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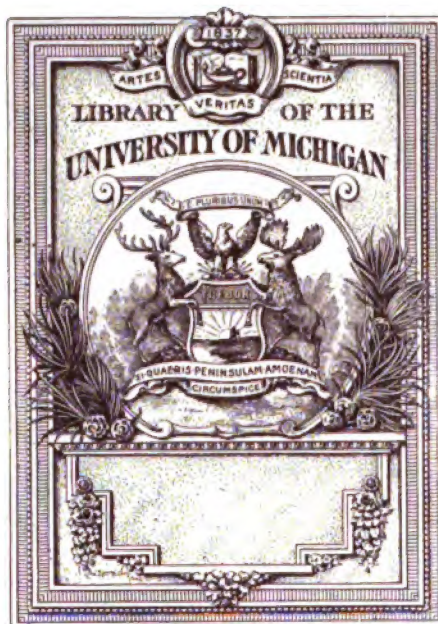
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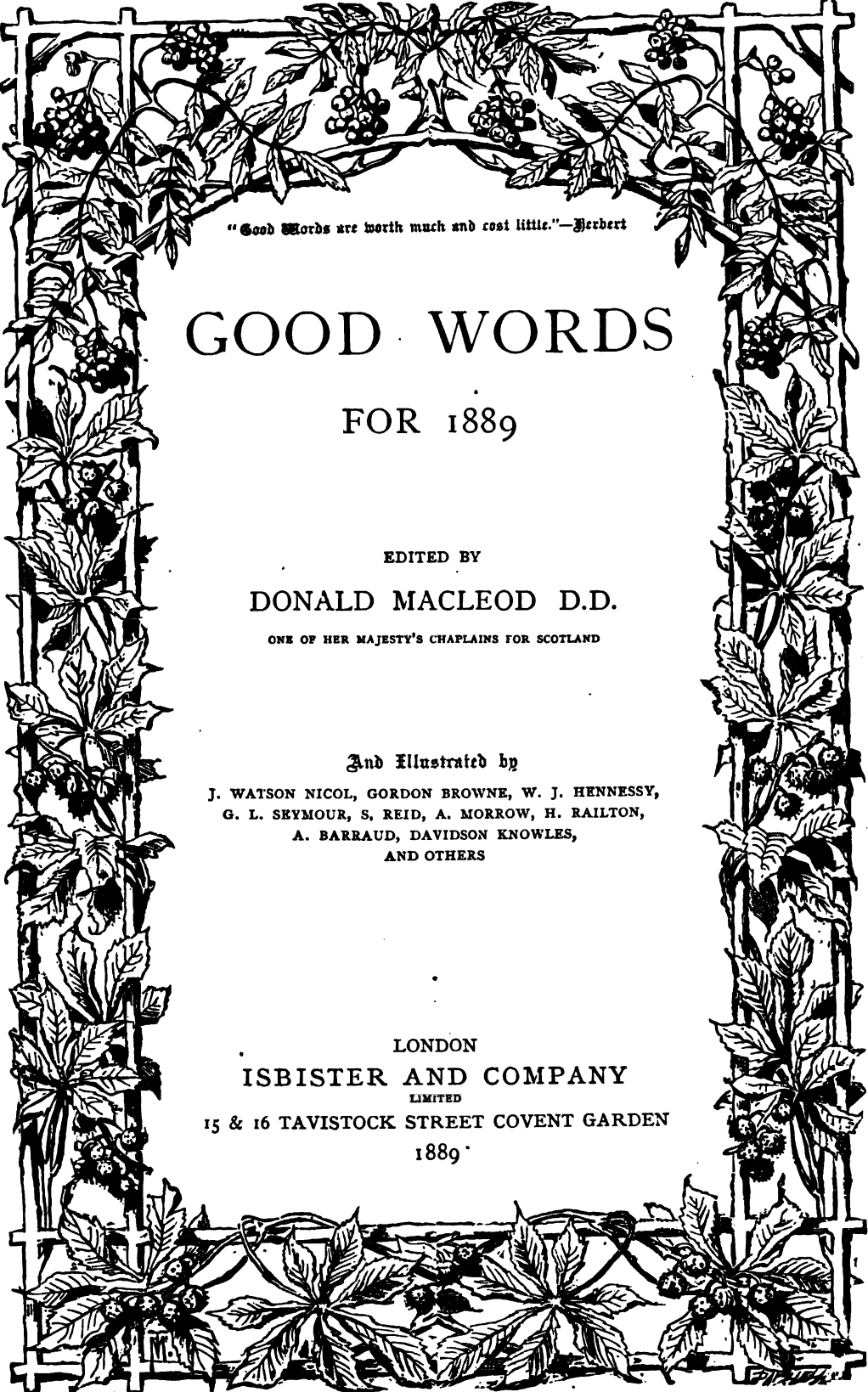


Frontispiece.]

Engraved by M. Klinkicht.

"LA PETITE RUSSE."

By ALEXIS HARLAMOFF.



"Good Words are worth much and cost little."—Herbert

GOOD WORDS

FOR 1889

EDITED BY

DONALD MACLEOD D.D.

ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S CHAPLAINS FOR SCOTLAND

And Illustrated by

J. WATSON NICOL, GORDON BROWNE, W. J. HENNESSY,
G. L. SEYMOUR, S. REID, A. MORROW, H. RAILTON,
A. BARRAUD, DAVIDSON KNOWLES,
AND OTHERS

LONDON

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1889



1889.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"YOU say your things are all ready, Cecil? Then I'll just go below and do up my Gladstone, and put it in your cabin. We shall be at Bergen before long, they say."

The speaker was a young Englishman of three or four-and-twenty, and the sister addressed by him was still in the first flush of girlhood, having but a few days before celebrated her nineteenth birthday.

"Let me see to your bag, Roy," she exclaimed. "It is a shame that you should miss this lovely bit of the fjord, and I shall do it in half the time."

"The conceit of women!" he exclaimed with a smile in which brotherly love and the spirit of teasing were about equally blended. "No, no, Cis, I'm not going to let you spoil me. I shall be up again in ten minutes. Have you not made any friends here? Is there no one on deck you can talk to?"

"I don't want to talk," said Cecil. "Truth to tell, I am longing to get away from all these English people. Very unsociable of me, isn't it?"

Roy Boniface turned away with a smile, understanding her feeling well enough, and Cecil, with her back to the chattering tourist throng, let her eyes roam over the shining waters of the fjord to the craggy mountains on the farther shore, whose ever-varying forms had been delighting her since the early morning.

She herself made a fair picture, though her beauty was not of the order which quickly draws attention. There was nothing

very striking in her regular features, fair complexion, and light-brown hair; to a casual observer she would have seemed merely an average English girl, gentle, well-mannered and nice-looking. It was only to those who took pains to study her that her true nature was revealed; only at times that her quiet grey eyes would flash into sudden beauty with the pleasure of meeting with some rare and unexpected sympathy; only in some special need that the force of her naturally retiring nature made itself felt as a great influence.

Cecil had passed a year of emancipated girlhood, she had for a whole year been her own mistress, had had time and money at her disposal and no special duties to take the place of her school-work. It was the time she had been looking forward to all her life, the blissful time of grown-up freedom, and now that it had come it had proved a disappointing illusion. Whether the fault was in herself or in her circumstances she did not know; but like so many girls of her age she was looking out on life with puzzled eyes, hardly knowing what it was that had gone amiss, yet conscious of a great want, of a great unrest, of a vague dissatisfaction which would not be reasoned down.

"Cecil is looking poorly," had been the home verdict; and the mother, not fully understanding the cause, but with a true instinct as to the remedy, had suggested that the brother and sister should spend a month abroad, grieving to lose Cecil from the usual family visit to the seaside, but perceiving with a mother's wisdom and unselfishness that it was time, as she expressed it, for her young one to try its wings.

So the big steamer plied its way up the fjord, bearing Cecil Boniface and her small troubles and perplexities to healthy old Norway, to gain there fresh physical strength, and fresh insights into that puzzling thing called life; to make friendships, spite of her avowed unsociableness, to learn something more of the beauty of beauty, the joy of joy, and the pain of pain.

She was no student of human nature; at present with girlish impatience she turned away from the tourists, frankly avowing her conviction that they were a bore. She was willing to let her fancy roam to the fortunes of some imaginary Rolf and Erica living, perhaps, in some one or other of the solitary red-roofed cottages to be seen now and then on the mountain-side; but the average English life displayed on the deck did not in the least awaken her sympathies, she merely classified the passengers into rough groups and dismissed them from her mind. There was the photographic group, fraternizing over the cameras set up all in a little encampment at the fore-castle end. There was the clerical group, which had for its centre no fewer than five gaitered bishops. There was the sporting group, distinguished by light-brown checked suits and comfortable travelling caps. There was the usual sprinkling of pale, weary, overworked men and women come for a much-needed rest. And there was the flirting group—a notably small one, however, for Norwegian travelling is rough work and is ill-suited to this genus.

"Look here, Blanche," exclaimed a grey-bearded Englishman approaching a pretty little brunette who had a most sweet and winsome expression, and who was standing so near to the camp-stool on which Cecil had ensconced herself that the conversation was quite audible to her. "Just see if you can make out this writing; your eyes are better than mine. It is from Herr Falck, the Norwegian agent for our firm. I daresay your father told you about him."

"Yes, papa said he was one of the leading merchants out here and would advise us what to see, and where to go."

"Quite so. This letter reached me just as I was leaving home, and is to say that Herr Falck has taken rooms for us at some hotel. I can read it all well enough except the names, but the fellow makes such outrageous flourishes. What do you make of this sentence, beginning with 'My son Frithiof'?"

"Uncle! uncle! what shocking pronunciation! You must not put in an English 'th.' Did you never hear of the Frithiof

Saga? You must say it quickly like this—Freet-Yoff."

"A most romantic name," said Mr. Morgan. "Now I see why you have been so industrious over your Norwegian lessons. You mean to carry on a desperate flirtation with Herr Frithiof, oh! that is quite clear—I shall be on the look out!"

Blanche laughed, not at all resenting the remark, though she bent her pretty face over the letter, and pretended to have great difficulty in reading Herr Falck's very excellent English.

"Do you want to hear this sentence?" she said, "because if you do I'll read it."

"My son Frithiof will do himself the honour to await your arrival at Bergen on the landing-quay, and will drive you to Holdt's Hotel, where we have procured the rooms you desired. My daughter Sigrid (See-gree) is eager to make the acquaintance of your daughter and your niece, and if you will all dine with us at two o'clock on Friday at my villa in Kalvedalen we shall esteem it a great pleasure."

"Two-o'clock dinner!" exclaimed Florence Morgan, for the first time joining in the general conversation. "What an unheard-of hour!"

"Oh! everything is primitive simplicity out here," said Mr. Morgan. "You needn't expect London fashions."

"I suppose Frithiof Falck will be a sort of young Viking, large-boned and dignified, with a kind of good-natured fierceness about him," said Blanche, folding the letter.

"No, no," said Florence, "he'll be a shy, stupid country-bumpkin, afraid of airing his bad English, and you will step valiantly into the breach with your fluent Norwegian, and your kindness will win his heart. Then presently he will come up in his artless and primitive way with a *Vaer saa god* (if you please), and will take your hand. You will reply *Mange tak* (many thanks), and we shall all joyfully dance at your wedding."

There was general laughter, and some trifling bets were made upon the vexed question of Frithiof Falck's appearance.

"Well," said Mr. Morgan, "it's all very well to laugh now, but I hope you'll be civil to the Falcks when we really meet. And as to you, Cyril," he continued, turning to his nephew, a limp-looking young man of one-and-twenty, "get all the information you can out of young Falck, but on no account allow him to know that your father is seriously thinking of setting you at the head of the proposed branch at Stavanger. When

that does come about, of course Herr Falck will lose our custom, and no doubt it will be a blow to him; so mind you don't breathe a word about it, nor you either, girls. We don't want to spoil our holiday with business matters, and besides, one should always consider other people's feelings."

Cecil set her teeth and the colour rose to her cheeks, she moved away to the other side of the deck that she might not hear any more.

"What hateful people! they don't care a bit for the kindness and hospitality of these Norwegians. They only mean just to use them as a convenience." Then as her brother rejoined her she exclaimed, "Roy! who are those vulgar people over on the other side?"

"With two pretty girls in blue ulsters? I think the name is Morgan, rich city people. The old man's not bad, but the young one's a born snob. What do you think I heard him say as he was writing his name in the book and caught sight of ours. 'Why, Robert Boniface—that must be the music shop in Regent Street. Norway will soon be spoilt if all the cads take to coming over.' And there was I within two yards of him."

"Oh, Roy! he couldn't have known or he would never have said it."

"Oh, yes, he knew it well enough. It was meant for a snub, richly deserved by the presuming tradesman who dared to come to Norway for his holiday instead of eating shrimps at Margate, as such cattle should, you know!" and Roy laughed good-humouredly. Snubs had a way of gliding off him like water off a duck's back.

"I should have hated it," said Cecil. "What did you do?"

"Nothing; studied Baedeker with an imperturbable face, and reflected sapiently with William of Wykeham that neither birth nor calling but 'manners makyth man.' But look! this must be Bergen. What a glorious view! If only you had time to sketch it just from here!"

Cecil, after one quick exclamation of delight, was quite silent, for indeed few people can see unmoved that exquisite view which is unfolded before them as they round the fjord and catch the first glimpse of the most beautiful town in Norway. Had she been alone she would have allowed the tears of happiness to come into her eyes, but being on a crowded steamer she fought down her emotion and watched in a sort of dream of delight the picturesque wooden houses, the red-tiled roofs, the quaint towers and spires,

the clear still fjord with its forest of masts and rigging, and the mountains rising steep and sheer, encircling Bergen like so many hoary old giants who had vowed to protect the town.

Meanwhile, the deck resounded with those comments which are so very irritating to most lovers of scenery; one long-haired aesthete gave vent to a fresh adjective of admiration about once a minute, till Roy and Cecil were forced to flee from him and to take refuge among the sporting fraternity, who occasionally admitted frankly that it was "a fine view," but who obtruded their personality far less upon their companions.

"Oh, Roy, how we shall enjoy it all!" said Cecil as they drew near to the crowded landing-quay.

"I think we shall fit in, Cis," he said smiling. "Thank Heaven, you don't take your pleasure after the manner of that fellow. If I were his travelling companion I should throttle him in a week."

"Or suggest a muzzle," said Cecil laughing; "that would save both his neck and your feelings."

"Let me have your key," he said, as they approached the wooden pier; "the Custom House people will be coming on board and I will try to get our things looked over quickly. Wait here and then I shall not miss you."

He hastened away and Cecil scanned with curious eyes the faces of the little crowd gathered on the landing-quay, till her attention was arrested by a young Norwegian in a light grey suit who stood laughing and talking to an acquaintance on the wooden wharf. He was tall and broad-shouldered, with something unusually erect and energetic in his bearing; his features were of the pure Greek type not unfrequently to be met with in Norway; while his Northern birth was attested by a fair skin and light hair and moustache, as well as by a pair of honest, well-opened blue eyes which looked out on the world with a boyish content and happiness.

"I believe that is Frithiof Falck," thought Cecil. And the next moment her idea was confirmed, for as the connecting gangway was raised from the quay, one of the steamer officials greeted him by name, and the young Norwegian, replying in very good English, stepped on board and began looking about as if in search of some one. Involuntarily Cecil's eyes followed him: she had a strange feeling that in some way she knew him, knew him far better than the people he had

come to meet. He, too, seemed affected in the same way, for he came straight up to her and, raising his hat and bowing, said with frank courtesy,

"Pardon me, but am I speaking to Miss Morgan?"

"I think the Miss Morgans are at the other side of the gangway, I saw them a minute ago," she said, colouring a little.

"A thousand pardons for my mistake," said Frithiof Falck. "I came to meet this English family, you understand, but I have never seen them."

"There is Miss Morgan," exclaimed Cecil, "that lady in a blue ulster; and there is her uncle just joining her."

"Many thanks for your kind help," said Frithiof, and with a second bow, and a smile from his frank eyes he passed on and approached Mr. Morgan.

"Welcome to Norway, sir," he exclaimed, greeting the traveller with the easy courteous manner peculiar to Norwegians. "I hope you have made a good voyage."

"Oh, how do you do, Mr. Falck?" said the Englishman, scanning him from head to foot as he shook hands, and speaking very loud, as if the foreigner were deaf. "Very good of you to meet us, I'm sure. My niece, Miss Blanche Morgan."

Frithiof bowed, and his heart began to beat fast as a pair of most lovely dark grey eyes gave him such a glance as he had never before received.

"My sister is much looking forward to the pleasure of making your acquaintance," he said.

"Ah!" exclaimed Blanche, "how beautifully you speak English! And how you will laugh at me when I tell you that I have been learning Norwegian for fear there should be dead silence between us."

"Indeed, there is nothing which pleases us so much as that you should learn our tongue," he said smiling. "My English is just now in its zenith, for I passed the winter with an English clergyman at Hanover for the sake of improving it."

"But why not have come to England?" said Blanche.

"Well, I had before that been with a German family at Hanover to perfect myself in German, and I liked the place well, and this Englishman was very pleasant, so I thought if I stayed there it would be 'to kill two flies with one dash,' as we say in Norway. When I come to England that will be for a holiday, for nothing at all but pleasure."

"Let me introduce my nephew," said Mr. Morgan, as Cyril strolled up. "And this is my daughter. How now, Florence, have you found your boxes?"

"Allow me," said Frithiof; "if you will tell me what to look for I will see that the hotel porter takes it all."

There was a general adjournment to the region of pushing and confusion and luggage, and before long Frithiof had taken the travellers to his father's carriage, and they were driving through the long, picturesque Strandgaden. Very few vehicles passed through this main street, but throngs of pedestrians walked leisurely along, or stood in groups talking and laughing, the women chiefly wearing full skirts of dark blue serge, short jackets to match, and little round blue serge hoods surmounting their clean white caps; the men also in dark blue with broad felt hats.

To English visitors there is an indescribable charm in the primitive simplicity, the easy informality of the place; and Frithiof was well content with the delighted exclamations of the new comers.

"What charming ponies!" cried Blanche. "Look how oddly their manes are cut—short manes and long tails! How funny! we do just the opposite. And they all seem cream-coloured."

"This side, Blanche, quick! A lot of peasants in sabots! and oh! just look at those lovely red gables."

"How nice the people look, too, so different to people in an English street. What makes you all so happy over here?"

"Why, what should make us unhappy?" said Frithiof. "We love our country and our town, we are the freest people in the world, and life is a great pleasure in itself don't you think? But away in the mountains our people are much more grave. Life is too lonely there. Here in Bergen it is perfection."

Cyril Morgan regarded the speaker with a pitying eye, and perhaps would have enlightened his absurd ignorance and discoursed of Pall Mall and Piccadilly, had not they just then arrived at Holdt's Hotel. Frithiof merely waited to see that they approved of their rooms, gave them the necessary information as to bankers and lionizing, received Mr. Morgan's assurance that the whole party would dine at Herr Falck's the next day, and then, having previously dismissed the carriage, set out at a brisker pace than usual on his walk home.

Blanche Morgan's surprise at the happy-

looking people somehow amused him. Was it then an out-of-the-way thing for people to enjoy life? For his own part mere existence satisfied him. But then he was as yet quite unacquainted with trouble. The death of his mother when he was only eleven years old had been at the time a great grief, but it had in no way clouded his after-life, he had been scarcely old enough to realise the greatness of his loss. Its effect had been to make him cling more closely to those who were left to him—to his father, to his twin sister Sigrid, and to the little baby Swanhild (Svarnheel), whose birth had cost so much. The home life was an extremely happy one to look back on, and now that his year of absence was over and his education finished it seemed to him that all was exactly as he would have it. Faintly in the distance he looked forward to further success and happiness; being a fervent patriot he hoped some day to be a king's minister—the summit of a Norwegian's ambition; and being human he had visions of an ideal wife and an ideal home of his own. But the political career could very well wait, and the wife too for the matter of that. And yet, as he walked rapidly along Kong Oscars Gade, through the Stadsport, and past the picturesque cemetery; which lie on either side of the road, he saw nothing at all but a vision of the beautiful dark grey eyes which had glanced up at him so often that afternoon, and in his mind there echoed the words of one of Björnson's poems—

"To-day is just a day to my mind,
All sunny before and sunny behind,
Over the heather."

But the ending of the poem he had quite forgotten.

CHAPTER II.

HERR FALCK lived in one of the pretty, unpretentious houses in Kalvedalen which are chiefly owned by the rich merchants of Bergen. The house stood on the right-hand side of the road surrounded by a pretty little garden, it was painted a light brown colour, and like most Bergen houses it was built of wood. In the windows one could see flowers, and beyond them white muslin curtains, for æstheticism had not yet penetrated to Norway. The dark tiled roof was outlined against a wooded hill rising immediately behind, with here and there grey rocks peeping through the summer green of the trees, while in front the chief windows looked on to a pretty terrace with carefully kept flower-beds, then down the wooded hill-side to the lake

below—the Lungegaardsvand, with purple and grey heights on the farther shore, and on one side a break in the chain of mountains and a lovely stretch of open country. To the extreme left was the giant Ulriken, sometimes shining and glistening, sometimes frowning and dark, but always beautiful; while to the right you caught a glimpse of Bergen with its quaint cathedral tower, and away in the distance the fjord like a shining silver band in the sun.

As Frithiof walked along the grassy terrace he could hear sounds of music floating from the house; some one was playing a most inspiring waltz, and as soon as he had reached the open French window of his father's study, a quaint pair of dancers became visible. A slim little girl of ten years old, with very short petticoats, and very long golden hair braided into a pig-tail, held by the front paws a fine Esquimaux dog, who seemed quite to enter into the fun and danced and capered most cleverly, obediently keeping his long pointed nose over his partner's shoulder. The effect was so comical that Frithiof stood laughingly by to watch the performance for fully half a minute, then, unable to resist his own desire to dance, he unceremoniously called Lillo the dog away and whirled off little Swanhild in the rapid waltz which Norwegians delight in; the languid grace of a London ball-room would have had no charms for him, his dancing was full of fire and impetuosity, and Swanhild, too, danced very well, it had come to them both as naturally as breathing.

"This is better than Lillo," admitted the child. "Somehow he's so dreadfully heavy to get round. Have the English people come? What are they like?"

"Oh, they're middling," said Frithiof, "all except the niece, and she is charming."

"Is she pretty?"

"Prettier than any one you ever saw in your life."

"Not prettier than Sigrid?" said the little sister confidently.

"Wait till you see," said Frithiof. "She is a brunette and perfectly lovely. There now!" as the music ceased, "Sigrid has felt her left ear burning, and knows that we are speaking evil of her. Let us come to confess."

With his arm still round the child he entered the pretty bright-looking room to the right. Sigrid was still at the piano, but she had heard his voice and had turned round with eager expectation in her face. The brother and sister were very much alike; each had the same well-cut Greek features,

but Frithiof's face was broader and stronger, and you could tell at a glance that he was the more intellectual of the two. On the other hand, Sigrid possessed a delightful fund of quiet common-sense, and her judgment was seldom at fault, while, like most Norwegian girls, she had a most charmingly simple manner, and an unaffected light-heartedness which it did one good to see.

"Well! what news?" she exclaimed. "Have they come all right? Are they nice?"

"Nice is not the word! charming! beautiful! To-morrow you will see if I have spoken too strongly."

"He says she is even prettier than you, Sigrid," said Swanhild mischievously. "Prettier than any one we ever saw!"

"She? Which of them?"

"Miss Blanche Morgan, the daughter of the head of the firm, you know."

"And the other one?"

"I hardly know, I didn't look at her much; the others all seemed to me much like ordinary English tourists. But she!—well you will see to-morrow."

"How I wish they were coming to-night! you make me quite curious. And father seems so excited about their coming. I have not seen him so much pleased about anything for a long time."

"Is he at home?"

"No, he went for a walk, his head was bad again. That is the only thing that troubles me about him, his headaches seem to have become almost chronic this last year."

A shade came over her bright face, and Frithiof, too, looked grave.

"He works very much too hard," he said; "but as soon as I come of age and am taken into partnership he will be more free to take a thorough rest. At present I might just as well be in Germany as far as work goes, for he will hardly let me do anything to help him."

"Here he comes, here he comes!" cried Swanhild, who had wandered away to the window, and with one accord they all ran out to meet the head of the house, Lillo bounding on in front and springing up at his master with a loving greeting.

Herr Falck was a very pleasant-looking man of about fifty; he had the same well-chiselled features as Frithiof, the same broad forehead, clearly marked, level brows, and flexible lips, but his eyes had more of grey and less of blue in them, and a practised observer would have detected in their keen

glance an anxiety which could not wholly disguise itself. His hair and whiskers were iron-grey, and he was an inch or two shorter than his son. They all stood talking together at the door, the English visitors still forming the staple of conversation, and the anxiety giving place to eager hope in Herr Falck's eyes as Frithiof once more sang the praises of Blanche Morgan.

"Have they formed any plan for their tour?" he asked.

"No; they mean to talk it over with you and get your advice. They all professed to have a horror of Baedeker, though even with your help I don't think they will get far without him."

"It is certain that they will not want to stay very long in our Bergen," said Herr Falck, "the English never do. What should you say now if you all took your summer outing at once and settled down at Ulvik or Balholm for a few weeks, then you would be able to see a little of our friends and could start them well on their tour."

"What a delightful plan, little father!" cried Sigrid, "only you must come too, or we shall none of us enjoy it."

"I would run over for the Sunday, perhaps, that would be as much as I could manage, but Frithiof will be there to take care of you. What should you want with a careworn old man like me, now that he is at home again!"

"You fish for compliments, little father," said Sigrid, slipping her arm within his and giving him one of those mute caresses which are so much more eloquent than words. "But, quite between ourselves, though Frithiof is all very well, I shan't enjoy it a bit without you."

"Yes, yes, father dear," said Swanhild, "indeed you must come, for Frithiof he will be just no good at all, he will be sure to dance always with the pretty Miss Morgan, and to row her about on the fjord all day, just as he did those pretty girls at Norheimsund and Faleide."

The innocent earnestness of the child's tone made them all laugh, and Frithiof vowing vengeance on her for her speech, chased her round and round the garden, their laughter floating back to Herr Falck and Sigrid as they entered the house.

"The little minx!" said Herr Falck, "how innocently she said it too! I don't think our boy is such a desperate flirt though. As far as I remember there was nothing more than a sort of boy and girl friendship at either place."

"Oh, no," said Sigrid smiling. "Frithiof was too much of a schoolboy, every one liked him and he liked every one. I don't think he is the sort of man to fall in love easily."

"No; but when it does come it will be a serious affair. I very much wish to see him happily married."

"Oh, father! surely not yet. He is so young, we can't spare him yet."

Herr Falck threw himself back in his arm-chair, and mused for a few minutes.

"One need not necessarily lose him," he replied, "and you know, Sigrid, I am a believer in early marriages—at least for my son, I will not say too much about you, little woman, for as a matter of fact I don't know how I should ever spare you."

"Don't be afraid, little father; you may be very sure I shan't marry till I see a reasonable chance of being happier than I am at home with you. And when will that be, do you think?"

He stroked her golden hair tenderly.

"Not just yet, Sigrid, let us hope. Not just yet. As to our Frithiof, shall I tell you of the palace in cloudland I am building for him?"

"Not that he should marry the pretty Miss Morgan, as Swanhild calls her?" said Sigrid, with a strange sinking at the heart.

"Why not? I hear that she is a charming girl, both clever and beautiful, and indeed it seems to me that he is quite disposed to fall in love with her at first sight. Of course were he not properly in love I should never wish him to marry, but I own that a union between the two houses would be a great pleasure to me—a great relief."

He sighed, and for the first time the anxious look in his eyes attracted Sigrid's notice.

"Father, dear," she exclaimed, "won't you tell me what is troubling you? There is something, I think. Tell me, little father."

He looked startled and a slight flush spread over his face, but when he spoke his voice was reassuring.

"A business man often has anxieties which cannot be spoken of, dear child. God knows they weigh lightly enough on some men; I think I am growing old, Sigrid, and perhaps I have never learnt to take things so easily as most merchants do."

"Why, father, you were only fifty last birthday, you must not talk yet of growing old. How do other men learn, do you think, to take things lightly?"

"By refusing to listen to their own con-

science," said Herr Falck, with sudden vehemence. "By allowing themselves to hold one standard of honour in private life and a very different standard in business transactions. Oh, Sigrid! I would give a great deal to find some other opening for Frithiof. I dread the life for him."

"Do you think it is really so hard to be strictly honourable in business life? And yet it is a life that must be lived, and is it not better that such a man as Frithiof should take it up—a man with such a high sense of honour?"

"You don't know what business men have to stand against," said Herr Falck. "Frithiof is a good, honest fellow, but as yet he has seen nothing of life. And I tell you, child, we often fail in our strongest point."

He rose from his chair and paced the room; it seemed to Sigrid that a nameless shadow had fallen on their sunny home. She was for the first time in her life afraid, though the fear was vague and undefined.

"But there, little one," said her father, turning towards her again. "You must not be worried. I get nervous and depressed, that is all. As I told you, I am growing old."

"Frithiof would like to help you more if you would let him," said Sigrid, rather wistfully. "He was saying so just now."

"And so he shall in the autumn. He is a good lad, and if all goes well I hope he will some day be my right hand in the business, but I wish him to have a few months' holiday first. And there is this one thing, Sigrid, which I can tell you, if you really want to know about my anxieties?"

"Indeed I do, little father," she said eagerly.

"There are many matters which you would not understand even could I speak of them; but you know, of course, that I am agent in Norway for the firm of Morgan Brothers. Well, a rumour has reached me that they intend to break off the connection and to send out the eldest son to set up a branch at Stavanger. It is a mere rumour and reached me quite accidentally. I very much hope it may not be true, but there is no denying that Stavanger would be in most ways better suited for their purpose; in fact, the friend who told me of the rumour said that they felt now that it had been a mistake all along to have the agency here, and they had only done it because they knew Bergen and knew me."

"Why is Stavanger a better place for it?"

"It is better because most of the salmon

and lobsters are caught in the neighbourhood of Stavanger, and all the mackerel, too, to the south of Bergen. I very much hope the rumour is not true, for it would be a great blow to me to lose the English connection. Still it is not unlikely, and the times are hard now—very hard."

"And you think your palace in cloudland for Frithiof would prevent Mr. Morgan from breaking the connection?"

"Yes; a marriage between the two houses would be a great thing, it would make this new idea unlikely if not altogether impossible. I am thankful that there seems now some chance of it. Let the two meet naturally and learn to know each other. I will not say a word to Frithiof, it would only do harm; but to you, Sigrid, I confess that my heart is set on this plan. If I could for one moment make you see the future as I see it, you would feel with me how important the matter is."

At this moment Frithiof himself entered, and the conversation was abruptly ended.

"Well, have you decided?" he asked in his eager, boyish way. "Is it to be Ulvik, or Balholm? What! You were not even talking about that. Oh, I know what it was then. Sigrid was deep in the discussion of to-morrow's dinner. I will tell you what to do, abolish the romekolle, and let us be English to the backbone. Now I think of it, Mr. Morgan is not unlike a walking sirloin with a plum-pudding head. There is your bill of fare, so waste no more time."

The brother and sister went off together, laughing and talking; but when the door closed behind them the master of the house buried his face in his hands and for many minutes sat motionless. What troubled thoughts, what wearing anxieties filled his mind, Sigrid little guessed. It was after all a mere surface difficulty of which he had spoken; of the real strain which was killing him by inches, he could not say a word to any mortal being, though now in his great misery he instinctively prayed.

"My poor children!" he groaned. "Oh, God, spare them from this shame and ruin which haunts me. I have tried to be upright and prudent, it was only this once that I was rash. Give me success for their sakes, oh, God! The selfish and unscrupulous flourish on all sides. Give me this one success. Let me not blight their whole lives."

But the next day, when he went forward to greet his English guests, it would have been difficult to recognise him as the bur-

dened, careworn man from whose lips had been wrung that confession and that prayer. All his natural courtesy and brightness had returned to him; if he thought of his business at all he thought of it in the most sanguine way possible, and the Morgans saw in him only an older edition of Frithiof, and wondered how he had managed to preserve such buoyant spirits in the cares and uncertainties of mercantile life. The two-o'clock dinner passed off well; Sigrid, who was a clever little housekeeper, had scouted Frithiof's suggestion as to the roast beef and plum-pudding, and had carefully devised a thoroughly Norwegian repast.

"For I thought," she explained afterwards to Blanche, when the two girls had made friends, "that if I went to England I should wish to see your home life just exactly as it really is, and so I have ordered the sort of dinner we should naturally have, and did not, as Frithiof advised, leave out the romekolle."

"Was that the stuff like curds and whey?" asked Blanche, who was full of eager interest in everything.

"Yes; it is sour cream with bread crumbs grated over it. We always have a plateful each at dinner, it is quite one of our customs. But everything here is very simple of course, not grand as with you; we do not keep a great number of servants, or dine late, or dress for the evening—here there is nothing—" she hesitated for a word, then in her pretty foreign English added, "nothing ceremonious."

"That is just the charm of it all," said Blanche, in her sweet gracious way. "It is all so real and simple and fresh, and I think it was delightful of you to know how much best we should like to have a glimpse of your real home life instead of a stupid party. Now mamma cares for nothing but just to make a great show, it doesn't matter whether the visitors really like it or not."

Sigrid felt a momentary pang of doubt; she had fallen in love with Blanche Morgan the moment she saw her, but it somehow hurt her to hear the English girl criticise her own mother. To Sigrid's loyal nature there was something out of tune in that last remark.

"Perhaps you and your cousin would like to see over the house," she said, by way of making a diversion. "Though I must tell you that we are considered here in Bergen to be rather English in some points. That is because of my father's business connection with England I suppose. Here you see, in

his study, he has a real English fireplace; we all like it much better than the stoves, and some day I should like to have them in the other rooms as well."

"But there is one thing very un-English," said Blanche. "There are no passages; instead, I see, all your rooms open out of each other. Such numbers of lovely plants, too, in every direction; we are not so artistic, we stand them all in prim rows in a conservatory. This, too, is quite new to me. What a good idea!" And she went up to examine a prettily worked sling fastened to the wall, and made to hold newspapers.

She was too polite of course to say what really struck her—that the whole house seemed curiously simple and bare, and that she had imagined that one of the leading merchants of Bergen would live in greater style. As a matter of fact you might, as Cyril expressed it, have bought the whole place for an old song, and though there was an air of comfort and good taste about the rooms and a certain indescribable charm they were evidently destined for use and not for show, and with the exception of some fine old Norwegian silver and a few good pictures Herr Falck did not possess a single thing of value.

Contrasted with the huge and elaborately furnished house in Lancaster Gate with its lavishly strewn knick-knacks, its profusion of all the beautiful things that money could buy, the Norwegian villa seemed poor indeed, yet there was something about it which took Blanche's fancy.

Later on, when the whole party had started for a walk, and when Frithiof and Blanche had quite naturally drifted into a *tête-à-tête*, she said something to this effect.

"I begin not to wonder that you are so happy," she added, "the whole atmosphere of the place is happiness. I wish you could teach us the secret of it."

"Have you then only the gift of making other people happy?" said Frithiof. "That seems strange."

"You will perhaps think me very discontented," she said, with a pathetic little sadness in her tone which touched him. "But seeing how fresh and simple and happy your life is out here makes me more out of heart than ever with my own home. You must not think I am grumbling; they are very good to me, you know, and give me everything that money can buy; but somehow there is so much that jars on one, and here there seems nothing but kindness and ease and peace."

"I am glad you like our life," he said, "so very glad."

And as she told him more of her home and her London life, and of how little it satisfied her, her words, and still more her manner and her sweet eyes, seemed to weave a sort of spell about him, seemed to lure him on into a wonderful future, and to waken in him a new life.

"I like him," thought Blanche to herself. "Perhaps after all this Norwegian tour will not be so dull. I like to see his eyes light up so eagerly; he really has beautiful eyes! I almost think—I really almost think I am just a little bit in love with him."

At this moment they happened to overtake two English tourists on the road; as they passed on in front of them Frithiof, with native courtesy, took off his hat.

"You surely don't know that man? he is only a shopkeeper," said Blanche, not even taking the trouble to lower her voice.

Frithiof crimsoned to the roots of his hair. "I am afraid he must have heard what you said," he exclaimed, quickening his pace in the discomfort of the realisation. "I do not know him certainly, but one is bound to be courteous to strangers."

"I know exactly who he is," said Blanche, "for he and his sister were on the steamer, and Cyril found out all about them. He is Boniface, the music-shop man."

Frithiof was saved a reply, for just then they reached their destination, and rejoined the rest of the party, who were clustered together on the hill-side enjoying a most lovely view. Down below them, sheltered by a great craggy mountain on the farther side, lay a little lonely lake, so weird-looking, so desolate, that it was hard to believe it to be within an easy walk of the town. Angry-looking clouds were beginning to gather in the sky, a purple gloom seemed to overspread the mountain and the lake, and something of its gravity seemed also to have fallen upon Frithiof. He had found the first imperfection in his ideal, yet it had only served to show him how great a power, how strange an influence she possessed over him. He knew now that, for the first time in his life, he was blindly, desperately in love.

"Why, it is beginning to rain," said Mr. Morgan. "I almost think we had better be turning back, Herr Falck. It has been a most enjoyable little walk; but if we can reach the hotel before it settles in for a wet evening, why, all the better."

"The rain is the great drawback to Bergen," said Herr Falck. "At Christiania they

have a saying that when you go to Bergen it rains three hundred and sixty-six days out of the year. But after all one becomes very much accustomed to it."

On the return walk the conversation was more general, and though Frithiof walked beside Blanche he said very little. His mind was full of the new idea which had just dawned upon him, and he heard her merry talk with Sigrid and Swanhild like a man in a dream. Before long, much to his discomfort, he saw in front of them the two English tourists, and though his mind was all in a tumult with this new perception of his love for Blanche, yet the longing to make up for her ill-judged remark, the desire to prove that he did not share in her prejudice, was powerful too. He fancied it was chiefly to avoid them that the Englishman turned towards the bank just as they passed to gather a flower which grew high above his head.

"What can this be, Cecil?" he remarked.

"Allow me, sir," said Frithiof, observing that it was just out of the stranger's reach.

He was two or three inches taller, and, with an adroit spring, was able to bring down the flower in triumph. By this time the others were some little way in advance. He looked rather wistfully after Blanche, and fancied disapproval in her erect, trim little figure.

"This is the Linnæa," he explained. "You will find a great deal of it about. It was the flower, you know, which Linnæus chose to name after himself. Some say he showed his modesty in choosing so common and insignificant a plant, but it always seems to me that he showed his good taste. It is a beautiful flower."

Roy Boniface thanked him heartily for his help. "We were hoping to find the Linnæa," he said, handing it to his sister, while he opened a specimen tin.

"What delicate little bells!" she exclaimed. "I quite agree with you that Linnæus showed his good taste."

Frithiof would probably have passed on had he not, at that moment, recognised Cecil as the English girl whom he had first accosted on the steamer.

"Pardon me for not knowing you before," he said, raising his hat. "We met yesterday afternoon, did we not? I hope you have had a pleasant time at Bergen?"

"Delightful, thank you. We think it the most charming town we ever saw."

"Barring the rain," said Roy, "for which we have foolishly forgotten to reckon."

"Never be parted from your umbrella is

a sound axiom for this part of the world," said Frithiof, smiling. "Hullo! it is coming down in good earnest. I'm afraid you will get very wet," he said, glancing at Cecil's pretty, grey travelling dress.

"Shall we stand up for a minute under that porch, Roy?" said the girl, glancing at a villa which they were just passing.

"No, no," said Frithiof; "please take shelter with us. My father's villa is close by. Please come."

And since Cecil was genuinely glad not to get wet through, and since Roy, though he cared nothing for the rain, was glad to have a chance of seeing the inside of a Norwegian villa, they accepted the kindly offer, and followed their guide into the pretty snug-looking house.

Roy had heard a good deal of talk about sweetness and light, but he thought he had never realised the meaning of the words till the moment when he was ushered into that pretty Norwegian drawing-room, with its painted floor and groups of flowers, and its pink-tinted walls, about which the green ivy wreathed itself picturesquely, now twining itself round some mirror or picture-frame, now forming a sort of informal frieze round the whole room, its roots so cleverly hidden away in sheltered corners or on unobtrusive brackets that the growth had all the fascination of mystery. The presiding genius of the place, and the very centre of all that charmed, stood by one of the windows, the light falling on her golden hair. She had taken off her hat and was flicking the rain-drops from it with her handkerchief when Frithiof introduced the two Bonifaces, and Roy, who found his novel experience a little embarrassing, was speedily set at ease by her delightful naturalness and frank courtesy.

Her bow and smile were grace itself, and she seemed to take the whole proceeding entirely as a matter of course; one might have supposed that she was in the habit of sheltering wet tourists every day of her life.

"I am so glad my brother found you," she exclaimed. "You would have been wet through had you walked on to Bergen. Swanhild, run and fetch a duster; oh, you have brought one already, that's a good child. Now let me wipe your dress," she added, turning to Cecil.

"Where has every one disappeared to?" asked Frithiof.

"Father has walked on to Holdt's Hotel with the Morgans," said Swanhild. "They would not wait though we tried to persuade

them to. Father is going to talk over their route with them."

Cecil saw a momentary look of annoyance on his face; but the next minute he was talking as pleasantly as possible to Roy, and before long the question of routes was being discussed, and as fast as Frithiof suggested one place, Sigrid and Swanhild mentioned others which must on no account be missed.

"And you can really only spare a month for it all?" asked Sigrid. "Then I should give up going to Christiania or Trondhjem if I were you. They will not interest you half as much as this south-west coast."

"But, Sigrid, it is impossible to leave out Kongswold and Dombaas. For you are a botanist, are you not?" said Frithiof, turning to the Englishman, "and those places are perfection for flowers."

"Yes? then you must certainly go there," said Sigrid. "Kongswold is a dear little place up on the Dovrefjeld. Yet if you were not botanists I should say you ought to see instead either the Vöringsfos or the Skjaeggedalsfos, they are our two finest waterfalls."

"The Skedaddle-fos, as the Americans call it," put in Frithiof.

"You have a great many American tourists, I suppose," said Roy.

"Oh, yes, a great many, and we like them very well, though not as we like the English. To the English we feel very much akin."

"And you speak our language so well!" said Cecil, to whom the discovery had been a surprise and a relief.

"You see we Norwegians think a great deal of education. Our schools are very good; we are all taught to speak German and English. French, which with you comes first, does it not? stands third with us."

"Tell me about your schools," said Cecil. "Are they like ours, I wonder?"

"We begin at six years old to go to the middle school—they say it is much like your English high schools; both my brother and I went to the middle schools here at Bergen. Then when we were sixteen we went to Christiania, he to the Handelsgymnasium, and I to Miss Bauer's school, for two years. My little sister is now at the middle school here; she goes every day, but just now it is holiday time."

"And in holidays," said Swanhild, whose English was much less fluent and ready, "we go away. We perhaps go to-morrow to Balholm."

"Perhaps we shall meet you again there," said Sigrid. "Oh, do come there: it is such a lovely place."

Then followed a discussion about flowers, in which Sigrid was also interested, and presently Herr Falck returned, and added another picture of charming hospitality to the group that would always remain in the minds of the English travellers; and then there was afternoon tea, which proved a great bond of union, and more discussion of English and Norwegian customs, and much laughter and merriment and light-heartedness.

When at length the rain ceased and Roy and Cecil were allowed to leave for Bergen, they felt as if the kindly Norwegians were old friends.

"Shall you be very much disappointed if we give up the Skedaddle-fos," asked Roy. "It seems to me that a waterfall is a waterfall all the world over, but that we are not likely to meet everywhere with a family like that."

"Oh, by all means give it up," said Cecil gaily. "I would far rather have a few quiet days at Balholm. I detest toiling after the things every one expects you to see. Besides we can always be sure of finding the Skjaeggedalsfos in Norway, but we can't tell what may happen to these delightful people."

CHAPTER III.

BALHOLM, the loveliest of all the places on the Sogne Fjord, is perhaps the quietest place on earth. There is a hotel, kept by two most delightful Norwegian brothers, there is a bathing-house, a minute landing-stage, and a sprinkling of little wooden cottages with red-tiled roofs. The only approach is by water; no dusty high road is to be found, no carts and carriages rumble past; if you want rest and quiet you have only to seek it on the mountains or by the shore; if you want amusement, you have only to join the merry Norwegians in the *salon*, who are always ready to sing or to play, to dance or to talk, or, if weatherbound, to play games with the zest and animation of children. Even so limp a specimen of humanity as Cyril Morgan found that, after all, existence in this primitive region had its charms, while Blanche said, quite truthfully, that she had never enjoyed herself so much in her life. There was to her a charming piquancy about both place and people; and although she was well accustomed to love and admiration, she found that Frithiof was altogether unlike the men she had hitherto met in society; there was about him something strangely fresh—he seemed to harmonize well with the place, and he made all the

other men of whom she could think seem ordinary and prosaic. As for Frithiof, he made no secret of his love for her, it was apparent to all the world—to the light-hearted Norwegians, who looked on approvingly; to Cyril Morgan, who wondered what on earth Blanche could see in such an unsophisticated boy; to Mr. Morgan, who, with a shrug of his broad shoulders, remarked that there was no help for it—it was Blanche's way; to Roy Boniface, who thought the two were well matched, and gave them his good wishes; and to Cecil, who, as she watched the two a little wistfully, said in her secret heart what could on no account have been said to any living being, "I hope, oh, I hope she cares for him enough!"

One morning, a little tired with the previous day's excursion to the Suphelle Brae, they idled away the sunny hours on the fjord, Frithiof rowing, Swanhild lying at full length in the bow with Lillo mounting guard over her, and Blanche, Sigrid, and Cecil in the stern.

"You have been all this time at Balholm and yet have not seen King Bele's grave!" Frithiof had exclaimed in answer to Blanche's inquiry. "Look, there it is, just a green mound by that tree."

"Isn't it odd," said Sigrid dreamily, "to think that we are just in the very place where the Frithiof Saga was really lived?"

"But I thought it was only a legend," said Cecil.

"Oh, no," said Frithiof, "the Sagas are not legends, but true stories handed down by word of mouth."

"Then I wish you would hand down your saga to us by word of mouth," said Blanche, raising her sweet eyes to his. "I shall never take the trouble to read it for myself in some dry, tiresome book. Tell us the story of Frithiof now as we drift along in the boat with his old home Framnaes in sight."

"I do not think I can tell it really well," he said; "but I can just give you the outline of it:—"

"Frithiof was the only son of a wealthy yeoman who owned land at Framnaes. His father was a great friend of King Bele, and the king wished that his only daughter Ingeborg should be educated by the same wise man who taught Frithiof, so you see it happened that as children Frithiof and Ingeborg were always together, and by-and-by was it not quite natural that they should learn to love each other? It happened just so, and Frithiof vowed that, although he was only the son of a yeoman, nothing should

separate them or make him give her up. It then happened that King Bele died, and Frithiof's father, his great friend, died at the same time. Then Frithiof went to live at Framnaes over yonder; he had great possessions, but the most useful were just these three: a wonderful sword, a wonderful bracelet, and a wonderful ship called *Ellida*, which had been given to one of his Viking ancestors by the sea-god. But though he had all these things, and was the most powerful man in the kingdom, yet he was always sad, for he could not forget the old days with Ingeborg. So one day he crossed this fjord to Bele's grave, close to Balholm, where Ingeborg's two brothers Helge and Halfdan were holding an assembly of the people, and he boldly asked for Ingeborg's hand. Helge the king was furious, and rejected him with scorn, and Frithiof, who would not allow even a king to insult him, drew his sword and with one blow smote the king's shield, which hung on a tree, in two pieces. Soon after this good King Ring of the far North, who had lost his wife, became a suitor for Ingeborg's hand; but Helge and Halfdan insulted his messengers and a war was the consequence. When Frithiof heard the news of the war he was sitting with his friend at a game of chess; he refused to help Helge and Halfdan, but knowing that Ingeborg had been sent for safety to the sacred grove of Balder, he went to see her in *Ellida*, though there was a law that whoever ventured to approach the grove by water should be put to death. Now Ingeborg had always loved him and she agreed to be betrothed to him, and taking leave of her, Frithiof went with all haste to tell her brothers. This time also there was a great assembly at Bele's grave, and again Frithiof asked for the hand of Ingeborg, and promised that, if Helge would consent to their betrothal, he would fight for him. But Helge, instead of answering him, asked if he had not been to the sacred grove of Balder, contrary to the law? Then all the people shouted to him, 'Say no, Frithiof! Say no, and Ingeborg is yours.' But Frithiof said that though his happiness hung on that one word he would not tell a lie, that in truth he had been to Balder's Temple, but that his presence had not defiled it, that he and Ingeborg had prayed together and had planned this offer of peace. But the people forsook him, and King Helge banished him until he should bring back the tribute due from Angantyr of the Western Isles; and every one knew that if he escaped with his life on such an errand it would be a

wonder. Once again Frithiof saw Ingeborg, and he begged her to come with him in his ship *Ellida*, but Ingeborg, though she loved him, thought that she owed obedience to her brothers, and they bade each other farewell; but before he went Frithiof clasped on her arm the wonderful bracelet. So then they parted, and Frithiof sailed away and had more adventures than I can tell you, but at last he returned with the tribute money, and now he thought Ingeborg would indeed be his. But when he came in sight of Framnaes, he found that his house and everything belonging to him had been burnt to the ground."

"No, no, Frithiof, there was his horse and his dog left," corrected Sigrid. "Don't you remember how they came up to him?"

"So they did, but all else was gone; and, worst of all, Ingeborg, they told him, had been forced by her brothers to marry King Ring, who, if she had not become his wife, would have taken the kingdom from Helge and Halfdan. Then Frithiof was in despair, and cried out, 'Who dare speak to me of the fidelity of women?' And it so happened that that very day was Midsummer Day, and he knew that King Helge, Ingeborg's brother, would be in the Temple of Balder. He sought him out, and went straight up to him and said, 'You sent me for the lost tribute and I have gained it, but either you or I must die. Come, fight me! Think of Framnaes that you burnt. Think of Ingeborg whose life you have spoiled!' And then in great wrath he flung the tribute-money at Helge's head, and Helge fell down senseless. Just then Frithiof caught sight of the bracelet he had given Ingeborg on the image of Balder, and he tore it off, but in so doing upset the image, which fell into the flames on the altar. The fire spread, and spread so that at last the whole temple was burnt, and all the trees of the grove. Next day King Helge gave chase to Frithiof, but luckily in the night Frithiof's friend had scuttled all the king's ships, and so his effort failed, and Frithiof sailed out to sea in *Ellida*. Then he became a Viking, and lived a hard life, and won many victories. At last he came home to Norway and went to King Ring's court at Yuletide, disguised as an old man; but they soon found out that he was young and beautiful, and he doffed his disguise, and Ingeborg trembled as she recognised him. Ring knew him not, but liked him well, and made him his guest. One day he saved Ring when his horse and sledge had fallen into the water. But an-

other day it so happened that they went out hunting together, and Ring being tired fell asleep, while Frithiof kept guard over him. As he watched, a raven came and sang to him, urging him to kill the king; but a white bird urged him to flee from temptation, and Frithiof drew his sword and flung it far away out of reach. Then the king opened his eyes, and told Frithiof that for some time he had known him, and that he honoured him for resisting temptation. Frithiof, however, felt that he could no longer bear to be near Ingeborg, since she belonged not to him, and soon he came to take leave of her and her husband. But good King Ring said that the time of his own death was come, and he asked Frithiof to take his kingdom and Ingeborg, and to be good to his son. Then he plunged his sword in his breast, and so died. Before long the people met to elect a new king, and would have chosen Frithiof, but he would only be regent till Ring's son should be of age. Then Frithiof went away to his father's grave and prayed to Balder, and he built a wonderful new temple for the god, but still peace did not come to him. And the priest told him that the reason of this was because he still kept anger and hatred in his heart towards Ingeborg's brothers. Helge was dead, but the priest prayed him to be reconciled to Halfdan. They were standing thus talking in the new temple when Halfdan unexpectedly appeared, and when he caught sight of his foe he turned pale and trembled. But Frithiof, who for the first time saw that forgiveness is greater than vengeance, walked up to the altar, placed upon it his sword and shield, and returning, held out his hand to Halfdan, and the two were reconciled. At that moment there entered the temple one dressed as a bride, and Frithiof lifted up his eyes and saw that it was Ingeborg herself. And Halfdan, his pride of birth forgotten and his anger conquered by his foe's forgiveness, led his sister to Frithiof and gave her to be his wife, and in the new Temple of Balder the Good the lovers received the blessing of the priest."

"How well you tell it! It is a wonderful story," said Blanche; and there was real, genuine pleasure in her dark eyes as she looked across at him.

It was such a contrast to her ordinary life, this quiet Norway, where all was so simple and true and trustworthy, where no one seemed to strain after effects. And there was something in Frithiof's strength, and spirit, and animation, which appealed to her greatly.

"My Viking is adorable!" she used to say to herself; and gradually there stole into her manner towards him a sort of tender reverence. She no longer teased him playfully, and their talks together in those long summer days became less full of mirth and laughter, but more earnest and absorbing.

Cecil saw all this, and she breathed more freely. "Certainly she loves him," was her reflection.

Sigrid, too, no longer doubted; indeed, Blanche had altogether won her heart, and somehow, whenever they were together, the talk always drifted round to Frithiof's past, or Frithiof's future, or Frithiof's opinions. She was very happy about it, for she felt sure that Blanche would be a charming sister-in-law, and love and hope seemed to have developed Frithiof in a wonderful way; he had suddenly grown manly and considerate, nor did Sigrid feel, as she had feared, that his new love interfered with his love for her.

They were bright days for every one, those days at Balholm, with their merry excursions to the priest's garden and the fir-woods, to the saeter on the mountain-side, and to grand old Munkeggen, whose heights towered above the little wooden hotel. Herr Falck, who had joined them towards the end of the week, and who climbed Munkeggen as energetically as any one, was well pleased to see the turn affairs had taken; and every one was kind, and discreetly left Frithiof and Blanche to themselves as they toiled up the mountain-side; indeed, Knut, the landlord's brother, who as usual had courteously offered his services as guide, was so thoughtful for the two lovers who were lingering behind, that he remorselessly hurried up a stout old American lady, who panted after him, to that "Better resting-place" which he always insisted was a little farther on.

"Will there be church to-morrow?" asked Blanche, as they rested half-way. "I should so like to go to a Norwegian service."

"There will be service at some church within reach," said Frithiof; "but I do not much advise you to go; it will be very hot, and the place will be packed."

"Why? Are you such a religious people?"

"The peasants are," he replied. "And of course the women. Church-going and religion, that is for women; we men do not need that sort of thing."

She was a little startled by his matter-of-fact, unabashed tone.

"What, are you an agnostic? an atheist?" she exclaimed.

"No, no, not at all," he said composedly. "I believe in a good providence, but with so much I am quite satisfied, you see. What does one need with more? To us men religion, church-going, is—is—how do you call it in English? I think you say 'An awful bore.' Is it not so?"

The slang in foreign accent was irresistible. She was a little shocked, but she could not help laughing.

"How you Norwegians speak out!" she exclaimed. "Many Englishmen feel that, but few would say it so plainly."

"So! I thought an Englishman was nothing if not candid. But for me I feel no shame. What more would one have than to make the most of life? That is my religion. I hear that in England there is a book to ask whether life is worth living? For me I can't understand that sort of thing. It is a question that would never have occurred to me. Only to live is happiness enough. Life is such a very good thing. Do you not agree?"

"Sometimes," she said rather wistfully.

"Only sometimes? No, no, always—to the last breath!" cried Frithiof.

"You say that because things are as you like; because you are happy," said Blanche.

"It is true, I am very happy," he replied. "Who would not be happy walking with you?"

Something in his manner frightened her a little. She went on breathlessly and incoherently,

"You wouldn't say that life is a very good thing if you were like our poor people in East London, for instance."

"Indeed, no," he said gravely. "That must be a great blot on English life. Here in Norway we have no extremes. No one is very poor, and our richest men have only what would be counted in England a moderate income."

"Perhaps that is why you are such a happy people."

"Perhaps," said Frithiof, but he felt little inclined to consider the problem of the distribution of wealth just then, and the talk drifted round once more to that absorbing personal talk which was much more familiar to them.

At length the top of the mountain was reached, and a merry little picnic ensued. Frithiof was the life of the party, and there was much drinking of healths and clinking of glasses, and though the cold was intense every one seemed to enjoy it and to make fun of any sort of discomfort.



"Are you hurt?" he questioned breathlessly.

"Come!" said Sigrid to Cecil Boniface, "you and I must add a stone to the cairn. Let us drag up this great one and put it on the top together in memory of our friendship."

They stood laughing and panting under the shelter of the cairn when the stone was deposited, the merry voices of the rest of the party floating back to them.

"Do you not think we are dreadful chatters, we Norwegians?" said Sigrid.

"I think you are delightful," said Cecil simply.

Something in her manner touched and pleased Sigrid. She had grown to like this quiet English girl. They were silent for some minutes, looking over that wonderful expanse of blue fjords and hoary mountains, flecked here and there on their sombre heights by snowdrifts. Far down below them a row-boat could be seen on the water, looking scarcely bigger than the head of a pin; and as Cecil watched the lovely country steeped in the golden sunshine of that summer afternoon, thoughts of the Frithiof Saga came thronging through her mind, till it almost seemed to her that in another moment she should see the dragon ship *Ellida* winging her way over the smooth blue waters.

Knut suggested before long that if they were to be home in time for supper it might be best to start at once, and the merry party broke up into little groups. Herr Falck was deep in conversation with Mr. Morgan, Cyril and Florence as usual kept to themselves, Knut piloted the American lady in advance of the others, while Roy Boniface joined his sister and Sigrid, pausing on the way for a little snowballing in a great snow-drift just below the summit. Little Swanhild hesitated for a moment, longing to walk with Blanche, for whom she had formed the sort of adoring attachment with which children of her age often honour some grown-up girl; but she was laughingly carried off by some good-natured friends from Bergen, who divined her intentions, and once more Frithiof and Blanche were left alone.

"And you must really go on Monday?" asked Frithiof with a sigh.

"Well," she said, glancing up at him quickly, "I have been very troublesome to you I'm sure—always needing help in climbing! You will be glad to get rid of me though you would be too polite to tell me so."

"How can you say such things!" he exclaimed, and again something in his manner alarmed her a little. "You know—you

must know what these days have been to me."

The lovely colour flooded her cheeks, and she spoke almost at random.

"After all, I believe I should do better if I trusted to my alpenstock!" And laughingly she began to spring down the rough descent, a little proud of her own grace and agility, and a little glad to baffle and tease him for a few minutes.

"Take care! take care!" cried Frithiof, hurrying after her. Then, with a stifled cry, he sprang forward to rescue her, for the alpenstock had slipped on a stone, and she was rolling down the steep incline. Even in the terrible moment itself he had time to think of two distinct dangers—she might strike her head against one of the boulders, or, worse thought still, might be unchecked, and fall over that side of Munkeggen which was almost precipitous. How he managed it he never realised, but love seemed to lend him wings, and the next thing he knew was that he was kneeling on the grass only two or three feet from the sheer cliff-like side with Blanche in his arms.

"Are you hurt?" he questioned breathlessly.

"No," she replied, trembling with excitement. "Not hurt at all, only shaken and startled."

He lifted her a little farther from the edge. For a minute she lay passively, then she looked up into his eyes.

"How strong you are," she said, "and how cleverly you caught me! Yet now that it is over you look quite haggard and white. I am really not hurt at all. It punished me well for thinking I could get on without you. You see I couldn't!" and a lovely tender smile dawned in her eyes.

She sat up and took off her hat, smoothing back her disordered hair. A sort of terror seized Frithiof that in another minute she would propose going on, and, urged by this fear, he spoke rapidly and impetuously.

"If only I might always serve you!" he cried. "Oh, Blanche, I love you! I love you! Will you not trust yourself to me?"

Blanche had received already several offers of marriage; they had been couched in much better terms but they had lacked the passionate ardour of Frithiof's manner. All in a moment she was conquered; she could not even make a feint of resistance, but just put her hand in his.

"I will always trust you," she faltered.

Then, as she felt his strong arm round her and his kisses on her cheek, there flashed

through her mind a description she had once read of—

“a strong man from the North,
Light-locked, with eyes of dangerous grey.”

It was a love worth having, she thought to herself; a love to be proud of!

“But Frithiof,” she began after a timeless pause, “we must keep our secret just for a little while. You see my father is not here, and —”

“Let me write to him and ask his consent,” exclaimed Frithiof.

“No, no, do not write. Come over to England in October and see him yourself, that will be so much better.”

“Must we wait so long?” said Frithiof, his face clouding.

“It is only a few weeks; papa will not be at home till then. Every one is away from London you know. Don’t look so anxious; I do not know your face when it isn’t happy—you were never meant to be grave. As for

papa I can make him do exactly what I like, you need not be afraid that he will not consent. Come! I have promised to trust to you and yet you doubt me.”

“Doubt you!” he cried. “Never! I trust you before all the world; and if you tell me to wait—why then—I must obey.”

“How I love you for saying that,” cried Blanche, clinging to him. “To think that you who are so strong should say that to me! It seems wonderful. But indeed, indeed, you need not doubt me. I love you with my whole heart. I love you as I never thought it possible to love.”

Frithiof again clasped her in his arms, and there came to his mind the sweet words of Uhland—

“Gestorben war ich
Vor Liebeswonn.
Begraben lag ich
In Ihren Armen;
Erwecket ward ich
Von ihren Küssen
Den Himmel sah ich
In ihren Augen.”

TO THE SAND GROUSE.

BY THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

WHY come ye from the tawny waste
Of the Mongolian plains,
To seek through leagues of stranger air
Our Western storms and rains?

Deep in the hollows of that land
Where some rare water gleams,
Ye bask among the flowers and seeds
Of oleantered streams.

These warm and pebbly colours show
Your native home to be
In lands that since the raging flood
Have never seen the sea.

What thought ye of that vaster plain
Rippling its thousand waves,
Its ships, its freight of living men,
And all its “wandering graves?”

As wide horizons may have lain
Under your ranging flight
Where the great Oxus rolls her sands
Through quivering fields of light.

Or when from Afghan hills and rocks
Your arrowy course was hurled

To Ganges from the Pamir steppe,
The roof-tree of the world.

But never since your little feet
Pattered among the stones
Have ye e’er heard the ocean roar
Or sing its undertones.

What mystic impulse, then, has brought
Your pinions to our West?
Why thought ye on our scraps of sand
To find a home or rest?

Did ye but follow on the march
That changed the world’s rude face,
First scattering broadcast the seeds
Of our great Aryan race?

Or was it that ye longed to see,
Far down the setting flame,
The mighty fountains whence Aral
And your own Caspian came?

So may we wing our searching course,
And guide our lines of flight,
To the great deeps which still have left
Some little pools of light.

[*•* The sand grouse (*Syrhaptes Paradoxus*) inhabits the deserts of Central Asia from the Caspian to the Wall of China. It is a bird of immense powers of flight, ranging for thousands of miles in vast flocks over the great spaces which afford it food and water. In 1863 some strange migratory impulse brought numerous coveys to Western Europe, and to the British Isles. This year (1888) a similar impulse has brought them here in much greater numbers; and in numerous localities they are supposed to be breeding. Its plumage is very beautiful, closely resembling the colours of the desert. The feet are very peculiar, having only three toes, and these small, and glued together close up to the claws.]



Our Camp in the Atlas.

HOW I REACHED MY HIGHEST POINT IN THE ATLAS.

By JOSEPH THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF "THROUGH MASAI LAND," ETC., ETC.

MY prospects of reaching the mountain of Ogdimt were far from promising on that morning of July in which I found myself within a day's march of my goal. Abdarachman, my interpreter, servant, and cook for the time being, had with characteristic treachery and cunning attempted to set the natives against us and stop our further advance into the dreaded mountains. Happily his evil machinations had been found out just in time, and he himself been scotched, though unfortunately not killed. My sole reliance was in my faithful Jew, Shalum, and, to a lesser extent, the Moor, Zemrani. My soldier-guide had received positive orders not to allow us to go farther into the mountains than Erduz, the point we had just reached, so his opposition had to be overcome.

So far I had told no one where I meant to go. To throw my followers off the scent I had taken a very circuitous route, and struck

upon the road to Ogdimt by a back-door. Before me lay the snow-streaked peaks and massive outlines of the central axis of the Atlas—a range that for nearly two thousand years had been seen by Europeans, but hardly ever crossed or ascended during the whole of that period. It had been my unique privilege to traverse the main axis in three different places, and now I had come to make a fourth attempt, and also to break the record in the matter of height, by the ascent of the prominent peak of Ogdimt, the highest point between the Wad Amsmiz and the Atlantic.

On the evening of the 8th I had sat solitarily wondering how my objects were to be achieved in the face of suspicious and fanatical mountaineers, and with two of my small party of four steeped in treachery and cowardice. The shadows had crept up the frowning barren rocks till all was dark. The temperature at our elevation of 6,000 feet had rapidly fallen, till I was glad to wander

back to my camp fire, wrap myself in my rug and chew the cud of my somewhat gloomy thoughts. Difficulties and a spice of danger are often to the traveller stimulating excitements, but when they have to be met with treachery and cowardice in the camp, they are calculated to give even the most cheerful and sanguine of individuals some uncommonly bad half-hours. It was so with me on this occasion, and I bitterly contrasted in my mind the hopefulness and confidence with which I had faced infinitely greater difficulties and dangers with Zanzilbaris, with the feelings I now experienced at finding myself so helpless before the evil machinations of one or two Moorish servants.

These thoughts kept me long awake as I lay wrapped in my rug on the hard ground, canopied by a gigantic overarching walnut-tree, my eyes sometimes attracted to the stars seen through the branches, more often to the fire-lit face of Abdarachman, for whom I wished many unutterable things. It is impossible, however, to travel all day and remain awake all night, especially in a bracing mountain atmosphere, and in time the not unpleasant rush of the stream close at hand and the drowsy sound of sighing leaves sent me into oblivion, where Abdarachman could not come to disturb me, nor the hard ground make my sleep less sound.

At daybreak I awoke with dew-washed face, refreshed and braced up to encounter, with renewed courage, the physical difficulties of the mountains, the suspicions of the mountaineers, and the opposition of my own men.

A cup of tea and a couple of eggs disposed of, I asked Shalum the way to Ogdimt. This was my first intimation of the goal I had in view, and every one stood speechless, though Shalum instinctively pointed out the way. The attractive expression disappeared from Abdarachman's face, and rage and fright expressed themselves in his chameleon eyes. Our soldier-guide in time found voice and proceeded to protest with voluble energy against any attempt to proceed further. He quoted the governor's order. In my calmest but most determined manner I told him that the governor's orders were matters of the utmost indifference to me, that he himself could go back if he pleased, but that to Ogdimt I would go. The soldier, however, dared not leave me. He wept, implored, cursed, and generally comported himself like a madman, but for sole answer I mounted my mule and moved Ogdimt-wards.

That the enterprise was a dangerous one was made evident by the blank faces of Shalum and Zemrani, who showed no great alacrity in following me. Abdarachman looked as if nothing would give him greater pleasure than putting his knife in me. For a time the guide followed me, laying hold of my clothes entreating, even threatening me, but I was immovable, and if I regarded him at all it was but to show my contempt for both him and his master. Finding all his arts in vain he was fain to mount his donkey, never ceasing for over an hour to curse his fate, and calling upon Allah, the Prophet, and the saints to stop me. Abdarachman with more malice was overheard trying to comfort him by an expression of a hope that this time I would be killed and release them from further service with such a cursed infidel. That, however, was poor comfort to the soldier, as my death would mean his incarceration for life in a horrible dungeon however innocent he might be.

That there was some little danger in penetrating to Ogdimt, however, was made apparent when even Shalum and Zemrani, on our arrival at the foot of the main axis, refused to budge another step till I loaded my rifle, guns, and revolver, and held them ready for action. Thus prepared for whatever might happen, we set ourselves to scale the excessively steep crest of the central mass of the range which so far we had only skirted.

We had not ascended more than a thousand feet above the mountain step or terrace of Erduz, when we found ourselves enveloped in a dense mist. Our men ceased their talk, even the soldier sank into silence, as we slowly zigzagged upward and penetrated deeper and deeper into the all-enveloping mist, which might also prove to them their shroud and winding-sheet. For over an hour and a half more we continued the ascent, seeing almost nothing but ourselves appearing and disappearing in the grey mist. At the end of that time, however, we were delighted to see a gradual lighting up of our surroundings, and in half an hour we emerged from the cloud zone and found an intensely clear blue sky overhead, and underneath one of the most weirdly beautiful and striking spectacles I have ever seen.

The monotonous grey mist through which we had passed stretched out before us in an illimitable ghostly sea of tumbling billows, breaking in snow-white foam. From this fleecy expanse of dazzling white the

main axis of the Atlas rose sharply defined, its frowning mass in marked contrast to the sea of clouds, though patches and streaks of snow still defied the summer sun. From the central ridge a number of spurs projected towards the north, forming jutting headlands and promontories, between which the snowy clouds penetrated like so many arms of the sea. That nothing should be wanting to complete the illusion, the cloud billows driven before a morning breeze dashed themselves against the apparent precipitous rocky coast-line and were transformed into the most perfect resemblance of spray and foam as they crept up the dark mountain sides. The whole scene was made more impressive, more spectral, by the preternatural silence which prevailed. Such a combination of the weird, the beautiful, and the grand I have never seen.

Gradually, as I stood giving myself up to the influence of the marvellous spectacle, the fog began to lift, though almost imperceptibly, dissipated by the morning breeze and the fast, ever-increasing heat of the sun. One or two of the more prominent elevations of the lower mountain terraces peeped out from the encircling cloud wreaths, and showed themselves like black rocks and islands, round which the ghostly billows dashed and foamed, though to the ear came neither roar nor murmur.

I could have dearly wished to sit and watch the slowly changing scene, and the disrobing of all the features of the hidden landscape below—the grim mountain ranges, the terraced valleys and glens, the gleaming torrents, and the picturesque Berber villages perched on rock or steep hillside; but we had still far to go, and dangers and difficulties lay in our way, so, after hurriedly photographing the scene in the hope of fixing on paper some of its fascinating aspects, I resumed my tramp.

Soon we reached the Tizi Nslit, the pass which leads over the Atlas range to the district of Ogdimt. The landscape panorama which now held us enthralled was of a very different character from the one we had just turned from. To the south and south-west no clouds threw the glamour of another world over a magnificent assemblage of sharp, barren mountain ridges, profound gorges, and glens, all grouped round one grand central mass, which, snow-streaked and commanding, reared its massive head far above the surrounding mountains. That central mass was the mountain of Ogdimt, my immediate goal.

My men made one more attempt to turn

me back at this point with kindly representations of the wildness of the independent Berbers who occupied Ogdimt. Here the long cuttle-fish arms of the government could not reach, and nothing would give the mountaineers more pleasure than cutting the throat of one who to them would appear not only as a spy, but as an infidel.

Arguments and warnings like these had often been dunned in my ears, but, as before, I remained deaf and set my face towards Ogdimt. From the pass of Nslit a gradually deepening glen led downward to the inhabited zone and the headwaters of the Wad Nyfis. Beyond its cañon-like depth and narrowness, and its grim and enclosing mountain walls, the glen presented no feature specially worthy of note, though there were places where we had some uncomfortable half minutes in skirting precipices and ascending or descending places verging on the impassable.

After a time we crossed a wall-like ridge, and entered a glen running parallel to that of the Tizi Nslit. It was with no small difficulty we reached the bed of this glen, but thereafter our way was comparatively easy as we rode down among cultivated terraces and through groves of walnuts and almonds, getting peeps here and there of strangely situated Berber villages, stuck on the steep mountain sides like swallows' nests against a weathered and ruined wall.

My men wanted me to stop at the first village we came to, but that did not suit my purposes, and I doggedly held on my way, though not without fear that the villagers might turn us back or end my further progress in an even more unpleasant fashion. No such disagreeable incident occurred, however, though it was evident from the demeanour of the natives that they were extremely suspicious of my intentions, and were not quite sure how to receive the first Christian who had ever ventured into their mountain fastnesses.

Some time after mid-day we reached the noisy stream of the Wad Nyfis, and on its banks I camped under shady walnut-trees and hemmed in by frowning mountain precipices. Matters looked far from promising. Nobody came to speak to us except an old man, who was sent to inquire our objects in venturing into those parts and generally to take note of us and our doings. From among the rocks and trees, however, armed men could be seen peering out, keeping a close watch upon us, and making us feel distinctly uncomfortable as we thought of possible "pot shots." My men thought it more than uncomfortable—

dangerous, in fact—as people from the plain were looked upon in the light of enemies by the mountaineers. It was therefore more than the cold breeze from the snow-streaked mountains which caused them to sit doubled up, the picture of wretchedness, awaiting what Allah might send them, and no doubt wondering what heinous sins they had committed that He had doomed them to be dragged at the heels of a hated Christian into these wild and dangerous parts. Shalum was the least concerned of the party, accustomed as he was, in his character of Jewish trader, to venture with impunity into the worst parts of the Atlas.

If we had had something to eat we might have taken a more cheerful view of our situation, but nothing was forthcoming, and an empty stomach does not dispose one to take a sanguine view of things. Happily towards evening the situation somewhat improved. One or two villagers came into our camp, and these were cajoled and bribed into bringing us some eggs, rancid butter, barley-meal scones, and walnuts, on which we made a sparing meal.

For the first time since we left Mogador, we were able to indulge in a splendid camp fire, a luxury which would have delighted the heart of my young companion, Mr. Harold Crichton-Browne, whom I had left behind at Amsmiz suffering from the effects of a scorpion sting. So far charcoal fires, which required the aid of a bellows, had not realised his ideal of a camp fire.

As the night passed on I withdrew from the cheerful blaze, and in the privacy of my tiny tent sought to solve the problem how I was to reach the top of that mountain mass which lay so tantalisingly near me and yet seemed so unattainable, thanks to the excitable and suspicious character of the people, and the laziness, treachery, and cowardice of some of my men.

My cogitations brought me no consolation, however, and I could only make myself cheerful by reiterating to myself that "It had to be ascended somehow."

That "somehow" was still undefined on turning out of my rug—I cannot say my bed—next morning. To give up the attempt was out of the question, however. I could not consult with my men, that would have insured failure. With Shalum alone I unfortunately could not hold converse, still some attempt had to be made at once, as the entire day would require to be devoted to the task.

At length I called the old man who

had visited us the day previous. I explained to him that I wanted to collect some medicinal herbs which I had been told grew on the slopes of these mountains. To this he objected at once. No stranger was ever allowed to go there, and all the people in the different glens were at constant feud and looking out for whomsoever they could shoot. The sight of some dollars made him take a more hopeful view of the situation, however, and, to my delighted surprise, he offered to take me to a shoulder of the mountain which he pointed out to me. That was all I wanted. Once away from the village, and Abdarachman and the soldier left behind, I felt sure of attaining my object.

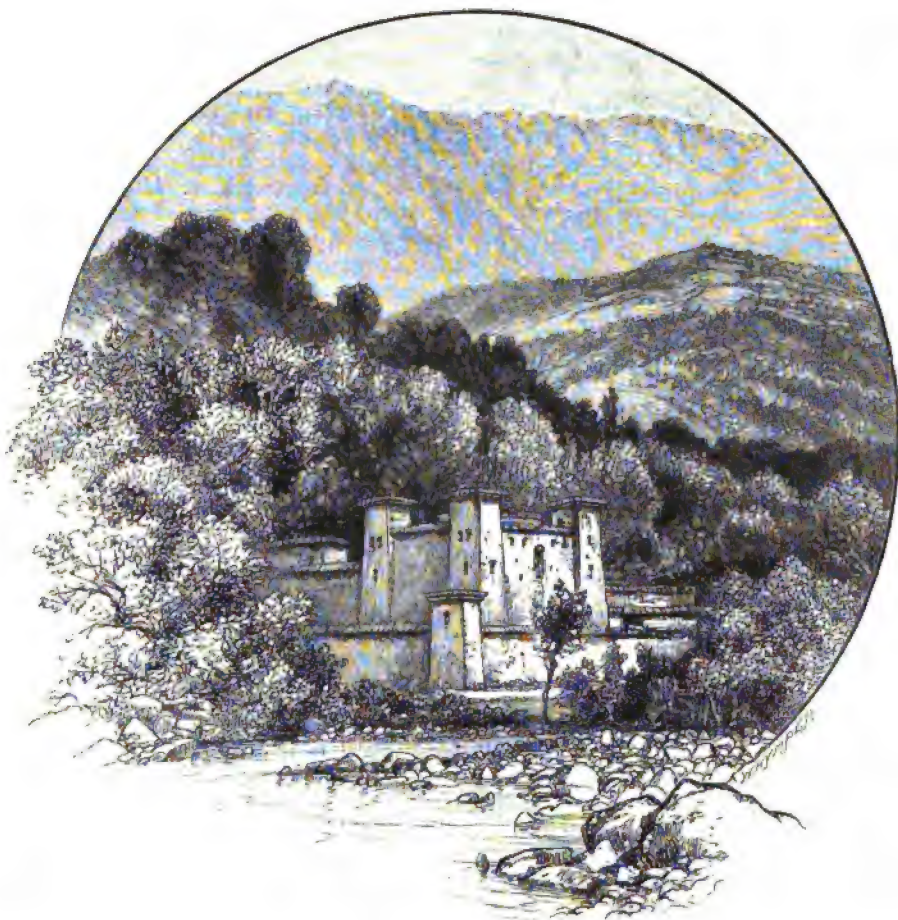
The bargain was clenched at once, and taking with me only Shalum and the soldier, I started off accompanied by our old Berber friend and a companion, an arrangement I did not so much like. Crossing the stream we at once commenced the steep ascent of the sharp ridge which ran east from the central mass and divides the upper course of the Wad Nyfis. I pushed on with a certain feverish energy, trying my lungs and limbs to the utmost. To my delight I soon discovered that the soldier was lagging wearily behind, the result largely of his bang smoking. With well-simulated commiseration for his weakness, I stopped, and taking my rifle from him, told him he might go back to the camp. Suspecting no trick he gladly turned down the mountain. I was now free of my chief danger, and for the first time assured of my success. My guides were ahead, and with a look at Shalum and a nod at the peak overhead I apprised him of my intention. Shalum smiled grimly, and for answer buckled up his voluminous clothes a little more, and took the rifle from me.

Half-way up the steep shoulder of the ridge, the view of the end of the Wad Nyfis glen looked very striking. From our camp the stream divided and spread itself out in a semicircle of radiating torrents, cut off from each other by narrow ridges which broadened and heightened till merged in the semicircle of snow-streaked mountains which circumscribed the view and formed the watershed. So complete was the semicircle, so regular the radiation of the stream and ridges from a small central hill, that I was irresistibly set a-thinking of a cyclopean wheel, of which the hill was the hub, the ridges, the giant spokes running into the great rim. All the streams were sharply marked out by fringing walnut-trees

and green terraces, above or among which stood picturesquely situated villages, the whole in refreshing contrast to the barren grey ridges on which hardly any vegetation found a footing or hid the jagged metamorphic rocks or their weathered débris.

In two hours we ascended 4,000 feet, and

had attained an elevation of about 9,000. We were here on the crest of the sharp ridge, and from it I was delighted to get a good view of the Sous Valley and the glen of the Wad Nyfis, from which I had been driven a week before by the Kaid or governor of the district, but I could laugh at him now.



Fortified Residence of a Berber Sheik.

At this point our guides sat down with the air of men who had got to their farthest limit and meant it to be mine also. To this I made no remonstrance. Happily Shalum was one of those men to whom a wink and a nod were sufficient to convey no end of things, and by that simple means I told him, "You wait here for a time with these two men, while I, on pretence of collecting

plants and beetles, make for the peak;" and he, with his cunning Jewish eyes, told me to "leave it to him and he would pick me up."

I would not, perhaps, have started off with such a light heart if I had known how the pass over into Sous was infested by robbers on the outlook for chance travellers, as well as by the armed sentinels who con-

tinually kept watch on the passes and glens. As long as I was in sight of my guides I was assiduous in my search for beetles and plants, but soon I got a ridge between me and them, and then I literally took to my heels and ran along the ridge of the grassy slope for quite half a mile. No one was yet in sight, but I soon desisted. Shalum hurriedly following up and alone. He rejoined me as I approached the pass which leads from Ogdint to Sous, the track appearing like a slender thread traversing the ridge and leading into a deep tortuous glen draining into the Sous River.

I could not learn from Shalum how he had got away from the guides, but he made it clear to me that there was still danger of being stopped besides danger to our lives, and he hurried me on till it seemed as if we were running a race. Without breaking into a run we tramped along at our utmost walking rate determined that we would keep a good distance between the mountaineers and ourselves.

As we reached the pass, Shalum, who was fully conversant with the dangers of the country, placed himself ostentatiously at my side, holding my express rifle ready for instant use, while by voice and gesture he hounded me to greater exertion. I laughed at the time at his precautions, though touched by his solicitude on my behalf. And yet his presence and the ready rifle probably saved my life, for at that very moment, all unconscious to myself, I was under the cover of a mountaineer's gun, who, hidden behind a rock, watched my passing. In spite of Shalum's precaution one of us would probably have dropped before the robber's fire, but meanwhile our guides had discovered our flight, and at that moment had raised a tremendous hue and cry behind us. We turned but to see where they were, and then gave renewed speed to our movements—not so much that we were afraid of them, but in case they got assistance to stop us. That this fear was not without grounds we soon discovered on looking round and seeing our pursuers joined by two other men, who seemed to have sprung from the ground. These were two Ogdint robbers, who had been on the point of shooting us from behind a rock near which we had passed.

For a time our way was comparatively easy, along the crest of the ridge leading towards the peak, and we made splendid progress. This, however, ended abruptly, and to our dismay we found ourselves confronted by a jagged piece of limestone rock,

projecting, like a gigantic saw, from the back of the ridge. For a moment we despaired being able to pass, but, happily, with some difficulty and danger we succeeded in getting over the nasty obstacle.

We now began to feel comparatively safe, as our guides and their friends had rather lost on us, though they never ceased to gesticulate wildly and scream vociferously to us to stop or come back. Still Shalum, who had fallen behind me some distance, kept urging me to keep pegging away; and peg away I did as if for dear life, though the exertion was frightful at the elevation of over 10,000 feet we had now attained. After crossing the jagged crystalline limestone barrier, a terribly steep part lay before us. My legs were trembling with the unusual exertion, while the rarefied condition of the atmosphere made breathing painful. This steep part over we need fear no opposition, however, and therefore I went for it with all the will and energy that I possessed.

By slow degrees, with many short stops, this step was accomplished, and I fell rather than sat down beside a patch of snow, of which I eagerly ate to assuage my thirst. Shortly after Shalum rejoined me, and later still the guides, foaming and full of wrath, but thanks to their age more exhausted than I was.

What made me feel rather uneasy was the disappearance of the two men who had joined them at the pass. Could they have gone to get more men? and was I going to run into a trap? such were the thoughts which shaped themselves in my mind.

Meanwhile my escort by turns entreated and threatened to get me to turn back, but seeing me determined and implacable, and feeling their inability to stop me, they yielded to the necessities of the situation and the seducing influence of a couple of dollars, and gave up all opposition. Still I was suspicious, and I lost no time in recommencing the ascent of the remaining and most difficult part, though it seemed but the work of an hour. We had not well set out, however, before we were confronted with the very nastiest piece of rock-climbing I had ever met in the whole course of my mountaineering. This was another jagged outcrop of weathered crystalline limestone, projecting in dangerous teeth, where a fall of a few feet would have meant the most terrible wounds. To evade this barrier meant a considerable descent, and I therefore tried to cross it, as in the other case;

but after a painful and perilous attempt I was forced to give it up on reaching an overhanging precipice over which it was absolutely impossible to pass. To return was now about as difficult, but happily, after much loss of time and a dangerous descent, I got to the bottom of the rocks. I had now to struggle over a nasty talus of loose debris, lying at such a high angle that at each step I slipped down the hill, and more than once I thought I would have gone down to the bottom of the mountain in the centre of an avalanche of stones.

The limestone precipices thus passed, I had to recommence the ascent, a task of no small difficulty in the loose, slippery rubbish. Moreover, I now felt the result of the race I had run to escape from my keepers. I had overstrained both limbs and lungs. This combined with the ever-increasing height made each step a painful toil, so that every few moments I had to sit down to recover myself.

All this time I was alone, as Shalum and the natives had taken their own roads and been lost sight of. After a series of determined spurts I thought my task was nearly accomplished, when to my dismay I found myself at the foot of a new precipice 150 feet in height, which seemed not only impregnable but shut off the view in the direction I was chiefly anxious to survey. As I sat down in disgust and disappointment to recover breath, my almost despairing gaze fell upon a narrow rift in the rock which I determined to try, relying upon the sharp projections and the undiminished strength of my arms to bring me safely to the top.

The climb was safely accomplished only, however, to find a new disappointment awaiting me. I had struck the wrong peak. Beyond me lay another and a higher point. Nearly exhausted as I was I would fain have given in. As it was I sat down to consider whether or not the attainment of the other peak was worth the trouble, and whether it would not be enough in the interests of science simply to estimate the remaining height. As I carefully cogitated these important matters Shalum got up to me, shortly after followed by the guides and three wicked-looking tribesmen. Shalum showed himself very uneasy, and warned me by his looks to be on my guard. As if to pass the time I looked at my revolver and opened and shut the breech of my rifle. At the same time I gave the chief one among them a franc to smooth matters if possible, as I

knew that a rifle shot would make every man in the radiating glens rush to arms. The sight of our weapons, our air of confidence, and the slight *douceur* of money did all that was required, and the banditti, for such they were, left us, though we kept them under watch till well away.

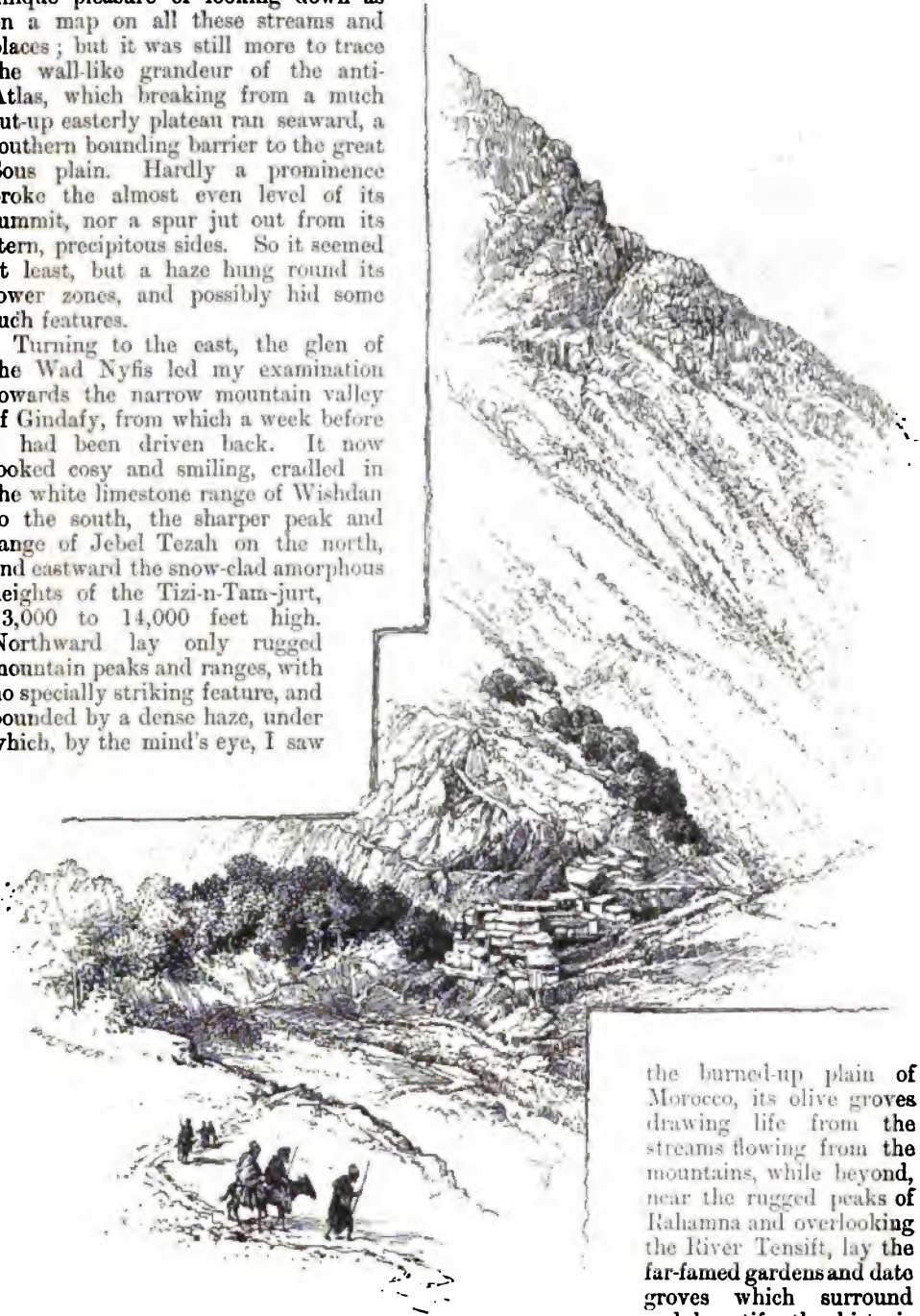
Somewhat recovered by the rest, we now struggled up the crowning peak, and exactly at mid-day I reached the top. My first care was to throw myself down for a quarter of an hour to recover from the terrible climb, or rather from the earlier exertions of the ascent. Then I gathered myself together and began leisurely to examine my surroundings.

The most varied and magnificent view presented along the entire range of the Atlas lay spread out before me. Immediately around me the metamorphic rocks which run from the central mass of the range were cut into a wild series of gorges and glens, divided by sharp mountain spurs and ridges here and there rising into snow-streaked peaks. Everywhere desolation, barrenness, and preternatural stillness. Hardly a patch of green gave variety to the monotonous drifts of shaly debris and the jagged ribs of rock which protruded above the surface. It was only on lower levels that dark masses of *callitris* and stunted trees of the evergreen oak found a footing, while along the bottoms of the glens terraces raised with stupendous labour added refreshing bits of green and showed where industrious Berbers exacted a scanty subsistence from the bosom of mother earth. Numerous villages clustered against the steep mountain sides, and under the blaze of the African sun, and with the proximity of walnut and almond groves, seemed almost desirable residences.

From my immediate rugged surroundings my gaze naturally turned southward and roamed with delight over the almost unknown Sous Valley, which seen from my commanding elevation spread all its physical features in one striking sheet 10,000 feet below me. From among the massive ranges to the south-east the Sous River could be seen emerging and winding in a quivering silver thread through the plain seawards. From either side numerous streams showed themselves meandering to augment its volume, here lost in dark green patches which spoke of date and olive groves, or glowing in sections where they glided along the yellow burned-up grass plains. Curling smoke indicated where towns and villages stood,

and Shalum, proud of his knowledge of the country, pointed out such places as Iminedha, Talkjunt, and Ras-el-Wad. It was much to have the unique pleasure of looking down as on a map on all these streams and places; but it was still more to trace the wall-like grandeur of the anti-Atlas, which breaking from a much cut-up easterly plateau ran seaward, a southern bounding barrier to the great Sous plain. Hardly a prominence broke the almost even level of its summit, nor a spur jut out from its stern, precipitous sides. So it seemed at least, but a haze hung round its lower zones, and possibly hid some such features.

Turning to the east, the glen of the Wad Nyfis led my examination towards the narrow mountain valley of Gindafy, from which a week before I had been driven back. It now looked cosy and smiling, cradled in the white limestone range of Wishdan to the south, the sharper peak and range of Jebel Tezali on the north, and eastward the snow-clad amorphous heights of the Tizi-n-Tam-jurt, 13,000 to 14,000 feet high. Northward lay only rugged mountain peaks and ranges, with no specially striking feature, and bounded by a dense haze, under which, by the mind's eye, I saw



the burned-up plain of Morocco, its olive groves drawing life from the streams flowing from the mountains, while beyond, near the rugged peaks of Rahamna and overlooking the River Tensift, lay the far-famed gardens and date groves which surround and beautify the historic city of Morocco.

A Berber Village.

Having revelled in the varied aspects of this magnificent panorama for some time, I had to recall myself to the more prosaic duties demanded of me. Having ascertained to my satisfaction that I had reached nearly 2,000 feet higher in the Atlas than any previous explorer—the height being 12,500 feet—and taken a round of angles for mapping purposes, it was necessary to recommence my descent without loss of time.

Keeping round the head of the glen (not daring to return the same road), we descended some 4,000 feet with great rapidity,

till we reached the bottom of a deep gorge, in which the snow still lay to a great depth, though beneath ran the headstream of the Wad Nyfis, the snow forming a beautiful but treacherous tunnel. At Ing, the first village we reached, we were received with profound astonishment, but happily Shalum discovered a trading acquaintance, and thanks to his good offices, we got a little milk and some walnuts, which greatly refreshed me.

Finally, after sunset, we safely reached our camp and relieved the fears of our men, though we did not lessen the excite-



View of Ogdimt from the Tizi Nalit.

ment and suspicion of the natives, who were now convinced that we were spies. The villagers kept clear of us and brought us no food, and I was fain to content myself with some more walnuts, and then turn in, more weary than I had ever been by a seventy-mile walk in Central Africa, though more from the over-pressure on lungs and limbs, than from the actual work achieved.

On the following morning we left Ogdimt with pardonable alacrity, for it had become too hot for us, and a diet of walnuts, though doubtless nourishing, was more than my gluttonous men could stand, or than I exactly relished. We recrossed the mountains to

Erduz, and taking a direct road over the lower terraces we arrived on the same day safe and sound at Amsmiz, to find all well.

The governor fumed and stormed on hearing where we had gone in defiance of his orders. He threw the innocent soldier into prison, from which I got him out with the utmost difficulty. He threatened Shalum with all sort of penalties, but that worthy Jew figuratively wrapped himself in the British flag, and dared him to touch a hair on his head.

Two days later we re-entered the city of Morocco, where from the house-tops in the cool of the evening I could comfortably look back towards the pass to Ogdimt.

SHOOTING STARS.

By SIR R. S. BALL, LL.D., F.R.S., ASTRONOMER ROYAL FOR IRELAND.

FIRST PAPER.

"See! a star falls!" said the people.
From the sky a star is falling."

EVERY one who has occasionally taken a nocturnal walk in the open country will probably have seen what is called "a shooting star." Perhaps I might rather say that unless the observer be very inattentive he will have noticed during various opportunities dozens, or scores, or hundreds of these objects, long or short, bright or faint.

For the due exhibition of a shooting star, that part of the sky where it is displayed should, of course, be free from cloud, and the silvery streak will seem all the more vivid if the moon be absent. No telescope is needed. This is, indeed, the one branch of astronomical observation in which the unaided eye can advantageously dispense with optical assistance.

Our present knowledge as to the natural history of the shooting stars has been mainly acquired during the last hundred years. The first important step in the comprehension of these bodies was to recognise that the brilliant flash of light was caused by some object which came from without and plunged into our air. This was known at the end of the last century, largely by the labours of the philosopher Chladni in 1794. But even his sagacity did not prevent him from making some serious mistakes about the nature of shooting stars. It has been reserved for the present generation to organize a multitude of facts into a connected whole, and thus contribute a very interesting chapter to modern astronomy.

Could an ordinary shooting star tell us its actual history, the narrative would run somewhat as follows:—

"I was a small bit of material, chiefly, if not entirely, composed of substances which are formed from the same chemical elements as those you find on the earth. Not improbably I may have had some iron in my constitution, and also sodium and carbon, to mention only a few of the most familiar elements. I only weighed an ounce or two, perhaps more, perhaps less—but you could probably have held me in your closed hand, or put me into your waistcoat pocket. You would have described me a sort of small stone, yet I think you would have added that I was very unlike the ordinary stones

with which you were familiar. I have led a life of the most extraordinary activity; I have never known what it was to stay still; I have been ever on the move. Through the solitudes of space I have dashed along with a speed which you can hardly conceive. Compare my ordinary motion with your most rapid railway trains, place me in London beside the Scotch express to race to Edinburgh; my journey will be done ere the best locomotive ever built could have drawn the train out of the station. Pit me against your rifle bullets, against the shots from your one-hundred-ton guns; before the missile from the mightiest piece of ordnance ever fired shall have gone ten yards I have gone 1,000 yards. I do not assert that my speed has been invariable—sometimes it has been faster, sometimes it has been slower; but I have generally done my million miles a day at the very least. Such has been my career, not for hours or days, but for years and for centuries, probably for untold ages. And the grand catastrophe in which I vanished has been befitting to a life of such transcendent excitement and activity; I have perished instantly, and in a streak of splendour. In the course of my everlasting wanderings I have occasionally passed near some of the great bodies in the heavens; I have also not improbably in former years hurried by that globe on which you live. On those occasions you never saw me, you never could have seen me, not even if you had used the mightiest telescope which has ever been directed to the heavens. But too close an approach to your globe was at last the occasion of my great transformation. You must remember that you live on the earth buried beneath a great ocean of air. This air extends above your head to a height of some two hundred miles, or even more, though it gradually becomes lighter and less dense with every increase of altitude. Viewed from outside space your earth would be seen to be a great ball, everywhere swathed with this thick coating of air. Beyond the appreciable limits of the air stretches the open space, and there it is that my prodigious journeys have been performed. Out there we have

a freedom to move of which you who live in a dense atmosphere have no conception. Whenever you attempt to produce rapid motion on the earth, the resistance of your air largely detracts from the velocity that would be otherwise attainable. Your quick trains are impeded by air, your artillery ranges are shortened by it. Movements like mine would be impossible in air like yours.

"And this air it is which has ultimately compassed my destruction. So long as I merely passed near your earth, but kept clear of that deadly net which you have spread, in the shape of your atmosphere, to entrap the shooting stars, all went well with me. I felt the ponderous mass of the earth, and I swerved a little in compliance with its attraction; but my supreme velocity preserved me, and I hurried past unscathed. Probably I had many narrow escapes from capture during the lapse of those countless ages in which I have been wandering through space. But at last I approached once too often to the earth. On this fatal occasion my course led me to graze your globe so closely that I could not get by without traversing the higher parts of the atmosphere. Accordingly, a frightful catastrophe immediately occurred. Not to you; it did you no harm; indeed, quite the contrary. My dissolution gave you a pleasing and instructive exhibition. It was then, for the first time, that you were permitted to see me, and you called me a shooting star or a meteor.

"You are quite familiar with the disasters associated with the word collision. Some of the most awful accidents you have ever heard of arose from the collision of two railway trains on land or of two ships in the ocean. You are thus able to realise the frightful consequences of a collision between two heavy bodies. But in the collision which annihilated me I did not impinge against any other heavy body. I only struck the upper and extremely rare layers of your atmosphere. I was, however, moving with a speed so terrific that the impulse to which I was exposed when I passed from empty space even into thin air was sufficient for my total disruption.

"Had the speed with which I entered your atmosphere been more moderate—had it been, for instance, not greater than that of a rifle bullet, or even only four or five times as fast, this plunge would not have been fatal to me. I could have pierced through with comparative safety, and then have tumbled down in my original form on the ground. Indeed, on rare occasions some-

thing of this kind does actually happen. Perhaps it is fortunate for you dwellers on the earth that we shooting stars do generally become dissipated in the upper air. Were it not so, the many thousands of us which would be daily pelting down on your earth would introduce a new source of anxiety into your lives. Fortunately for you, we dart in at a speed of some twenty miles or more a second. Unfortunately for us, we learn that it is the 'pace which kills.'

"When from the freedom of open space I darted into the atmosphere, I rubbed past every particle of air which I touched in my impetuous flight, and in doing so I experienced the usual consequence of friction—I was warmed by the operation. If you rub a button on a board it will become warm. If you rub two pieces of wood together you can warm them, and you could even produce fire if you possessed the cunning skill of some people whom you are accustomed to speak of as savages. Nor need you be surprised to find that I was warmed by merely rubbing against air. If you visit a rifle range and pick up a fragment of a bullet which has just struck the target you will find it warm; you will even find it so hot that you will generally drop it. Now whence came this heat? The bullet was certainly cold ere the trigger was pulled. No doubt there is some heat developed by the combustion of the gunpowder, but the bullet cannot be much warmed thereby; it is, indeed, protected from the immediate effect of the heat of the powder by the wad. The bullet is partly warmed by the friction of rubbing against the barrel of the rifle, but doubtless it also receives some heat by the friction of the air and some from the consequence of its percussion against the target. You need not, then, wonder how it is that when I am checked by your atmosphere I, too, am heated. Remember that I move a hundred times as swiftly as your rifle bullet, and that the heat developed in the checking of the motion of a body increases enormously when the velocity of the body increases. Your mathematicians can calculate how much. They tell you that the heat produced will, as they say, vary as the square of the velocity. To give an illustration of what this means, suppose that two rifles were fired at a target, and that the sizes of the bullets and the ranges were the same, but that the charge in one of the rifles was such that its bullet had twice the initial velocity of the other. Then the mathematician will say that the heat de-

veloped during the flight of the rapid bullet might be not alone twice but even four times as great as that developed in the slower bullet. If we could fire two bullets one of which had three times the speed of the other, then, under similar circumstances, the heat generated ere the two bullets were brought to rest would be nine times greater for the more rapidly flying bullet than for the other one. Now you can readily comprehend the immense quantity of heat that will have been produced ere friction could deprive me of a speed of twenty miles a second. That heat not merely warmed me, but I rapidly became red-hot, white-hot, then I melted, even though composed of materials of a most refractory kind. Still friction had much more to do, and it actually drove me off into vapour, and I vanished. You, standing on your earth many miles below, never saw me—never could have seen me—until this supreme moment, when, glowing with an instantaneous fervour, I for a brief second became visible. You shouted, 'Oh! there is a shooting star.'

"Nature knows no annihilation, and though I had been driven off into vapour and the trial by fire had scattered and dispersed me, yet in the lofty heights of the atmosphere those vapours cooled and condensed. They did not, they never could again reunite and reproduce my pristine structure. Here and there in wide diffusion I repassed from the vaporous to the solid form, and in this state I wore the appearance of a streak of minute granules distributed all along the highway I had followed. These granules gradually subsided through the air to the earth. On Alpine snows, far removed from the haunts of men and from the contamination of chimneys, minute particles have been gathered, many of which have unquestionably been derived from the scattered remains of shooting stars. Into the sea similar particles are for ever falling, and they have been subsequently dredged up from profound depths, having subsided through an ocean of water after sinking through an ocean of air.

"The notes by which a sunbeam through a chink in a closed shutter is rendered visible, are no doubt mainly of organic origin, but they must also frequently comprise the meteoric granules. These notes gradually subside upon the tops of your bookcases or into other congenial retreats to form that dust of which good housekeepers have such a horror. It is certain that the great majority of the particles of which ordinary dust is constituted have purely terrestrial sources

which it would be impossible to endow with any romantic interest. It is equally certain that in a loathed dust-heap are many atoms which, considering their celestial origin and their transcendent voyages, would have merited a more honoured resting-place."

The discovery of the height at which the streaks of shooting stars are produced is an important element in obtaining any precise knowledge of these bodies. To determine it requires the joint action of at least two observers situated at stations widely distant. It will thus be seen that the occasions on which such observations can be obtained are mainly fortuitous. We cannot foretell the occurrence of conspicuous shooting stars so as to enable the two observers to arrange a combined system of observations. We can no doubt in certain cases predict the advent of a shower of shooting stars, but then the very profusion in which the meteors appear tends to baffle any preconceived agreement, because it is so difficult to insure that identical streaks shall be observed at the two stations. It does, however, sometimes happen that a shooting star observed in one place can by a time comparison be proved to be identical with a shooting star observed in another place. If the two observers have each possessed the skill and taken the pains to note accurately the spot of the heavens where the object appeared, or rather the point either of the beginning or of the termination of its track, then the discovery of its distance is rendered practicable.

It is an interesting application of some few propositions in Euclid to determine the meteor's height from these observations. We shall, however, here be content with describing two special cases, in the first of which the general problem has been somewhat simplified. I shall suppose that an observer at London sees a shooting star, and notices that the luminous streak commences at the point of the heavens exactly over his head. It also happens that an observer who resides at Bristol sees a shooting star, and notices that it lies to the east, and that the point where the streak commences is at an elevation of forty-five degrees, that is half-way from the horizon to the zenith. On subsequent comparison these observers find that their observations were made at the same moment; and as neither of them saw any other shooting star about the same time it is obvious that they must have both observed the same object. We have now to consider a triangle of which the three corners are respectively

London, Bristol, and the shooting star (or rather the point at the commencement of its track). It is plain that this triangle has a right angle and equal sides, and that consequently the distance from London to the shooting star must be the same as from London to Bristol. Thus the height of a shooting star has been found. Of course the observer at London will not usually be so fortunate as to see the object directly over his head, and the observer at Bristol will not often find the angle of elevation to be half a right angle. The calculation therefore will usually be not quite so simple as in the case we have supposed, but it presents no real difficulty.

In addition to this somewhat imaginary illustration I shall mention an actual instance, and I naturally take the most recent meteor that suits my purpose. It is one which has been fully described by the well-known astronomer, Mr. W. F. Denning, who was himself one of the observers, and who afterwards calculated the position of the meteor's track. From his account I gather the following particulars.

A careful observer of these bodies, who resides at Leeds, Mr. D. Booth, was keeping watch on the evening of January 2nd, 1888, when at 10h. 58m. P.M. a splendid meteor, which appeared to him to be as bright as Jupiter, travelled across the heavens, through the constellation Aries, towards the south. On the same evening Mr. Denning, who was on the look out at Bristol, saw the same bright meteor in the northern part of the sky, in the constellation Draco. That the object seen at Leeds and the object seen at Bristol were the same is obvious from the fact that the times noted by the two observers were identical. Nor was there any other bright meteor recorded at either place which would admit of the possibility of confusion. No doubt the parts of the sky in which each observer located the meteor were utterly different. From Leeds it appeared high up in the south-western quarter of the heavens, from Bristol it was seen in the north, almost under the Pole. But the different situations do not imply that there were two distinct objects; they are merely aspects of the same object obtained from widely different points of view. It is, in fact, the very difference between these positions which renders it possible to discover the true situation of the luminous streak.

The point at which the meteor appeared to vanish from Bristol was at an elevation of nearly 30° , a little to the west of north. Lay,

therefore, a map of England on the table, fasten with a pin a piece of thread at Bristol, and then stretch the thread up towards the north at an inclination of one-third of a right angle above the surface of the map. The observation at Bristol then assures us that the vanishing point of the meteor was *somewhere* along that line. To find exactly where we make use of the observation at Leeds, which tells us that the vanishing point of the meteor was towards the south-west. A little study of the map shows us that the line of sight from Bristol to the meteor passes nearly over Chester, and that Chester is south-west from Leeds. Hence we see that the vanishing point of the meteor must have been directly over Chester, and the slope of the incline from Bristol indicates that the height of the meteor must there have been about sixty miles. If any inhabitant of Chester were fortunate enough to have seen that bright meteor on the 2nd of last January he would apparently have seen it terminate at a point exactly over his head.

The terminal point of the meteor is usually much better observed than the initial point. Nor is this a matter for surprise. The attention of an observer is often directed towards the object by a bright light, while he may be looking in quite another direction. He turns round and, of course, follows the glorious object to its close at a point the situation of which he can note accurately. It seems in this case that the meteor was observed at a much earlier part of its flight at Bristol than at Leeds. We may, however, conclude, from a study of both observations, that the body commenced its brilliant career at a point ninety-eight miles high above a spot to the west of Appleby.

We have thus the means of determining the actual path which the meteor has traversed, and I would suggest to the reader that he should construct, for his own information, a little model, which will give him a clear picture of the career of this curious visitor. Put a map of England on a board and stick through it and into the board two straight wires (knitting needles will do admirably), one near Appleby and the other at Chester. A string is then to be stretched from one of these needles to the other, but the heights at which its two ends are to be fastened to the needles will of course depend upon the scale of the map. The little model, that is now before me, is made with the map from Bradshaw's Railway Guide. On the scale of that map ninety-eight miles will be nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Accordingly I have fastened

one end of the string to the knitting needle through Appleby at the height of $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Similarly sixty miles correspond on this map to about 3 inches, and therefore the other extremity of the string is to be secured 3 inches over Chester, and an instructive model is complete. We can at once learn from it the actual length of the meteor's path. The distance between the two extremities of the string is a little over 5 inches, and consequently we see from the scale of the map that the length of flight is over 100 miles. Mr. Denning, from his accurate methods of calculation, states it at 109 miles.

A glance at the model will also explain what might otherwise appear to be paradoxical, and that is the assertion by Mr. Booth at Leeds that the meteor was rather swift, while Mr. Denning from Bristol assures us that the motion was very slow. The apparent discrepancy vanishes when we see how the course of the meteor actually lies. The observer from Leeds sees the celestial rocket moving squarely across his line of sight from right to left. He could hardly have observed it under more favourable circumstances so far as the direction of the motion is concerned. But to the observer at Bristol the aspect of the meteor's path was wholly different. The object was moving towards him. In fact, if we continue the line of flight sufficiently far, we find it sloping downwards to the Bristol Channel, and finally touching earth in Devonshire. From Bristol therefore the track was extremely foreshortened; and consequently during its whole flight the meteor seemed from Bristol to traverse but a comparatively small part of the heavens: to an observer there this motion would seem very slow when compared with such a view of the object as was presented from Leeds. It will also be noted that at the centre of its journey the meteor must have been about 200 miles distant from Bristol, and the great-

ness of this distance is another reason why it should appear to move slowly.

It will be interesting to see whether any confirmation can be obtained from other observers elsewhere of the various facts with regard to this meteor. It was witnessed by Mr. Backhouse at Sunderland; he describes it to have been as bright as the star Sirius, and it appeared near the constellation of Orion. It would lead me too far to pursue this matter, so I shall dismiss it with the remark that these facts can be shown to tally with the path ascertained by the observations at Leeds and at Bristol.

The track of this meteor may be taken as fairly representative of the course pursued by those more splendid shooting stars which are often called fire-balls. They move, however, in every direction. They come from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. There is no hour of the night at which they have not occasionally been seen. Even in daylight it has happened not once or twice, but on several occasions, that a brilliant meteor has forced itself upon our astonished notice. They generally first make their appearance at a height which is between 50 and 100 miles above the ground. They hurry down their inclined path, but generally become extinguished while still at least 20 miles aloft. In their brief career they traverse a mighty path which sometimes, as we have seen, stretches over a few counties. In their more ambitious flights meteors have been known to span a kingdom. Nor are even greater strides unrecorded. The length of a continent may be compared with the track of that terrific meteor of 5th September, 1868, which broke into visibility at an appalling height above the Black Sea, and had not expended its stupendous energy until it passed over the smiling vineyards of France.

(To be continued.)

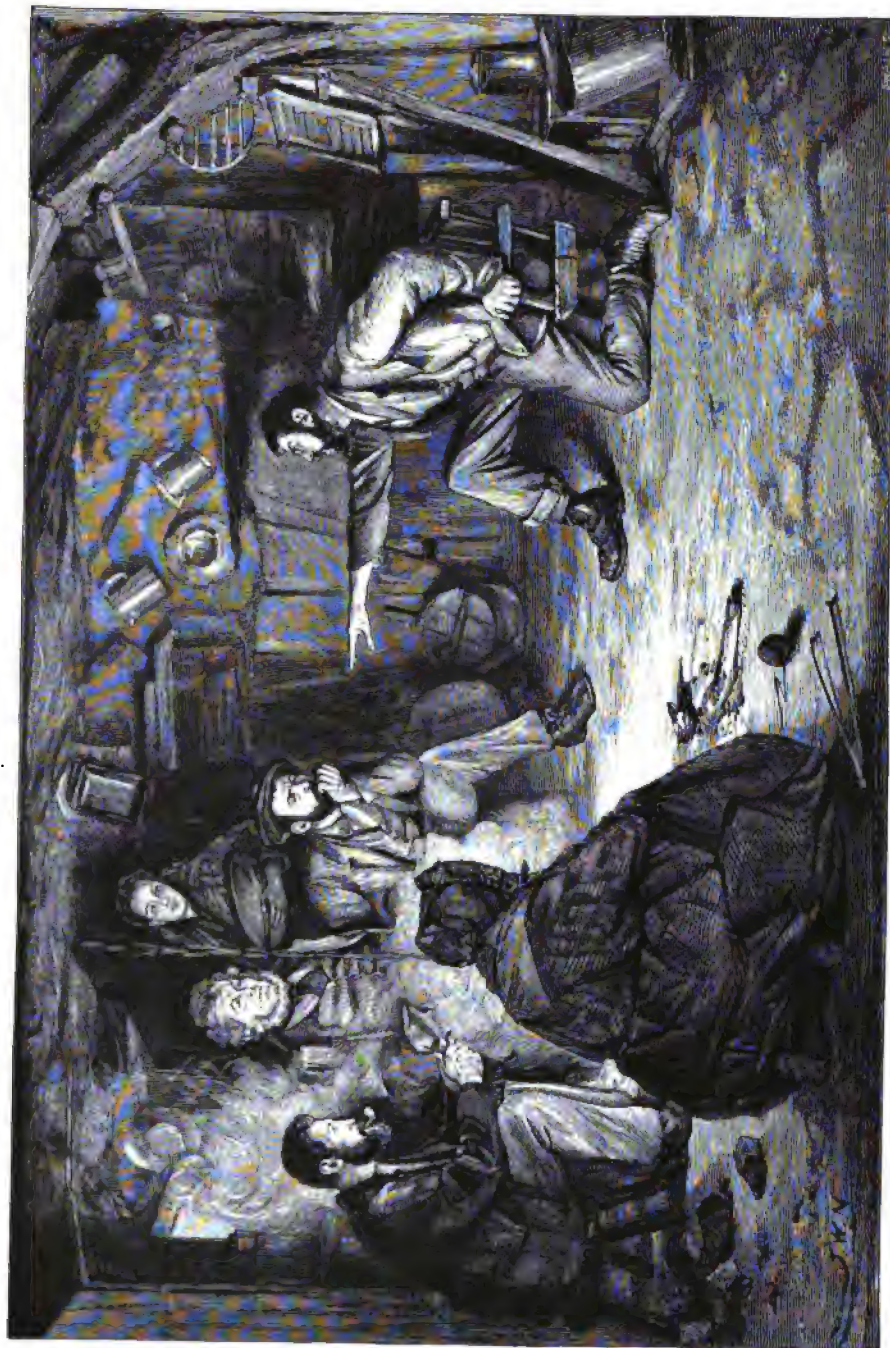
A WINTER NIGHT WITH THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

By "NETHER LOCHABER."

PART I.

THE Highland crofter has of recent years become a rather prominent character in the land. He has claimed the particular notice of the legislature; and, having made known his grievances, a great deal has already been done in amelioration of his condition.

With the political aspect of the question, however, we have here nothing to do. Our object is simply to give our readers a few glimpses of what we may call the fire-side life of the crofter; and as our "interiors," in artists' phrase, are painted from the life,



A HIGHLAND CÈILIDH.

whatever their merits or demerits otherwise, the reader who gives us his attention may depend at least on their fidelity.

It is in the winter season, when the days are shortest and the nights longest, that we think it best to introduce the reader to

the kindly acquaintance of the crofting population of a district with which we have long been familiar—a district which boasts of many old-world bards and seannachies of renown; erstwhile famous too, and famous still, as the home of fair women and brave men. We select the winter season because it is then we are surest to find the people at home, and because of the readier access then than at any other season of the year to the crofter's fireside through the always pleasant and time-honoured institution of the *céilidh*. Of the *céilidh*, we say; a word for which there is no proper equivalent in the English language, but which may be defined as a homely confabulation or fireside colloquy in which few or many may take part. The people of a hamlet arrange to meet on cer-

tain evenings of the week in each other's houses by turns, when, after the local gossip has been duly discussed, the remainder of the long winter's night is devoted to the singing of songs grave or gay, and the telling of weird and wonderful tales, with, by way of variety, now and again a brief interval for a tune on the fiddle or Jew's-harp, which latter instrument most Highlanders—females, too, as well as males—can make discourse very excellent music. Meetings of this kind are known as *céilidhs*, and very delightful meetings they are; for every one present is there to entertain or be

entertained as the tide of song and story may determine; and all are upon honour, as it were, to refrain from saying a word or doing anything in the least degree likely to disturb the peace and harmony of the meeting, there being a very old and well-known

Gaelic saying, frequently repeated in the *céilidh* season, to the effect that a person who by indelicacy of speech or rudeness of conduct breaks up a *céilidh* is by reason of such offence "fitter to be hanged than if he stole a sheep!"

To see for ourselves and thoroughly to understand what these *céilidh* gatherings really are, let us in the name of our crofting township invite the reader to accompany us to the New Year's time *céilidh* to be held this evening in the house of Donald Bán Iasgair—Donald Bane the fisher—so called because he is an ardent disciple of Izaak Walton, and, with the rudest of rods and flies of his own busking, can take a basket of pounder trouts from loch or stream, when others more bravely accoutred with their brass-mounted rods



Boy playing Shinty.

and kaleidoscopic books of flies have thrashed the same waters for an entire day with, in the evening, but half-a-dozen tiniest trout-lets to show for their pains. Arrived at Donald's house, we find the kitchen, always the largest room in the house, thoroughly swept and in tidiest order for our reception. It is a bitterly cold night without, but there is a big blazing fire of peat and birchwood logs on the broad hearth within—a fire specially prepared for such occasions, and called a *teine céilidh*, or *céilidh*-fire; and it is with pleasure we accept the proffered seats of honour close by the kindly blaze in order to

warm ourselves. Earlier in the evening Donald's wife was busy carding wool, and her two rosy-cheeked and really handsome daughters as busy at their spinning-wheels; but these have some time since been put out of the way, and the portly dame, in stiffly-starched, snow-white mutch and a gaily-coloured shawl, is now dressed for the *céilidh*, as are also the daughters, in their own style; and very well they look, with their nicely ironed collars, neatly braided hair, and closely fitting frocks, all of their own spinning, and dyed in the wool with the purple of heather-tops and a brown of *cnotal* of the hills.

By seven o'clock or thereby the people of the *céilidh* have assembled; some thirty or five-and-thirty in number, of whom a few, half-a-dozen perhaps, are from rather distant townships. Amongst these latter are two strapping young fellows, one a shepherd, the other an assistant gamekeeper; and a single glance at Donald's daughters, bright and blushing as Beltane-day morning, as these young fellows enter with lightsome step and

gaily shake hands with us all round, is quite sufficient to make us guess the attraction which has brought them so far, on a night, too, so bitterly cold and stormy, to Donald Ban's *céilidh*. The local gossip of the township, being fortunately unimportant, is quickly disposed of, and then it is that the entertainment proper of the evening begins. The first thing is a round of riddles, which gives occasion to a great deal of ear-scratching and lifting of eyes to the rafters overhead in eager search of the solutions, which when announced are as often as not absurdly inadequate and astray, and give rise to no little laughter and amusement. These Gaelic riddles are mostly in rhymed couplets, and are difficult to render into English; but the following are specimens likely to be propounded on such occasions; those present who have heard them already, and who know the solutions, being considered out of the running, and understood to be on their honour not to tell. "Who is it that goes across the water, and comes from over the water, whose voice is not heard, who cannot speak a word, and who yet can tell us a story?" The answer is a newspaper. "A girl went out between two woods and returned between two waters: what was she doing?" The answer is that she went out with a pair of wooden water stoups empty, one in each hand, and that she returned with them full of water. "Who is it that is always cross and combative, that never wears a coat of his own, but somebody else's?" The answer is a soldier crab; it is always found in a whelk or buckie-shell, with threatening claws protruding through the aperture. "What is that species of capercailzie (literally, horse of the wood) that owns a numerous set of sharpest teeth, whose only food is woollen thread, that is always double-bridled but never saddled, and that can go as fast as the wind, and yet moves not from the same spot?" The answer is a spinning-wheel. Hundreds of better riddles than these go round, for the Gaels of Alba as of Erin have from very early times been great propounders of riddles, but as they cannot be rendered into English without some loss of pith and point, and in many cases cannot be rendered into English at all, we must for the present pass them by.

The riddles ended, Ewen Brocair, the fox-hunter of the district, a bache-

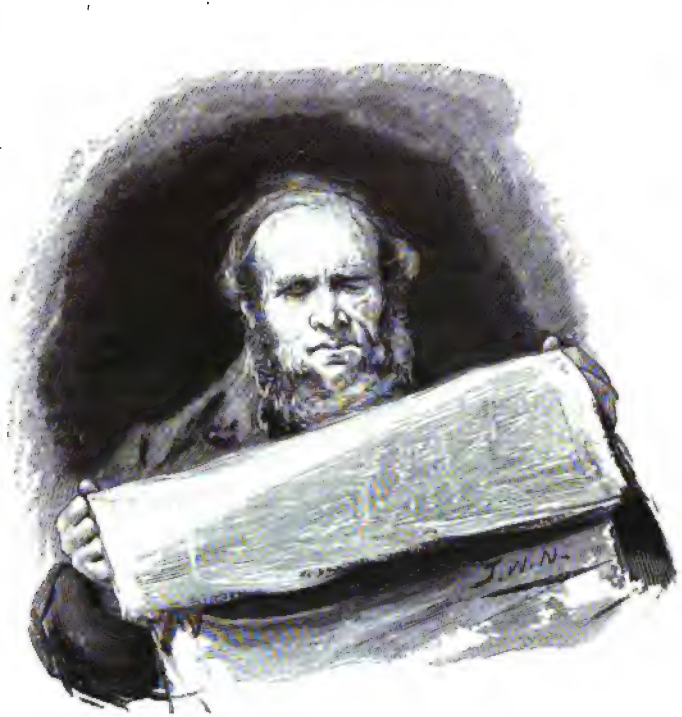


Carding Wool.

lor of middle age, blind of an eye, and with closely cropped head and stubbly beard, which gives him a marvellous resemblance to one of his own terriers, volunteers "a while upon the trumps," as the Gaelic phrase is, a proposition which is received with great favour, for Ewen is a thoroughly good fellow, a prodigious favourite wherever he goes, and at the same time known to be "as masterly a performer on the trumps," so our host puts it, "as is to be found in all the Highlands." Putting his hand in one of his capacious pockets (and capacious they had need to be, as we shall afterwards explain), he takes out a couple of bottle corks of the largest size, to each of which a Jew's harp is closely bound by a bit of string, there being, as we notice, a notch, or narrow furrow

or slit across the head of each cork for the tongue of the trump to lie in comfortably and without fear of damage whilst being carried about in the pockets of one so constantly on the tramp as a Highland fox-hunter, who is out amongst the hills in all sorts of weather, and liable to any number of rude joltings and tumblings as, with dogs at heel, he scrambles up and adown the roughest scaurs and *sgridans*. His Jew's harps, we notice, are of large size; in circumference of bulge and length of neck and breadth of tongue more than twice the size of the tiny school-boy toy trump with which we are all familiar. Taking the trumps, one in each hand, Ewen places them in the corners of his mouth, and using the little finger of either hand as plectra, wherewith to touch the tongue tips, he strikes up "Mackintosh's Lament" in a style that makes you hold your breath in admiration of the exquisitely mellifluous and silvery notes. As he runs through all the intricate "fingering," and many variations of the marvellously suggestive and wildly plaintive melody, you are thoroughly convinced of two things—that there is a wealth of exquisitest music in the Jew's harp for which you never before gave it credit, and

XXX—3



Reading his Newspaper.

that Ewen Brocair is thoroughly and entirely master of all the instrument can yield. He next plays the "Piobrachd of Donull Dubh," and after that the wildly sweet and plaintive airs "Cha till mi tuille" and "Crodh Chailein mo Ghaoil." During the time these beautifully plaintive airs are being played, with a deftness of touch and mastery of execution even in minutest details that nothing can surpass, all the people sit hushed and still as if they were carved of stone, and it is not a little amusing to see how suddenly, as if at an electric touch, the attitudes and aspect of us all undergo the change from grave to gay, when Ewen, without hardly a moment's interval or intermediate note of prelude or warning, launches into the dance music, reels, and strathspeys of which Highlanders everywhere are so fond. "Bob of Fettercairn," "Lady Mary Ramsay," the "Bridge of Perth," "Lord MacDonald," the "Marquis of Huntley's Highland Fling"—these and other favourites Ewen dashes off in a style that is simply perfect. For airy lightness of touch, and faultless precision and pointedness of individual note and phrase, from no other instrument, not even from the violin in

the most masterly hands, could a correcter or more dulcet rendering be extracted.

The extraction of music from all other instruments is largely mechanical. The music is, so to speak, *in the instrument*, and the performer's business is to get it out as best he can. In the case of the Jew's harp, however, the music is *in the performer*, the instrument simply giving issue and utterance to the music that is already within him. An accomplished player on the Jew's harp, therefore, is always and necessarily possessed of a keen and delicately attuned "ear," as the phrase is, and if a good player on the trump is almost always a person of a naturally flexible and musical voice, and a good singer of a song. The Jew's harp, as has already been said, has long been a favourite instrument in the Highlands. It is cheap to buy, easily carried about, and in the hands of an accomplished performer is capable of musical utterances of infinite variety and of the very highest order.

There is an amusing reference to the Jew's harp or trump in a curious composition, which we take leave to introduce to the notice of our readers. One of the most distinguished officers in Prince Charlie's army in the '45 was Colonel John Roy Stewart, of whose dauntless bravery and many hair-breadth escapes numberless traditions of exceeding interest still survive amongst the people of Appin, Lochaber, and Badenoch. He was of the Stewarts of Kincardine in Strathspey, a sept who traced their descent from the celebrated Wolf of Badenoch. In Highland tradition he is known as Jain Ruadh Chinnecardine—John Roy of Kincardine—and, as the author of several Gaelic songs that attained to considerable popularity, is entitled to a respectable position amongst the Jacobite bards. He was severely wounded in both ankles at Culloden, and when thus disabled, was only saved from the frightful butchery that closed that day of battle by the gallantry of a party of Mackintoshes, who, fighting their way to where he had fallen, rescued him at the imminent hazard of their own lives, and carried him to a place of hiding near their chief's residence at Moy Hall. He was one of those on whose head a price was set; and it was only with the greatest difficulty and danger to all concerned that he was taken by easy stages from hiding-place to hiding-place, and always under cloud of night, until he was finally placed in the great Waterfall Cave, high up a mountain face on the estate of his cousins and friends, the Stewarts of Ardsheal. By-

and-by, when it came to be suspected that he was in hiding somewhere in the country of the Stewarts, a company of soldiers quartered in the district, mostly Campbells, made every effort to discover his hiding-place, but in vain. On one occasion a party of them actually climbed the mountain and stood before the waterfall, behind which was the cave, of the existence of which, however, they were in total ignorance; so that they left the spot, little dreaming that behind that curtain of foam and spray the object of their search was sitting the while, with his broadsword across his knees, seeing them and watching their every movement, though they saw not him.

John Roy's chief solace in this strange hiding-place was a pair of Jew's harps or trumps, on which he was an admirable player, and which he carried about with him in all his wanderings. It was whilst he was in the Waterfall Cave that he composed his celebrated "Psalm" (*Salm Jain Ruaidh*), the only composition in the Gaelic language dignified by that title, except, of course, the Psalms of David. Of his Gaelic "Salm" John Roy himself made at the same time a fairly literal rendering into English; and it is this curious composition that we now present to the notice of the reader, who will at once see how necessary to the proper understanding of it are the foregoing remarks.

JOHN ROY STEWART'S PSALM.

- "The Lord's my targe, I will be stout,
With dirk and trusty blade;
Though Campbells come in flocks about,
I will not be afraid.
- "The Lord's the same as heretofore,
He's always good to me;
Though redcoats come a thousand score,
Afraid I will not be.
- "Though they the woods do cut and burn,
And drain the waters dry,
Nay, though the rocks they overturn,
And change the course of Spey;
- "Though they mow down both corn and grass,
And seek me underground,
Though hundreds guard each road and pass,
John Roy will not be found!
- "The Lord is just, lo! here's a mark,
He's gracious and kind;
While they like fools grop'd in the dark,
As moles He struck them blind.
- "Though lately straight before their face,
They saw not where I stood;
The Lord's my shade and hiding-place—
He's to me always good.
- "Let me proclaim, both far and near,
O'er all the earth and sea,
That all with admiration hear
How kind the Lord's to me.
- "Upon the pipes I'll sound His praise,
And dance upon my stumps,
A sweet new tune to it I'll raise,
And play it on my trumps."

The reference to "the pipes" in the last quatrain reminds us of what we forgot to

state above, namely, that John Roy was an excellent player on the bagpipes as well as on the "trumps," and that, when the coast was clear, he frequently enlivened the solitude of his cave with its wild music. We beg the reader, who smiles as he reads this curious composition, very particularly to remember that it is all pious earnest; not the slightest levity or irreverence is meant; for John Roy was in truth the Colonel Gardiner of the Jacobite army, as distinguished for his

piety as for his bravery. It is only necessary to add that when his wounds were healed, John Roy Stewart, in defiance of all the efforts made to capture him, managed in the early winter of 1746 to make his escape into France, where he died at a good old age some twenty years afterwards, having attained to the rank of general in the French service.

After this digression we gladly return to Donald Bane's *céilidh*, where Ewen Brocair's performance on the trumps is greeted, as in



Wearin' Awa'.

truth it well deserves to be greeted, with very hearty applause. The handsome young shepherd already referred to is now asked for a song, and, nothing loth, he strikes up a lively ditty, to which all of us lustily sing chorus; and this goes on, song after song, with but the briefest of intervals between them, for a good hour or more. There are love songs, and hunting songs, and sailing songs, and convivial songs; songs serio-comic and gay, songs plaintive and sad, and every song has its chorus, which has this advantage, besides others that might be mentioned, that it insures the closest attention on the part

of the audience, who are all expected, as a matter of courtesy to the singer, if for nothing else, to join in at the proper moment, and with all the lively gesticulation too, and all the emphasis of note and phrase that may be appropriate to the theme and *motif* of the particular song in hand.

But *halte là!* We have reached the end of our tether, and must for the present come to a stop. With the Editor's good leave, however, we hope to have an early opportunity of telling in a second paper what remains to be told of the story of Donald Bane's *céilidh*.

SONG AND SCIENCE.

Two Allegories.

BY THE RIGHT REV. W. BOYD CARPENTER, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF RIPON.

I.—POETRY AND LIFE.

"How shall we sing the Lord's song!"

EVERY soul is filled with the desire to express itself; its inward power cannot rest till it has linked its energies with some outward form.

The child was restless; he looked out of the open window and the great wonder of the earth and sky seemed to call to him; he could bear it no more. "Mother, I want to be a poet, how can I be one?" And the mother was wise, and she said, "My son, you must seek for ideas—great ideas and noble that may fill your mind with richness and light, for only thus can you become a poet." "But where can I find ideas?" said the child. "Everywhere, my son; in the sky and on the hills, in the face of the flowers and by the margin of the river, over the great bare heath, and by the roaring sea."

So the child went out to seek great ideas. He dwelt with nature. He looked upon the earth and saw the flowers, great and small, the rich gorse and the mighty trees; he wandered by the side of the rivers and heard the voice of the river spirit, and he dived into deep forests and heard voices there. The great sea made music for him, and the sky, bright with sunshine or dark and dotted with stars, now smiled upon him and now filled him with the deep sense of mystery.

His mind was full of ideas; and he sat down to write, and he wrote verses, that were brimful of startling images and disproportioned thoughts and strange words and cadences most unmusical.

He showed his verses to his master; and his master shook his head. "You must study metre and form," said the master; "read various poems, watch the syllables and accents; seek out the meaning of words and make yourself master of the music and beauty of form."

So he studied poets; he practised various metres; he followed the highest models; and made successful imitations and caught the taste for cultured expression, and the enthusiasm of classic form.

Then he wrote a poem of his own. Its ideas were lofty and breathed of nature's

joy; the rhythm was faultless, the flow and movement were graceful and correct. It was approved as good; and his master thought it worthy to rank with the models of antiquity.

The young poet was not happy; he had achieved something, but it was not the thing he wanted. And one day he took his poem in his hand and stood before his father and said, "Father, what is wrong with my poem?"

And his father took his hand in his and looked into his eyes with that deep look of love which love gives when it fears to wound and yet perforce must speak the truth. "My son," he said, "the matter that is wrong is this: your verses are good, but what you have written is not a poem. Listen, my son; there are great ideas here; and there is melodious verse; but great ideas and melodious verse do not make poetry!" "Then can I never be a poet, father?" said the lad. "Yes, my son, you can be a poet; but there is one thing more you lack. Your life has been quiet and smooth, easy and full of small contentments; it is not thus that poets are nursed. When poets are born, the mountains blaze with wild light, and the earth shakes and men are afraid. You need tempest in your life, and the experience of pain. You must know the world of men, as well as the world of nature and of books. Go and travel; see the dark and light of human life; see the workman at his blazing furnace mouth in the din of ceaseless machinery; see the sailor on the tossing ocean. Watch how men strive and win, or strive and fail, or strive and win that first success which is more fatal than failure. It means hardship if you do this; but no man can be a poet who has not tasted what pain, and hardship, and sacrifice mean."

So the lad went forth, and he saw the world. He lived in rough places, and took part in strange adventures; he faced danger on sea and land; he bore hardship in town and travel; he studied the world and entered into its thoughts and feelings; he paid the price of many sacrifices of ease and pleasure, and endured want, to learn lessons from the book of human life.

And a great pity filled his soul and a

glad pride filled his heart, he knew now other voices besides those of nature and of poets; he heard the voices of the world of men, and a glow filled his breast, for a sense of power grew within him, and he felt he could achieve success which would be real at last.

He wrote his poem; great thoughts and musical verse, with a glowing ardour which burned behind them, were in his poem. It awakened an enthusiasm in those who read; it satisfied those who wanted to feed on noble ideas; it pleased those who love sweet classicisms and correct fluency; it stirred those whose hearts looked for pictures of life—the life of toil and pain as they knew it.

But the poet was not satisfied; and he went to the man of God who dwelt in his village and taught the people. And he said, "I am not satisfied; my poem is admired; my parents are pleased; the villagers are proud of me; but I am not happy."

"My son," said the man of God, "I do not wonder; you have done well; but you can do better. You have written a poem, but you are not yet a poet."

"Not yet a poet! But if I have written a poem, am I not a poet?" said the young man. "Did not the papers praise my work as full of genuine fire and true poetic insight?"

"Yes, my son; it is true, and the poem is good, but you are not yet a poet for all that. Listen; you are not happy and you are not satisfied. There must be something wrong; for you have written a great poem and many are pleased—yet you are not—I can tell you why. None are great or do their highest best, till they lose themselves in something else. You are uneasy, because you have not yet—not even in this poem—fully expressed yourself to the world. The truth is you have not yet wholly lost yourself."

"O yes, yes, I lost myself wholly in my poem; I sacrificed time, ease, friends, to fit myself for doing it; and I gave myself wholly to it, I had no thought for months but just my poem."

"True, and in so far as you did this, you did well. Sacrifice lies at the root of all success; our power to express ourselves is just in proportion to our power of sacrificing ourselves; but you have not yet made a perfect sacrifice. Did you not think of yourself, of the power you were gaining, of the force you could gather, and the material you could accumulate for your poem? Did not the thought of your poem fill your mind while you were away? Did you not read everything you saw and studied with the

remembrance of the poem in your mind? Was that a time of perfect sacrifice which was a sacrifice of self for self? Was that a true sacrifice which was only for the sake of the fame and praise which achievement would secure?"

And the young poet was silent. Then he said, "What am I to do? I would like to be a poet still, only greater."

And the man of God answered, "'Nec tamen,' said the holy Chrysostom, 'sufficit nostra relinquere, nisi relinquamus et nos.' 'It is not enough to sacrifice what we have, it is we ourselves who must be sacrificed.'"

"But how?"

"How?" said the man of God. "I am but a simple man. I live here in this obscure place. You have seen the world. Did you see no sorrow, no pain, no wrong things that made you full of wrath and pity? Did they not call to you to go and help?"

"Oh, I could never live in the dingy town—far from all beauty and poetic surroundings. I should sacrifice my very poetry then, and poetry is my life—my self."

And the old man said gently, "Nec tamen sufficit nostra relinquere, nisi relinquamus et nos."

"You are right," said the young man. "It is mere selfishness to bubble out verses, however good, while the world is weary and men want helping. Let the book stay here; I will go and work among the needy and the sad."

He went, he laboured, organized, helped. He did not cease to write poems; indeed, he could not help writing them. A full heart and overflowing love made him write them. And his poems were noble; and as the man of God read them, he said, "He is a poet now."

He worked among the sorrowing and the toiling till he died, and when he died the poor folks followed him to the grave, and they said one to another, "They say he was a poet; I never read his poems; but he was a poet indeed to me, for his life was a true poem."

II.—SCIENCE AND LIFE.

"Where the water begins the land ends."

The people who lived there were a happy and contented folk. The land was flat and in many places marshy, and a broad river flowed through the midst of it. The people had enough for their needs; the land yielded corn and grass, and the river and the sea beyond yielded fish. Some sowed and reaped; others embarked in their little boats

and brought back the harvest of the sea. So they all had enough and were content. The fisherman exchanged fish for corn, the ploughman exchanged corn for fish, and all were content.

The population grew; necessity became their teacher, and men began to think. The wide marsh lands were useless; the wise men said that they must be drained. The water soaked these lands through and through, and rendered them profitless; men who were wise saw that they could only reclaim the land by getting rid of the water. So the work of draining the land went forward, and fisher-folk still plied their trade.

The task of draining proved hard, and those who were eager about it looked distrustfully and angrily at the calm river which came in and out each day with growing and abating flood. They felt that the river made their work harder, and they grudged its presence and resented its power.

Others, who loved the river well and delighted in the fish which was borne to their doors on its bosom, looked anxiously and suspiciously on those who were working to drain the land. They saw that the river was being bound up within narrow limits, and they feared to lose it altogether.

So a division was caused among the folk who were so friendly and contented of old. And aged people began to point the moral of the evils which arise from new-fangled ways; and some said that it was godless work to alter what God had made, and that bad times and sore judgments were sure to follow such doings. And those who were

draining the land made fierce replies. It was good and wise to change what was bad; and as for the river, it was no good at all. It spoiled the land, and it bred sickness among the people. It would be well if it could be banished altogether. The controversy grew bitter between the rival parties. But there were many of the people who took no part in the strife; they looked on with wonder, they were content to wait. And meanwhile the ploughman ploughed, the sower sowed, the reaper reaped, and the fishermen swept the sea, and brought back the bright and bonnie fish. And day by day new land was reclaimed from the marshes, and the sower sowed corn over wider tracts, and the reaper reaped down larger fields, and the river, compressed into narrower limits, ran swifter and deeper; and the banks of sand and shallows which brought hindrances and danger to the fisher-boats disappeared, drowned in the fulness of the river.

The people rejoiced; the wise men who had worked at the draining no longer spoke of abolishing the river. Everybody was glad to see the wider fields and meadows and the deeper and fuller river, except the evil prophets who shook disappointed heads as if they knew that, notwithstanding appearances, some evil must come of it. But the harvests were more plenteous, the fish was brought in more freely, the people grew healthier, and the party feuds passed away.

And the wise men said, "The earth is given to the children of men." And the fisher-folk said, "There is a river which makes glad the city of God."

IN THE PAMFILI-DORIA GARDENS.

BBROWN, stagnant dawn, forgotten of the sun,
 And then wan noon beneath white pools of sky,
 Mists blackening, and the long, harsh night begun.
 What bird could know to bid the day good-bye?
 No sun to rise, no sun to sink:
 At noon birds chirped, "Day's near, we think,"
 And 'twas the night-fall had begun.

Dawns thus, noons thus, nights thus, with never a change,
 This leaden while of weeks of the young year;
 A snowdrop, if one struggles forth, looks strange,
 A birth unnatural in a world so drear,
 And keeps its stem within the mould,
 Afraid and parching in the cold:
 Poor flower! in such a world too strange.

No pulse of Spring's revival beats and thrills ;
 Beneath the narrow vault of cloud and rime,
 Beneath the thick and bitter air that kills,
 The rigid earth lies sere—in budding time.
 No vernal rush in blade and tree
 And us that makes us glad to be :
 We breathe the thick, bleak air that kills.

But all the while I know where, too far hence,
 Through earth's flushed pores the year's young life leaps forth ;
 Where air is drunken with Spring's quickening sense ;
 Where infinite sky is east, west, south, and north,
 Bluer than any sapphire's light ;
 Where dawn and noon and fostering night
 Instil Spring's subtle quickening sense ;

Where ruby, rose, white flushing at the marge,
 Pearl, and shell-pink, and grey, and amethyst,
 Crowded upon their sunshine acres large,
 (Posies at will, and next day none be missed)
 Blow, born of light and Spring's soft breeze,
 The shyly sweet anemones :
 Sunshine and blossom acres large.

Oh ! star anemones, whose fragrance coy,
 Close at the heart like a young maiden's hope,
 Gave me its secret, and your radiance joy,
 Ye are blowing now, and on the bosky slope,
 The emerald and shadowy gloom
 Is shot with purple wefts of bloom,
 For violets have filled the slope.

Pleased children, greedy for the flowers, make haste ;
 With nosegay both hands big must add and add—
 Their world is full enough of flowers for waste.
 Some one that, being older, is more sad
 Hides, maybe, where a stillness is,
 To feel the exquisite spring bliss,
 And but one flower's too much to waste.

Ah ! well, 'tis black and barren here to-day ;
 My life lags numbed ; and yet there is for me
 Some part in sunshine and birds' welcoming song,
 Who know the spring that's where far strangers see,
 And am the happier in my home
 Because of violets at Rome,
 Of Rome's far wind-flowers strangers see.



A MINIATURE MONKEY.

By GRANT ALLEN.

MOST English corn-fields, when the wheat is kerning, and the pensile heads just beginning to sway in long sweeping undulation before the summer breeze, you may find here and there among the tall haulms of straw a

tiny hanging nest, as thin as paper, and almost as transparent as the airiest gauze. It is the home and nursery of the timid little harvest-mouse, smallest of all our British quadrupeds (with the doubtful exception of the lesser shrew) and all but smallest of known mammals. In these dainty wee creatures the great mammalian type finds, in fact, almost its utmost possible limit of pettiness.

The harvest-mouse is, as it were, a miniature northern analogue of the spider-monkeys and lemurs that sport among the branches of the tropical forests, reduced to the smallest practicable scale. Amid our dwarfed and impoverished insular fauna it plays somewhat the same part in a minor world that the marmozets and wandroos, and lemuroids and aye-ayes play in the richer and more varied life of far southern jungles.

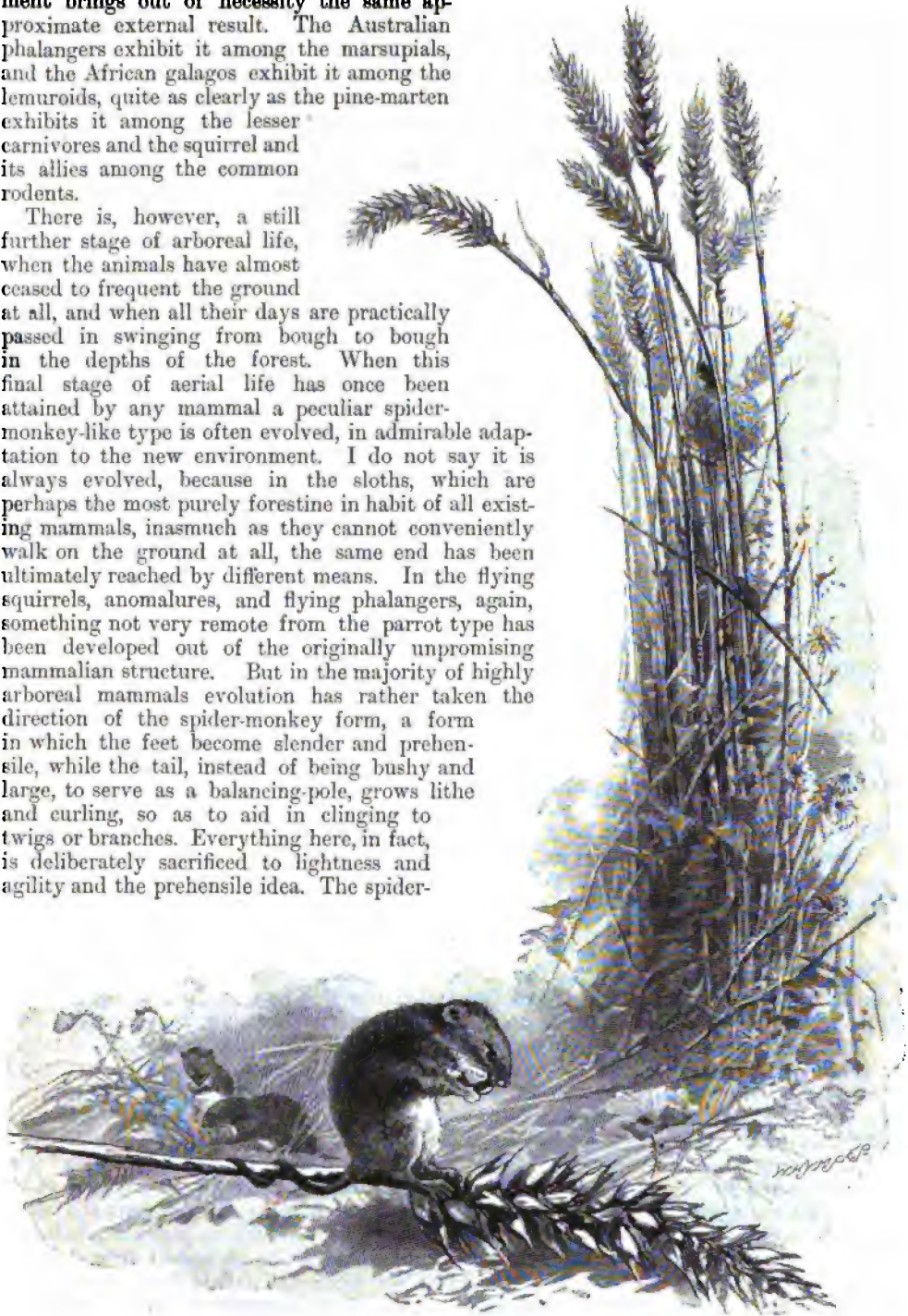
Of course, I don't mean to say that in internal structure the harvest-mouse presents the slightest real likeness to the monkey family. Its resemblance is external and functional only. Genealogically speaking, it is a mere mouse, nothing more or less, a rodent of the rodents, simple and central in type, and not diverging in any way from the normal features of that great though un-

ambitious mammalian order. But in outer adaptive form it nevertheless shows us some interesting approximations to the monkey character, and it is these outer adaptations, so unduly neglected by technical anatomists, that strike the eye and fix the attention of that staple of our race, the casual observer. They too enclose a history and a science of their own, a history and a science too apt to be overlooked in the genealogical researches of the dry-as-dust school of laboratory naturalists.

Thorough-going ground-rodents, like the hares and rabbits, have feet adapted for running only. One could hardly imagine a rabbit or a guinea-pig climbing a tree; both its feet and tail are utterly unfitted for such a purpose. But arboreal rodents undergo certain changes in this respect, which are very well marked in our own squirrels. In such tree-haunting types, the feet, instead of being flat, become hooked and clawed. They are well adapted for clinging to small twigs and minor branches, or for digging into the bark of the trunk and the larger boughs. At the same time the extended tail becomes thick and bushy; it is very flexible, and is carried, as a rule, bent over the back, especially in running, because it thus serves the same purpose as the acrobat's pole, to balance the body on its narrow purchase. Almost all arboreal animals in which the tree-haunting habit has reached a certain degree of development possess exactly this squirrel-like type, combining a peculiar form of agile slender body with clasping clawed feet and a bushy tail-piece. No matter to what great order of mammals the tree-haunters may belong,

adaptation to their special forestine environment brings out of necessity the same approximate external result. The Australian phalangers exhibit it among the marsupials, and the African galagos exhibit it among the lemuroids, quite as clearly as the pine-marten exhibits it among the lesser carnivores and the squirrel and its allies among the common rodents.

There is, however, a still further stage of arboreal life, when the animals have almost ceased to frequent the ground at all, and when all their days are practically passed in swinging from bough to bough in the depths of the forest. When this final stage of aerial life has once been attained by any mammal a peculiar spider-monkey-like type is often evolved, in admirable adaptation to the new environment. I do not say it is always evolved, because in the sloths, which are perhaps the most purely forestine in habit of all existing mammals, inasmuch as they cannot conveniently walk on the ground at all, the same end has been ultimately reached by different means. In the flying squirrels, anomalures, and flying phalangers, again, something not very remote from the parrot type has been developed out of the originally unpromising mammalian structure. But in the majority of highly arboreal mammals evolution has rather taken the direction of the spider-monkey form, a form in which the feet become slender and prehensile, while the tail, instead of being bushy and large, to serve as a balancing-pole, grows lithe and curling, so as to aid in clinging to twigs or branches. Everything here, in fact, is deliberately sacrificed to lightness and agility and the prehensile idea. The spider-



The Harvest Mouse and its Nest.

monkeys and their analogues in other classes spend their whole time in swinging from bough to bough of their native forests, which they traverse in a perpetual acrobatic display almost as rapidly as a horse can run over the open plain.

Now, odd as it sounds at first hearing to say so, our tiny harvest-mice belong to the outskirts of this essentially arboreal and forestine type. They inhabit a mimic woodland all of their own. For to creatures so small and slender as they are—their body is hardly bigger than a garden snail—the haulms of corn and tall grasses among which they wander must produce the effect of forest trees. Bamboos are really gigantic grasses; but the tallest bamboos are less than a quarter as tall compared to average humanity as wheat-stalks are to the size of a full-grown harvest-mouse. Up these lithe and swaying stems the airy little creature runs in search of food as the monkey runs up tropical jungle-bushes. It is not remarkable, therefore, that in size and shape this tiny northern analogue of the monkeys should have acquired exactly its present proportions. It must needs be small, so that its total weight will not break down the bending haulms as it climbs to their summit in search of the rich nutritious grain. It must have clasping hands, almost like a monkey's, to grasp and hold the smooth round stems. Its tail, instead of being bushy, must be slender and prehensile, to aid it in clinging and to prevent untimely falls. It must be, and it is, as agile as a monkey, for it lives under practically the same forestine conditions. Only, its forest being a very miniature one, its own organization must be miniature to match. It is so very light that five adult harvest-mice go to the ounce, and could be sent by post for a penny stamp.

Nevertheless, the harvest-mouse has not reached the very last stage of arboreal life, in that it can still run freely on the ground, where its movements are as rapid as on its native grass forest. Why is this? Clearly because the harvest-mouse's trees are trees of a very short-lived sort; they are mown by the scythe or die down to the ground at the end of summer. Before the advent of man, with his acres of corn-field, the harvest-mouse's lot was a much less happy one. He had to burrow in the ground in the winter, where he passed the time in a state of torpidity, like his neighbour the dormouse and so many more of our smaller mammals. Here he laid up, squirrel-wise, a small granary of his own, consisting of the dry

seeds of grasses and other meadow plants, on which he fed whenever a fine warm spell permitted him to resume active life for awhile in his winter quarters. This annual need for retirement, however, dependent upon the annual growth and decay of his mimic forest, has compelled the harvest-mouse to keep up in part his terrestrial habits, and prevented him from acquiring the thorough-going quasi-arboreal type of structure which he would no doubt otherwise have adopted in obedience to the conditions of his almost aerial existence.

The growth of agriculture, I may remark parenthetically, has greatly ameliorated the lot of the harvest-mouse, and has no doubt been followed by a corresponding increase in his numbers throughout Northern Europe. The immense expanse of corn-fields and meadow-land means a vast new store-house of food for these pretty little rodents. Thousands of them inhabit the standing crops throughout the greater part of Britain; they are carried with the sheaves into the ricks and barns where their winter subsistence is well provided for. Under these circumstances they do not hibernate; on the contrary, they continue to feed and breed through the winter with unremitting industry.

But the most interesting peculiarity of all in the harvest-mice is their curious custom of building a pensile nest, interwoven among the leaves and stems of grasses. Nest-building is an extremely arboreal habit; indeed, it may be noticed even among birds that the most terrestrial species build relatively poor and scanty nests, or even lay their eggs (like the goatsuckers) upon the open ground; while the most arboreal species, like the weaver-birds and humming-birds, construct the softest and most perfect homes of any. In fact, nests are specially needed in trees, to prevent the young from falling out; and wherever the nest-building instinct exists among mammals it is always in arboreal or quasi-arboreal habitats. The little American white-footed mouse, for example, constructs itself a neat, small nest in trees or bushes, often as much as fifteen feet from the ground. The squirrel, again, most tree-haunting of English quadrupeds, builds itself a true aerial cradle on the topmost branches of an oak or beech, quite distinct from the hibernating hole in which it passes its half-dormant winter. The tree-rat of Bengal hangs its bed on the tall top of a cocoa-nut palm, or swings complacently on a swaying bamboo-stem. Even the carnivorous pine-marten builds a soft retreat with leaves and frag-

ments of moss among its native Scotch firs; and many monkeys and lemurs construct beds for themselves and nurseries for their young in the dense depth of tropical forests.

Well, just as in the bamboo thickets of the south, which are gigantic grass-plots, many forestine animals build their nests on the swaying stems, so among the corn-fields and meadows of England, which may be regarded conversely as miniature bamboo thickets, the harvest-mouse hangs its round cradle of dry blades from the tallest bennets. When the wind blows the cradle will rock; but the six or eight little ones within seldom get a fall, so admirably is the nest constructed and so well is it secured. Not only is it hung from several distinct grass-stems, but the leaves of each are many times split, and the nest is regularly woven into them by the teeth and paws of the cunning little architect. All the outer coating of the oval nest, about as big as a cricket-ball, is similarly woven of split straws and blades, while the interior is lined with thistledown, dandelion fluff, and other like soft vegetable fibres. There is no mouth or opening of any sort; the mother mouse seems to press her snout through the yielding materials wherever she likes, while the little ones apparently press out their own in return when they wish to feed at the teats of the mother.

Once more, it is noticeable that most tree-haunting mammals, even if they belong to herbivorous or frugivorous families, take in the end to a more or less mixed animal diet. Their agility encourages them to pursue prey. This is the case with many monkeys, which kill and eat birds and insects: it is the case with the most arboreal marsupials and rodents, and generally with all active and agile tree-nesters. The harvest-mouse is no exception to the prevailing rule. A grain-eater by descent, it feeds largely off flies, small beetles, and even bees; and it will climb stealthily up a wheat-stalk and then dart upon an insect with lightning speed in a way that recalls in varying degrees a cat with a bird, or a sleepy chameleon with a tropical fly. The usual quickness and vivacity of forestine animals is not wanting in the demure harvest-mouse; and the large bright eyes and grace of movement display that high intelligence which, as Mr. Herbert Spencer well points out, is almost always developed by the possession of distinct grasping organs.

It is interesting to observe how by small external adaptive modifications so monkey-like a creature, with prehensile hands and lithe twining tail, has been developed with

hardly any structural modification from the common mouse type of rodents. All the mice, as we know, are very good climbers; they can run up perpendicular walls by digging in their sharp little claws, and can take advantage of every slight irregularity of surface to gain a foothold for their lithe bodies. In the harvest-mouse, these points have only gone one step further; the feet have merely become a trifle more hand-like, and the naked tail a trifle more lissom, rapid, and prehensile. Such slight changes, however, have amply sufficed to adapt the terrestrial mouse-like form for a practically arboreal and almost aerial existence.

Still more interesting is it to note how in the mouse and rat group of rodents at large, similar small modifications have enabled various divergent members to fit themselves for the most diverse conditions of life. In the common rat, and similar terrestrial forms, we have a simple central mouse-like archetype little specialized for any particular habitat. But in India and America, the same family produces sundry tree rats, which are as fully adapted as squirrels to an arboreal life. In New South Wales there are true rats (not marsupials) which have acquired to some extent the kangaroo-like form and habit; while the gerbilles of Africa and India, which are also true-rats, have powerful hind legs as strong as a jerboa's, by whose aid they jump along the open ground with extraordinary rapidity and grace of movement. Then among the very closely allied group of voles we have the English water-rat, thoroughly adapted to an aquatic existence; and the still more developed American musquash (universally known in its own country as the musk-rat) in which the tail is flattened and nearly naked like a beaver's, so as to form an efficient living rudder, while the hind toes are united by a web-like skin, which the animal uses as an oar in swimming. Altogether, more than three hundred species of true rats and mice are known to science, and in this single family, closely related down to the minutest particular in those underlying anatomical traits which are the true guides to genealogical relationship, may be found all varieties of external form, adapted to terrestrial, aquatic, and arboreal existence—runners, jumpers, climbers, and swimmers; burrowers and nest-builders; herbivorous, carnivorous, frugivorous, omnivorous; hamsters, with their large internal food-pouches; lemmings, with their seemingly purposeless migratory instinct; snow-mice that grub for food under Alpine snow-fields; rabbit-mice

that simulate the outer form of rabbits in the open fields of La Plata and Patagonia. Wherever an opening can be found for industry, indeed, some vagrant member of the active and intelligent rat tribe is sure to seize upon it, and develop in time the distinctive external features of a beaver, a kangaroo, a squirrel, or a lemur, while retaining beneath these various assumed disguises all the fundamental points of the simple central rat-and-mouse type. And if we include in our survey not only the restricted family of the *muride* themselves, but also those others of their allies which, while varying a little further in any particular

direction, are still essentially "myomorphic" or mousy in character, we shall have to add such singular variations as the hibernating dormouse, which simulates a squirrel; the blind and burrowing mole-rat, which simulates the true insectivorous moles; the pocket-mice, which simulate the lesser marsupials; and the jumping mice, jerboas, and Cape jumping hares, which simulate in every particular of limb and form the kangaroos themselves. So plastic is nature under the double action of altered conditions and natural selection, that out of this one type she has known how to evolve almost every possible variety of mammalian life.



AT THE SAETER.

A saeter in Norway is what an alp is in Switzerland, the rough mountain chalet to which the cows and other animals are taken for the summer months, while the haymaking goes on in the unfenced valleys.

O HAPPY goats, and sheep, and dogs,
That fear no frauds and dangers,
But, as we sit upon these logs,
Refuse to count us strangers!

Perchance the wise Norwegian brute
Admires our British features:
Needs no Amphion with his lute
To gather round the creatures.

They come, they come, a merry flock,
Not one is coy or crusty;
In eager haste they push and knock,
Embarrassingly trusty.

The goats upon their hind-legs rise,
And deftly search our pockets,
And roll their green uncanny eyes
Within their hairy sockets.

The friendly sheep, at any rate,
Are no fastidious browsers,
But nibblingly investigate
The texture of our trowsers.

NORWAY, August, 1888.

The fox-tail'd dogs with furry hide,
Inane grimaces making,
Come wheedling up, with head aside,
Prepared for much hand-shaking.

A little calf with budding horns,
Behind the others lingers,
And moistly notice craves, nor scorns
To suck the British fingers.

Nor stick, nor threat, nor push, nor poke,
Will cool their ardour clearly;
They only treat it as a joke,
And crowd around more nearly.

Ah, happy beasts! so well inclined
To own me as a brother!
On such good terms with human-kind
As well as one another!

If I were but a sheep or goat,
With power to choose my region,
Unhesitatingly I'd vote
To live and die—Norwegian.

WILLIAM WALSHAM WAKEFIELD.

THE GREATEST SINGER OF THE WORLD.

By J. F. ROWBOTHAM, AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF MUSIC."

THE beginning of the eighteenth century was the golden age of Italian singing. The country was covered with singing-schools—well-nigh every town possessed one. But the most famous—indeed, European in its celebrity—was the school of Porpora at Naples. Porpora, a learned theorist, and a rigorous disciplinarian, had already sent forth from his seminary most of the leading singers of Europe. He was at the zenith of his repute and in the prime of his life, when accident brought a boy of ten to his gates, whose father, an illiterate man of the town, desired the great master to try his voice, thinking it a good one. "When I heard him even speak," says Porpora, "such silvery sweetness came from his lips that I had well-nigh taken him in my arms and embraced him; but I restrained myself, knowing what was best for his interest." The boy's temporary visit to the academy was turned into a sojourn; and for seven years he scarcely quitted its walls. If Porpora's system of instruction was strict with others, it was trebly strict with him. Carlo Broschi, or Farinelli ("the little miller"), as he was nicknamed by his comrades, from his father being employed about a mill, had to undertake the most fatiguing and monotonous exercises, always practise by himself, and never receive a word of commendation from his master. The drudgery of singing two notes and no more for the space of three years was imposed upon him; the story seems incredible, but there is no doubt of its truth. The two notes were F and B, the interval between which constitutes the most perilous passage for a singer, and nearly always suffers from inaccuracy of intonation. After declaiming this interval for three years, Farinelli asked his master what was the next interval he should learn. "You know all intervals," replied Porpora. "You need practise no other."

His fourth year of study was devoted to learning the trill. When he received his first lesson in this new accomplishment, the whole school gathered round to hear him; for they thought that the strange pupil who had been practised so much by himself and at such monotonous exercises would never be able to perform that nimble-throated feat of execution which was the test of a finished vocalist. Yet at the first trial of a trill, Farinelli executed it so perfectly and withal

so long, that the master had to beg him to desist, for fear his voice might suffer injury from indulgence in a thing so new to his experience. Despite his miraculous proficiency, however, Farinelli had to sing trills for a year to come. Meanwhile Porpora had not been idle in cultivating his talents in other directions. His taste had been educated by learning and reciting poetry; his knowledge of music had been extended by harpsichord-playing and composition; and a natural inelegance of bearing and sternness of feature had been entirely overcome by practice before a looking-glass, which was always placed in front of him during his hours of monotonous singing. The art of sustaining sound, of swelling the note and diminishing it, of employing every degree of shading, had formed part of his studies during his earliest days of drudgery with no more than two notes to work upon. And after a year spent in trills, he was passed on to practise the countless embellishments of song which formed so large a part of music in those days, and in which Porpora particularly delighted. Seven years of toilsome labour had now gone by. Farinelli was seventeen years of age. His voice was a soprano of the most extraordinary compass. He could ascend to the E on the ledger line above the stave, and could sink to the E in the middle of the bass clef. He was quite unconscious of his powers, and was still in the midst of exercises and studies, blindly pursuing and achieving day by day the task that was set him, with methodical accuracy. Till at last the day arrived when, according to the legend, he came to Porpora and said,

"Master, what more shall I do to attain perfection?"

Porpora replied,

"Go, my son; you have no further need of me. You are the greatest singer in the world."

Farinelli accepted an engagement at the Opera House at Rome, and his first appearance caused the marvellous sensation that was anticipated. A well-nigh deserted house was filled to overflowing, and the whole of Italy soon rang with the news of the great singer that had suddenly fallen from the clouds into the midst of the operatic world. A curious circumstance conspired to increase yet further his reputation. In one of his arias in the opera he was accompanied by a

trumpeter, and the two having to sustain a long note at the end of the piece, it became a point of rivalry between Farinelli and the trumpeter who could hold his note for the greatest time. The rivalry interested the public amazingly, till one night it reached its climax. The trumpeter and Farinelli both got on their note and held it. "Bravo, trumpeter!" "Bravo, Farinelli!" resounded from all sides of the house. The trumpeter, anxious to secure a decided victory, swelled his note to *fortissimo*. Farinelli did the same. The trumpeter, without drawing breath, changed his note into a trill. Farinelli followed suit, and both together trilled and trilled, until at last the trumpeter was fairly exhausted and gave in. The audience, who were preparing to applaud Farinelli's victory, were surprised to hear him, without pausing for a moment to take breath, break off into a cascade of scales, runs, and fiorituras, which was only terminated by deafening cheers which made all further singing impossible. A sensational incident like this was precisely what was wanted to found the fame of the great singer. Often lucky chances do more for an artist's reputation than all the power of natural ability or the instruction of the schools; something *outré* and extraordinary is demanded by the world as a sort of peg on which to hang its gossip, and this something was forthcoming in Farinelli's case by the adventure of the trumpeter, which was at once buzzed through Italy. All were eager to see and hear, not the profound artist who had spent years in silent study, wrestling with and mastering the difficulties of his art, but "l'uomo chi ha vinto il trombadore"—"the man who had beaten the trumpeter." "Was the trumpeter really the celebrated Baldassare, or only a substitute engaged for the evening?" "Was it a genuine contention between the two, or merely a pre-arranged plan so as to secure the singer some popularity? At any rate," this was the conclusion of all the gossip, "we must go and hear him, for such a thing has never happened on the stage before." The fame of Farinelli was very soon spread beyond the limits of Italy, and he received a lucrative engagement at Vienna which detained him at the Austrian capital nearly two years, night after night the sensation of the town. His return to Italy was caused by his desire to meet the only rival in his art, of whom he ever professed himself afraid—the great singer, Bernacchi. Farinelli, flushed with his Austrian successes, and still so young as to merit the title of Il

Ragazzo, or the Boy, which was bestowed upon him by his admirers, seems in this instance to have forgotten that modesty, which ever remained one of the most beautiful features of his character. Bernacchi was an old man, a tried veteran who had trodden every stage in Europe, and the younger singer was anxious to impress upon this master of the art a due sense of inferiority. Accordingly he arranged a meeting with Bernacchi, which took place at Bologna. The partisans of either singer attended in great numbers; those of the younger man were particularly sanguine, and wagers were laid that the verdict of the judges would go in his favour. Farinelli desired to sing first, with the object of so humiliating his rival by his extraordinary display, that probably the latter would retire from the contest. Accordingly he poured forth torrent upon torrent of his most intricate bravuras. Trills and flourishes only known to Porpora and himself were called into requisition for the occasion. And he sat down at last, in the opinion of all present, an easy victor. To Farinelli's amazement Bernacchi rose from his seat, and without any appearance of effort, repeated note for note the whole of the extemporised bravura. The award of the judges was no longer in doubt, and was unanimously given to the second singer.

Mortified and crestfallen Farinelli determined to retire from public life. He had imagined himself—too soon—the greatest singer in Europe, and under the eye of all Italy had failed egregiously to establish his title to the name. He fretted, he fumed, as a young man of twenty will do at any intolerable disappointment—but like other young men he gradually recovered from his melancholy. He asked himself the reason of his failure. The position he aspired to could never be secure, he thought; for at any moment a virtuoso might appear who might play on him the masterly trick of Bernacchi, and arrogate, if not superiority, at least a fair title to equality. What means, what device could he light upon, so as to make his throne secure, from whence no chance interloper or lucky aspirant might ever unseat him? In this dilemma of thought, it was his good fortune to be introduced to the Emperor, Charles VI. of Germany, who had heard with delight his singing at Vienna in former years, before the terrible fiasco of the Bernacchi combat, and was also reputed one of the most eminent connoisseurs of music in that most musical age. Taking him aside,

Charles said to him: "You seem to be in some mysterious dejection, Farinelli, and if I am gifted with any penetration I know the cause of your sorrow. The defeat you have received from Bernacchi is one which may at any time await you, unless your present method of singing is supplemented by something higher and more truly the prerogative of the great. Hitherto you have sought only to astonish. I confess myself amazed when I heard you first. I believed not that anything human could produce such marvels of vocalisation as came from your flexible throat. If your object, as I believe it, was to amaze the world, you have done so to a degree which should well content you in that one sphere of a singer's powers. But something further must now be added. You must try henceforth to touch the heart." This remark of the Emperor's seems to have revealed a new world to the great singer who heard it. At last, then, he had learnt the real road to empire, and the possibility of an eternal magic spell which no one could ever take from him. To win this new source of influence, to possess himself of this new and infallible charm, he must not retire to the walls of a school for solitary practice, or ensconce himself before a looking-glass in the privacy of his chamber and declaim to empty air. He must gather this new lore of art by actual contact with every class of hearers, he must mature his powers in the presence of his audiences. Each song in public must be a lesson to him, instead of a piece of display to amuse his vanity. Bidding adieu, therefore, to morbid seclusion, he accepted every engagement at Vienna that was offered him; and very soon the town rang of his wonders once more, though in somewhat different tattle from that of preceding years. "Did you hear of Farinelli last night? The whole audience were weeping when I left." "I am told that at the palace of Prince Kaunitz two ladies swooned during his first air." The talk of the town was not of his prodigies and marvels of execution, though they were still present in his singing, but of the wonderful effects that were to be witnessed on the hearers. People praised the tenderness of his tone, the pathos of his musical grief, the thunder of his mimic anger. He held Vienna captive in his thrall once more, not with astonishment, but with love.

Three years had thus passed since his emergence from seclusion, to practise in the world those arts of fascination which the great imperial critic had recommended him

to acquire—and, according to all accounts, he had become perfect in his new rôle. But now an imperative summons came to him, and a call to arms, which claimed the supreme exertion of all his wonderful powers at once, if he were to answer it aright—and Farinelli was not the man to leave the summons unanswered. For his great master, Porpora, had been invited to London by the English nobility to set up a rival opera to Handel's. Porpora had strained every nerve to outmatch the Saxon giant, and for a time had at least contrived to acquire for his opera in Lincoln's Inn Fields an equal share of patronage to that which was accorded to Handel at the Royal Academy of Music. But the contest was an unequal one. Porpora's meagre vein of composition could make no head against the copious stream of opera after opera which the genius of Handel inexhaustibly produced, and the house in Lincoln's Inn Fields was on the verge of bankruptcy. In this emergency it seemed to Porpora that the opera might yet be saved from collapse by the employment of some admittedly phenomenal singer—and Farinelli at once occurred to him as the only singer who could fulfil the task. To London Farinelli accordingly came, and the first night of his appearance at the opera was an astounding triumph. We are told that the opening note of his introductory air was sung in a way that English ears had never heard before. He commenced it with an intonation so imperceptible that fancy had to supplement its thinness in order to realise that sound was present at all. Gradually the volume swelled; until at last it rang like a trumpet through the house. But with inimitable art he again reduced it to an invisible point, "and then set off with such a brilliancy and speed that the violins could scarcely keep up with him." Senesino, the contralto, who was the first singer of the day in England, and affected at the outset of the opera a superiority to the new-comer, was on the stage with him. Senesino played the part of a tyrant, and Farinelli that of a hero in chains. But as the opera proceeded, Senesino, forgetting all stage propriety, and even the character that he had assumed, ran to Farinelli and embraced him, overcome with the strongest emotion. The rage for hearing Farinelli sing reached such a height that Handel's house was well-nigh deserted, and the prospect of bankruptcy was suddenly transferred from the opera in Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Royal Academy of Music. Not only did enthusiasm attain an ungovernable

pitch, but the fortunate singer was loaded daily with hosts of most valuable presents. Diamond buckles, gold snuff-boxes, purses of a hundred and two hundred guineas, bank notes in gold cases—we hear of these and numerous other gifts of as costly a kind. The well-known story, which turns out to be an authentic one, must not be omitted: how, one night, a lady in the boxes, forgetting all propriety beneath the magic influence of his song, exclaimed aloud, "There is one God, and one Farinelli!"—and the *mot* passed into a commonplace. Royalty was lavish in its patronage of the lion of the day. He made frequent visits to Windsor, and sang before the royal circle, "being accompanied by the eldest princess upon the harpsichord." But Farinelli's closer and more celebrated acquaintance with royalty was yet to come.

After his return to Italy at the conclusion of the season, where, *en passant*, he showed a keen sense of humour by building a superb mansion with a fifth part of the treasures he had brought from London, and naming the house "England's Folly," he received a summons to visit the Court of Madrid, on an errand the like of which has surely never been deputed to a singer since the mythical times of history. The King of Spain, Philip V., had fallen a prey to an incurable malady; and immured in the gloom of the Escorial had resolutely declined to take any part in public affairs. In consequence the whole routine of government had fallen out of gear; the transaction of daily business in the Court was at a standstill, because the king refused his signature to any document whatsoever. He also would allow no regent to be appointed, and had turned a deaf ear to every remonstrance that one or other alternative was a necessity. Numerous doctors from different parts of Europe had attempted to relieve his disorder, but without avail. They could not even induce him to shave, which was one of the points at issue; and this ludicrous resolution of her consort seems to have affected the unfortunate queen, judging from her correspondence, even more perhaps than any other. The queen, despairing of all ordinary means of cure, resolved as a last resource to attempt an extraordinary one; and this was no less than to summon Farinelli to Madrid, in the almost crazy hope that perhaps his wonderful singing might succeed in effecting that which all the medical art of Europe had failed to accomplish. Farinelli obeyed the royal bidding, and, at his first interview, the queen communicated to him the object of his visit, which before she had carefully concealed

from him, lest so unheard-of a project might deter him from complying with her wishes. She sketched out the scheme of cure, according to which Farinelli was to be placed in a room adjoining that of the unshaved and distempered monarch, with nothing but a screen as a partition between the chambers. At a given signal from the queen, who was to be in the king's apartment, he must commence to sing, and continue doing so until it became apparent how the medicine was likely to work. Everything was then arranged for this most extraordinary experiment. The king, a prey to profound melancholy, sat in his chamber, entirely unconscious of the craft of the conspirators. All at once from above the screen Farinelli's silvery voice was heard. The king listened for some time in gloomy silence, without giving any indication, beyond that of inclining his head somewhat towards the screen, that he heard the music at all. It was only when the queen had given the preconcerted signal to Farinelli to cease, that he rose up, looked about him, and said, "Whoever be the singer, and he seems to me more like an angel of heaven than any mortal man, I bid him sing that song again." Then turning to his wife he said, "If you have taken this means to please me, you have done well, for I cannot remember for years past when my senses have been more delighted than they have been just now. Let him sing again." A second time did Farinelli sing. And yet a third time. And a fourth time. "These four songs," said the king, "shall be sung to me to-morrow, and every evening while I live." With ever-increasing interest did the melancholy monarch listen to the songs of Farinelli, until at last the day came—we must quote from our Spanish authority to save our reputation for veracity—"the day came at last when his most Christian majesty consented to be shaved, to the surprise of the whole court. He gave it as his reason that such good music deserved something better than an unkempt beard on the face of the man who heard it. This was the first step in his recovery. Next he consented to sign official documents, saying that since he had begun to use his ears he might as well employ his hands on somewhat too, to save them from being idle. After that there was no more talk of a Regency. And all this marvellous recovery was due to the untiring efforts of the Italian signior, Farinelli, who sang every night to the best of his ability, and with that art which hath long caused him to be proclaimed the modern Orpheus of harmony."

Delighted at the cure, which was very soon complete, for Philip eventually took the reins of government into his hands again and became his former self, the queen engaged Farinelli to remain at the Spanish Court on the double footing of a pensioner and a friend. Nay, the king would not hear of parting with him, and insisted on a regular continuation of the same nightly concerts which first worked the cure. So odd was the king's humour, even in the days of his recovery, that he would allow Farinelli to sing no songs night after night but the very four that he had sung behind the screen. For ten years Farinelli remained at the Spanish court, that is to say, till the death of Philip, and during the whole time of his stay he never sang any other song to his Majesty but these four. They were "Pallido il sole," "Per questo dolce amplesso," a Minuet on which he improvised variations, and another one; and he must have sung them three or four thousand times apiece.

From the peculiar circumstances under which his introduction to the Spanish Royal family had taken place, Farinelli's part in the household was a most influential one. He enjoyed the confidence both of the king and queen, was with them in their most private hours, and was perfectly cognisant of every great secret of state. Such an omnipotent power did he gradually become, that the report has been credited, and even recorded by some historians, which makes him to have been elected and to have actually served as prime minister. This is not the case. Officially he had no *locus standi*, but practically he came next to the king himself. He was a grandee of Spain, and the crowned heads of Europe frequently corresponded with him, when they had any favour to obtain from the king and queen. Among the rest, the proud Maria Theresa kept up a constant communication with him, and a curious collection of letters are among the archives of Madrid, which passed between the Empress-Queen and the opera-singer. Farinelli's repute for probity and worth in the very delicate and commanding situation wherein he was placed, is one of the most noteworthy features in connection with this singular period of his life. He might have been a Buckingham or an Essex, trebly exaggerated; for his power was more supreme than that of either. But he displayed the modesty of a great man and the inimitable tact of a true statesman. Two or three instances in point are on record. On one occasion overhearing an old cavalry captain,

who had long danced attendance in the royal antechambers, lamenting his hard lot, that he who had served his country for forty years should never receive any reward from the king for his services, while an Italian mountebank and opera-singer was in daily receipt of the most lavish liberality, Farinelli solicited and obtained the commission which the old soldier was in search of. "Now," said he, as he handed the astonished officer his patent of colonel, "never again entertain the notion that the king forgets to reward true merit." On another occasion Farinelli solicited his royal patron on behalf of a certain Count di Talavera, for whom he begged the appointment of ambassador to a foreign court. The king exclaimed in surprise, for he knew the man, "Are not you aware that the Count di Talavera is your bitterest enemy? For years past he has been intriguing against you." "Yes," replied Farinelli; "but this is how I desire to be revenged on him."

The death of Philip and the accession of Charles III., in 1759, effected an entire change in Farinelli's position at the Spanish Court. He retired, full of honours and overburdened with wealth, to Bologna, where Burney found him some years afterwards leading a quiet and retired life, and employing his leisure in the collection of materials for a history of music. He was particularly proud of his rare manuscripts and his elegant harpsichords, some of which were of the most exquisite workmanship and inlaid with mother-of-pearl and precious stones. In this refined retirement Farinelli continued to live—still to the last the most celebrated musician in Europe—until death overtook him at the age of eighty years.

In person he was singularly tall and commanding. His face was exceedingly beautiful, and the naturally stern cast of his features had been corrected by assiduous effort to an expression of divine and statuesque repose. When he was singing, "there was something celestial," says a contemporary, "in his noble head thrown back, his eyes sparkling with light, and the wonderfully picturesque attitudes of his frame. Everything seemed to disappear in the world but he, and there was, as it were, a halo around him." He owed his imperial supremacy in the art of song to the assiduity of his practice under so great a master as Porpora, all of whose secrets he thoroughly acquired, particularly that art of taking breath so softly and easily that no one could perceive him—an inestimable piece of knowledge which has since been lost to music.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—"IN THE WEST COUNTRY."

"TAKE care, Mr. Luke Vine, sir. There's a big one coming."

The thin, little, sharp-featured, grey-haired man on a rock looked sharply round, saw the "big one coming," stooped, picked up a large basket, and, fishing-rod in hand, stepped back and climbed up a few feet, just as a heavy swell, which seemed to glide along rapidly over the otherwise calm sea, heaved, flooded the rock on which he had been standing, ran right up so high as to bathe his feet, then sank back in a series of glittering falls which sparkled in the glorious sunshine; there was a hissing and sighing and sucking noise among the rocks, and the wave passed on along the rugged coast, leaving the sea calm and bright once more.

"Many a poor lad's been took like that, Mr. Luke, sir," said the speaker, "and never heard of again. Why, if I hadn't called out, it would have took you off your legs, and the current's so strong here you'd have been swept away."

"And there'd been an end of me, Polly, and nobody a bit the worse, eh?"

The last speaker seemed to fill his sharp, pale face full of tiny wrinkles, and reduced his eyes to mere slits, as he looked keenly at the big robust woman at his side. She was about fifty, but with her black hair as free from grey as that of a girl, her dark eyes bright, and her sun-tanned face ruddy with health, as she bent forward with a great fish-basket supported on her back by means of a broad leather strap passed over her print sun-bonnet and across her forehead.

"Nobody the worse, Mr. Luke, sir?" cried the woman. "What a shame to talk like that! You arn't no wife, nor no child, but there's Miss Louise."

"Louisa, woman, Louisa," said the fisher sharply.

"Well, Louisa, sir. I only want to be right; but it was only yes'day as old Miss Vine, as stood by when I was selling her some hake, shook her finger at me and said I was to say Miss Louise."

"Humph! Never mind what my sister says. Christened Louisa.—That ought to fetch 'em."

"Yes, sir; that ought to fetch 'em," said the woman in a sing-song way, as the elderly

man gave the glistening bait at the end of his running line a deft swing and sent it far out into the bright sea. "I've seen the water boiling sometimes out there with the bass leaping and playing. What, haven't you caught none, sir?"

"No, Polly, not one; so just be off about your business, and don't worry me with your chatter."

"Oh, I'm agoing, sir," said the woman good-humouredly; "only I see you a-fishing, and said to myself, 'Maybe Mr. Luke Vine's ketched more than he wants, and he'd like to sell me some of 'em for my customers.'"

"And I haven't seen a bass this morning, so be off."

"Toe be sure, Mr. Luke Vine, sir; and when are you going to let me come up and give your place a good clean. I says to my 'Liza up at your brother's, sir, only yes'day——"

"Look here, Polly Perrow," cried the fisher viciously, "will you go, or must I?"

"Don't be criss-cross, sir, I'm going," said the woman, giving her basket a hitch. "Here's Miss Louise—is-a—coming down the rocks with Miss Madlin."

"Hang her confounded chatter!" snarled the fisher, as he drew out his bait, unwound some more line, and made another throw, "bad as those wretched stamps."

He cast an angry glance up at the mining works high on the cliff-side, whose chimney shaft ran along the sloping ground till it reared itself in air on the very top of the hill, where in constant repetition the iron-shod piles rose and fell, crushing the broken ore to powder. "A man might have thought he'd be free here from a woman's tongue."

He gave another glance behind him, along the rocky point which jutted out several hundred yards and formed a natural breakwater to the estuary, which ran, rock-sheltered, right up into the land, and on either side of which were built rugged flights of natural steps, from the bright water's edge to where, five hundred feet above, the grey wind-swept masses of granite looked jagged against the sky.

Then he watched his great painted float, as it ran here and there in the eddies of the tremendous Atlantic currents which swept along by the point. The sea sparkled, the sun shone, and the grey gulls floated above

the deep blue transparent water, uttering a querulous cry from time to time, and then dipping down at the small shoals of fry which played upon the surface.

Far away seaward a huge vessel was going west, leaving behind a trail of smoke; on his right a white-sailed yacht or two glistened in the sun. In another direction, scattered here and there, brown-sailed luggers were passing slowly along; while behind the fisher lay the picturesque straggling old town known as East and West Hake-mouth, with the estuary of the little river pretty well filled with craft, from the fishing luggers and trawlers up to the good-sized schooners and brigs which traded round the coast or adventured across the Bay of Storms, by Spain and through the Straits, laden with cargoes of pilchards for the Italian ports.

"Missed him," grumbled the fisher, withdrawing his line to rebait with a pearly strip of mackerel. "Humph! now I'm to be worried by those chattering girls."

The worry was very close at hand, for directly after balancing themselves on the rough rocks, and leaping from mass to mass, came two bright-looking girls of about twenty, their faces flushed by exercise, and more than slightly tanned by the strong air that blows health-laden from the Atlantic.

As so often happens in real life as well as in fiction, the companions were dark and fair; and as they came laughing and talking, full of animation, looking a couple of as bonny-looking English maidens as the West Country could produce, their aspect warranted, in reply to the greetings of "Ah, Uncle Luke!" "Ah, Mr. Vine!" something a little more courteous than—

"Well, Nuisance?" addressed with a short nod to the dark girl in white serge, and "Do, Madelaine?" to the fair girl in blue.

The gruffness of the greeting seemed to be taken as a matter of course, for the girls seated themselves directly on convenient masses of rock, and busied themselves in the governance of sundry errant strands of hair which were playing in the breeze.

The elderly fisher watched them furtively, and his sour face seemed a little less grim, and as if there was something after all pleasant to look upon in the bright youthful countenances before him.

"Well, uncle, how many fish?" said the dark girl.

"Bah! and don't chatter, or I shall get none at all. How's dad?"

"Quite well. He's out here somewhere."

"Dabbling?"

"Yes."

The girl took off her soft yachting cap, and fanned her face; then ceased and half closing her eyes and throwing back her head, let her red lips part slightly as she breathed in full draughts of the soft western breeze.

"If he ever gives her a moment's pain," said the old man to himself as he jerked a look up at the mining works, "I'll kill him." Then, turning sharply to the fair girl, he said aloud:—"Well, Madelaine, how's the *bon père*?"

"Quite well and very busy seeing to the lading of the *Corunna*," said the girl with animation.

"Humph! Old stupid. Worrying himself to death money grubbing. Here, Louie, when's that boy going back to his place?"

"To-morrow, uncle."

"Good job too. What did he want with a holiday? Never did a day's work in his life. Here! Hold her, Louie. She's going to peck," he added in mock alarm, and with a cynical sneering laugh, as he saw his niece's companion colour slightly, and compress her lips.

"Well, it's too bad of you, uncle. You are always finding fault about Harry."

"Say Henri, pray, my child, and with a good strong French accent," cried the old man with mock remonstrance. "What would Aunt Marguerite say?"

"Aunt Margaret isn't here, uncle," cried the girl merrily; "and it's of no use for you to grumble and say sour things, because we know you by heart, and we don't believe in you a bit."

"No," said the fisherman grimly, "only hate me like poison, for a sour old crab. Never gave me a kiss when you came."

"How could I without getting wet?" said the girl with a glance at the tiny rock island on which the fisher stood.

"Humph! Going back to-morrow, eh? Good job too. Why, he has been a whole half-year in his post."

"Yes, uncle, a whole half-year!"

"And never stayed two months before at any of the excellent situations your father and I worried ourselves and our friends to death to get for him."

"Now, uncle—"

"A lazy, thoughtless, good-for-nothing young vag— There, hold her again, Louie. She's going to peck."

"And you deserve it, uncle," cried the girl, with a smile at her companion, in whose eyes the indignant tears were rising.

"What! for speaking the truth, and trying to let that foolish girl see my lord in his right colours?"

"Harry's a good affectionate brother, and I love him very dearly," said Louise, firmly; "and he's your brother's son, uncle, and in your heart, you love him too, and you're proud of him as proud can be."

"You're a silly, young goose, and as feather-brained as he is. Proud of him? Bah! I wish he'd enlist for a soldier, and get shot."

"For shame, uncle!" cried Louise indignantly; and her face flushed too as she caught and held her companion's hand.

"Yes. For shame! It's all your aunt's doing, stuffing the boy's head full of fantastic foolery about his descent, and the disgrace of trade. And now I am speaking, look here," he cried, turning sharply on the fair girl, and holding his rod over her as if it were a huge stick which he was about to use. "Do you hear, Madelaine?"

"I'm listening, Mr. Vine," said the girl, coldly.

"I've known you ever since you were two months old, and your silly mother must insist upon my taking hold of you—you miserable little bit of pink putty, as you were then, and fooled me into being god-father. How I could be such an ass, I don't know—but I am, and I gave you that silver cup, and I've wanted it back ever since."

"Oh, uncle, what a wicked story!" cried Louise, laughing.

"It's quite true, miss. Dead waste of money. It has never been used, I'll swear."

"No, Mr. Vine, never," said Madelaine, smiling now.

"Ah, you need not show your teeth at me because you're so proud they're white. Lots of the fisher-girls have got better. That's right, shut your lips up, and listen. What I've got to say is this: if I see any more of that nonsense there'll be an explosion."

"I don't know what you mean," said Madelaine, colouring more deeply.

"Yes you do, miss. I saw Harry put his arm round your waist, and I won't have it. What's your father thinking about? Why, that boy's no more fit to be your husband than that great, ugly, long brown-bearded Scotchman who poisons the air with his copper mine, is to be Louie's."

"Uncle, you are beyond bearing to-day."

"Am I? Well then be off. But you mind, Miss Maddy, I won't have it. You'll be silly enough to marry some day, but when you do, you shall marry a man, not a

feather-headed young ass, with no more brains than that bass. Ah, I've got you this time, have I?"

He had thrown in again, and this time struck and hooked a large fish, whose struggles he watched with grim satisfaction, till he drew it gasping and quivering on to the rock—a fine bass, whose silver sides glistened like those of a salmon, and whose sharp back fin stood up ready to cut the unwitting hand.

"Bad for him, Louie," said the old man with a laugh; "but one must have dinners, eh? What a countenance!" he continued, holding up his fish, "puts me in mind of that fellow you have up at the house, what's his name, Priddle, Fiddle?"

"Pradelle, uncle."

"Ah, Pradelle. Of course he's going back too."

"Yes, uncle."

"Don't like him," continued Uncle Luke, rebaiting quickly and throwing out; "that fellow has got scoundrel written in his face."

"For shame! Mr. Vine," said Madelaine, laughing. "Mr. Pradelle is very gentlemanly and pleasant."

"Good-looking scoundrels always are, my dear. But he don't want you. I watched him. Going to throw over the Scotchman and take to Miss Louie?"

"Uncle, you've got a bite," said the girl coolly.

"Eh? So I have. Got him, too," said the old man, striking and playing his fish just as if he were angling in fresh water. "Thumper."

"What pleasure can it give you to say such unpleasant things, uncle?" continued the girl.

"Truths always are unpleasant," said the old man, laughing. "Don't bother me, there's a shoal off the point now, and I shall get some fish."

"Why you have all you want now, uncle."

"Rubbish! Shall get a few shillingsworth to sell Mother Perrow."

"Poor Uncle Luke!" said the girl with mock solemnity; "obliged to fish for his living."

"Better than idling and doing nothing. I like to do it, and— There he is again. Don't talk."

He hooked and landed another fine bass from the shoal which had come up with the tide that ran like a millstream off the point, when as he placed the fish in the basket he raised his eyes.

"Yah! Go back and look after your

men. I thought that would be it. Maddy, look at her cheeks."

"Oh, uncle, if I did not know you to be the best and dearest of——"

"Tchah! Carney!" he cried, screwing up his face. "Look here, I want to catch a few fish and make a little money, so if that long Scot is coming courting, take him somewhere else. Be off!"

"If Mr. Duncan Leslie is coming to say good-day, uncle, I see no reason why he should not say it here," said Louise, calmly enough now, and with the slight flush which had suffused her cheeks fading out.

"Good-day. A great tall sheepish noodle who don't know when he's well off," grumbled the fisher, throwing out once more as a tall gentlemanly-looking young fellow of about eight-and-twenty stepped actively from rock to rock till he had joined the group, raising his soft tweed hat to the ladies and shaking hands.

"What a lovely morning!" he said eagerly. "I saw you come down. Much sport, Mr. Vine?" he added, as he held out his hand.

"No," said Uncle Luke, nodding and holding tightly on to his rod. "Hands full. Can't you see?"

"Oh, yes, I see. One at you now."

"Thankye. Think I couldn't see?" said the old man, striking and missing his fish. "Very kind of you to come and see how I was getting on."

"But I didn't," said the new-comer, smiling. "I knew you didn't want me."

"Here, Louie, make a note of that," said Uncle Luke, sharply. "The Scotch are not so dense as they pretend they are."

"Uncle!"

"Oh, pray don't interpose, Miss Vine. Your uncle and I often have a passage of arms together."

"Well, say what you've got to say, and then go back to your men. Has the vein failed?"

"No, sir; it grows richer every day."

"Sorry for it. I suppose you'll be burrowing under my cottage and burying me one of these days before my time?"

"Don't be alarmed, sir."

"I'm not," growled Uncle Luke.

"Uncle is cross, because he is catching more fish than he wants this morning," said Louise quietly.

"Hear that, Maddy, my dear?" said the old man, sharply. "Here's a problem for you:—If my niece's tongue is as keen-edged as that before she is twenty, what will it be at forty?"

The girl addressed laughed and shook her head.

"Any one would think it would be a warning to any sensible man to keep his distance."

"Uncle! Pray!" whispered the niece, looking troubled; but the old man only chuckled and hooked another fish.

"Going to make a fortune out of the old mine, Leslie?" he said.

"Fortune? No, sir. A fair income, I hope."

"Which with prudence and economy—Scottish prudence and economy—" he added, meaningly, "would keep you when you got to be an old man like me. Bah!"

He snatched out his line and gave an impatient stamp with his foot.

"What is the matter, uncle?"

"What's the matter? It was bad enough before. Look there!"

CHAPTER II.—ELEMENTS OF A WHOLE.

MADELAINE VAN HELDRE had seen the object of Uncle Luke's vexation before he called attention to it; and at the first glance her eyes had lit up with pleasure, but only to give place to an anxious, troubled look, and faint lines came across her brow.

"Why, it is only Harry with his friend," said Louise quietly.

"Yes: flopping and splashing about in the boat. There will not be a fish left when they've done."

"I'll tell them to land at the lower stairs," said Louise eagerly.

"No; let 'em come and do their worst," said the old man, with quite a snarl.

"Why doesn't Harry row, instead of letting that miserable cockney fool about with an oar?"

"Miserable cockney!" said Duncan Leslie to himself; and his face, which had been overcast, brightened a little as he scanned the boat coming from the harbour.

"Mr. Pradelle likes exercise," said Louise quietly.

Duncan's face grew dull again.

"Then I wish he would take it in London," said the old man, "jumping over his desk or using his pen, and not come here."

The water glistened and sparkled with the vigorous strokes given by the two young men who propelled the boat, and quickly after there was a grating noise as the bows ground against the rocks of the point and a young man in white flannels leaped ashore, while his companion after awkwardly laying in his oar followed the example, balancing himself

as he stepped on to the gunwale, and then after the fashion of a timid horse at a gutter, making a tremendous bound on to the rocks.

As he did this his companion made a quick leap back into the bows to seize the chain, when he had to put out an oar once more and paddle close up to the rock, the boat having been sent adrift by the force of the other's leap.

"What a fellow you are, Pradelle!" he said, as he jumped on to a rock, and twisted the chain about a block.

"Very sorry, dear boy. Didn't think of that."

"No," said the first sourly, "you didn't."

He was a well-knit manly fellow, singularly like his sister, while his companion, whom he had addressed as Pradelle, seemed to be his very opposite in every way, though on the whole better looking; in fact, his features were remarkably handsome, or would have been had they not been marred by his eyes, which were set close together, and gave him a shifty look.

"How are you, uncle? How do, Leslie?" said Harry, as he stood twirling a gold locket at the end of his chain, to receive a grunt from the fisherman, and a friendly nod from the young mine-owner. "So here you are then," he continued; "we've been looking for you everywhere. You said you were going along the west walk."

"Yes, but we saw uncle fishing, and came down to him."

"Well, come along now."

"Come? Where?"

"Come where? Why for a sail. Wind's just right. Jump in."

Duncan Leslie looked grave, but he brightened a little as he heard what followed.

"Oh no, Harry."

As she spoke, Louise Vine glanced at her companion, in whose face she read an eager look of acquiescence in the proposed trip, which changed instantly to one of agreement with her negative.

"There, Vic. Told you so. Taken all our trouble for nothing."

"But, Harry——"

"Oh, all right," he cried, interrupting her, in an ill-used tone. "Just like girls. Here's our last day before we go back to the con-founded grindstone. We've got the boat, the weather's lovely; we've been looking for you everywhere, and it's 'Oh no, Harry!' And Madelaine looking as if it would be too shocking to go for a sail."

"We don't like to disappoint you," said Madelaine, "but——"

"But you'd rather stay ashore," said the young man shortly. "Never mind, Vic, old chap, we'll go alone, and have a good smoke. Cheerful, isn't it? I say, Uncle Luke, you're quite right."

"First time you ever thought so then," said the old man shortly.

"Perhaps Miss Vine will reconsider her determination," said the young man's companion, in a low soft voice, as he went toward Louise, and seemed to Duncan Leslie to be throwing all the persuasion possible into his manner.

"Oh no, thank you, Mr. Pradelle," she replied hastily, and Duncan Leslie once more felt relieved and yet pained, for there was a peculiar consciousness in her manner.

"We had brought some cans with us and a hammer and chisel," continued Pradelle. "Harry thought we might go as far as the gorns."

"Zorns, man," cried Harry.

"I beg pardon, zorns, and get a few specimens for Mr. Vine."

"It was very kind and thoughtful of Harry," said Louise hastily, "and we are sorry to disappoint him—on this his last day—but——"

"Blessed but!" said Harry, with a sneer; and he gave Madelaine a withering look, which made her bite her lip.

"And the fish swarming round the point," said Uncle Luke impatiently. "Why don't you go with them, girls?"

"Right again, uncle," said Harry.

The old man made him a mocking bow.

"Go, uncle!" said Louise eagerly, and then checking herself.

Duncan Leslie's heart sank like an ingot of his own copper dropped in a tub.

"Yes, go."

"If you think so, uncle——"

"Well, I do," he said testily, "only pray go at once."

"There!" cried Harry. "Come, Maddy."

He held out his hand to his sister's companion, but she hesitated, still looking at Louise, whose colour was going and coming as she saw Pradelle take off his cap and follow his friend's example, holding out his hand to help her into the boat.

"Yes, dear," she said to Madelaine gravely. "They would be terribly disappointed if we did not go."

The next moment Madelaine was in the boat, Louise still hanging back till, feeling that it would be a slight worse than the refusal to go if she ignored the help extended to her, she laid her hand in Pradelle's, and

stepped off the rock into the gently rising and falling boat.

"Another of my mistakes," said Duncan Leslie to himself; and then he started as if some one had given him an electric shock.

"Hullo!" cried the old man. "You're going too!"

"I? going?"

"Yes, of course! To take care of them. I'm not going to have them set off without some one to act as ballast to those boys."

Louise mentally cast her arms round the old man's neck and kissed him.

Harry, in the same manner, kicked his uncle into the sea, and Pradelle's eyes looked closer together than usual, as he turned them upon the young mine-owner.

"I should only be too happy," said the latter, "if——"

"Oh, there's plenty of room, Mr. Leslie," cried the girls in duet. "Pray come."

The invitation was so genuine that Leslie's heart seemed to leap.

"Oh yes, plenty of room," said Harry, "only if the wind drops, you'll have to pull an oar."

"Of course," said Leslie, stepping in.

Harry raised the boat-hook, and thrust the little vessel away, and then began to step the mast.

"Lay hold of the rudder, Leslie," he cried. "Send us up some fish for tea, uncle."

"I'll wait and see first whether you come back," said the old man. "Good-bye, girls. Don't be uneasy. I'll go and tell the old people if you're drowned."

"Thank you," shouted back the young man as he hoisted the little sail, which began to fill at once, and by the time he had it sheeted home, the boat was swiftly running eastward with the water pattering against her bows, and a panorama of surpassing beauty seeming to glide slowly by them on the left.

"There!" cried Harry to his friend, who had seated himself rather sulkily forward, the order to take the tiller having placed Leslie between Louise and Madelaine. "Make much of it, Vic: Paddington to-morrow night, hansom cab or the Underground, and next morning the office. Don't you feel happy?"

"Yes, now," said Pradelle, with a glance at Louise.

"Easy, Leslie, easy," cried Harry; "where are you going?"

"I beg pardon," said the young man hastily, for he had unwittingly changed the course of the boat.

"That's better. Any one would think

you wanted to give Uncle Luke the job he talked about."

Madelaine looked up hastily.

"No; we will not do that, Miss Van Hel-dre," said Leslie smiling. "Shall I hold the sheet, Vine?"

"No need," said the young man, making the rope fast.

"But——"

"Oh, all right. I know what you're going to say—puff of wind might lay us over as we pass one of the combea. Wasn't born here for nothing."

Leslie said no more, but deferred to the opinion of the captain of the boat.

"Might as well have brought a line to trail. You'd have liked to fish, wouldn't you, Vic?"

"Only when we are alone," said Pradelle. "Can you tell me the name of that point, Miss Vine?"

"Brea," said Louise quietly.

"And that little valley?"

"Tol Du. The old Cornish names must sound strange to any one from London."

"Oh no," he said, bending forward to engage her in conversation. "This place is very interesting, and I shall regret going," he added with a sigh, and a thoughtful look toward the picturesque little group of houses on either side of the estuary.

"I should think you will," said Harry. "Never mind, we've had a very jolly time. I say, Maddy," he whispered, "you will write to a fellow, won't you?"

"No," she said quietly; "there is no need."

"No need?"

"Louie will be writing to you every week, and you will answer her. I shall hear how you are getting on."

Harry whistled and looked angrily at his sister, who was replying to some remark made by Leslie.

"Here, Vic," he said, "she's too heavy forward. Come and sit by my sister. That's better. A little more over to the side, Leslie. Always trim your boat."

The changes were made, and the little yawl sped rapidly on past the headland of grey granite hoary and shaggy with moss; past black frowning masses of slaty shale, over and amongst which the waves broke in sparkling foam, and on and on by ferny hollows and rifts, down which trickled tiny streams. The day was glorious, and the reflection of the sapphire sky dyed the sea tint of a blue that seemed amethystine in its richer transparent hue. The grey gulls floated overhead, and the tiny fish they pursued made

the sea flash as they played about and showed their silvery sides.

But the conversation flagged. Possibly the fact of its being the last day of a pleasant sojourn acted upon the spirits of two of the party, while the third of the male occupants of the boat rather welcomed the restraint and silence, for it gave him an opportunity to sit and think and wonder what was to be his future, and what the animated countenance of Louise Vine meant as she answered the questions of her brother's friend.

He was a visitor as well as her brother's companion; he had been staying at Mr. Vine's for a fortnight. They had had endless opportunities for conversation, and—in short, Duncan Leslie felt uncomfortable.

It was then with a feeling of relief that was shared by both the ladies, that after a few miles run Henry Vine stood up in the bows, and, keeping a sharp look out for certain rocks, shouted his orders to Leslie as to the steering of the boat, and finally, as they neared the frowning cliffs, suddenly lowered the sail and took up the oars.

They were abreast of a large cave, where the swift grey-winged pigeons flew in and out over the swelling waves, which seemed to glide slowly on and on, to rush rapidly after the birds and disappear in the gloom beneath the arch. Then there was a low echoing boom as the wave struck far away in the cave, and came back hissing and whispering to be merged in the next.

"Going to row close in?" said Leslie, scanning the weird, forbidding place rather anxiously.

"Going to row right in," said Harry, with a contemptuous smile. "Not afraid, are you?"

"Can't say," replied Leslie. "A little perhaps. The place does not look tempting. Do you think it is safe to go in?"

"Like to land on the rock till we come back?" said Harry instead of answering the question.

"No," said Leslie quietly; "but do you think it wise to row in there?"

"You're not afraid, are you, girls?"

"I always feel nervous till we are outside again," said Louise quietly.

"But you will be very careful, Harry," said Madelaine.

"Think I want to drown myself?" he said bitterly. "I might just as well praps, as go back to that dismal office in London, to slave from morning till night."

He rested upon his oars for a minute or two, and perhaps from the reflection of the masses of ferns which fringed the arch of the

cavern, and which were repeated in the clear waters, Victor Pradelle's face seemed to turn of a sickly green while one hand grasped the edge of the boat with spasmodic force.

"Now then, hold tight," said the rower, as a swell came from seaward, running right in and raising the boat so that by skilful management she was borne forward right beneath the arch and then away into the depths of the cavern, leaving her rocking upon the watery floor, while it sped on away into the darkness where it broke with a booming noise which echoed, and whispered, and died away in sobs, and sighs, and strange hisses and gasps, as if the creatures which made the cavern their lair had been disturbed, and were settling down again to sleep.

"There Vic," cried Harry, "what do you think of this?"

Pradelle was holding tightly by the side of the boat, and gazing uneasily round.

"Think? Yes: very wild and wonderful," he said huskily.

"Wonderful? I should think it is. Goes in ever so far, only it isn't wide enough for the boat."

Leslie looked back at the mouth, fringed with the fronds of ferns, and at the lovely picture it framed of sunny amethystine sea; then at the rocky sides, dripping with moisture, and here of a rich metallic green, there covered with glistening weeds of various shades of olive-green and brown.

"Ahoy—oy!" shouted Harry with all his might, and at the same moment he let his oars splash in the water.

Pradelle leaped to his feet as there came a strange echo and a whirring rush, and a dozen pigeons swept past their heads from out of the depths of the water cave, and away into the brilliant sunshine.

"Oh, if I had a gun," cried Pradelle, to hide his confusion.

"What for—to make a miss?" sneered Harry. "Now then, out with those cans. Fill every one, and I'll try and knock off a few anemones for the governor."

As he spoke he laid in his oars, picked a hammer and chisel from out of the locker in the forepart of the boat, and then worked it along by the side of the great cave, as from out of the clefts and crannies above and beneath the water he searched for the semi-gelatinous sea anemones that clustered among barnacles, and the snail-like whorl molluscs whose home was on the weedy rocks.

The girls aided all they could, pointing out and receiving in the tins a many-rayed

creature, which closed up till it resembled a gout of blood; now, still adhering to the rock which Harry chipped off, a beautiful *Actinia* of olive-green with gem-like spots around the mouth and amid its fringe, of turquoise blue.

Duncan Leslie eagerly lent his help; and, not to be behindhand, Pradelle took up the boat-hook and held on, but with the smoothness and care of a sleek tom-cat, he carefully avoided wetting his hands.

"Nothing very new here," said Harry at last, as the waves that kept coming in made the boat rise and fall gently; "there's another better cave than this close by. Let's go there; or what do you say to stopping here and having a smoke till the tide has risen and shut us in?"

"Is there any risk of that?" said Pradelle anxiously.

"Oh, yes, plenty."

Leslie glanced at Louisa and thought that it would be very pleasant to play protector all through the darkness till the way was open and daylight shone again. He caught her eyes more than once and tried to read them as he wondered whether there was hope for him; but so surely as she found him gazing rather wistfully at her, she hurriedly continued the collecting, pointing out one of the beautiful objects they sought beneath the surface, and asking Pradelle to shift the boat a little farther along.

"All my vanity and conceit," said Leslie to himself with a sigh; "and why should I worry myself about a woman? I have plenty to do without thinking of love and marriage. If I did, why not begin to dream about pleasant, straightforward Madelaine Van Helder? There can be nothing more than a friendly feeling towards Master Harry here."

"Now then, sit fast," cried the latter object of his thoughts; "and if we are cap-sized, girls, I'll look after you, Maddy. Pradelle here will swim out with Louie, and I shall leave you to bring out the boat, Leslie. You can swim, can't you?"

"A little," said the young man drily.

Pradelle looked rather more green, for the light within the cave was of a peculiar hue, and he began to think uneasily of bathing out of a machine at Margate, holding on to a rope, and also of the effort he once made to swim across a tepid bath in town. But he laughed heartily directly after as he realised that it was all banter on his friend's part, while, in spite of himself, he gave a sigh of relief as, riding out on the crest of a

broken wave, they once more floated in the sunshine.

Ten minutes' careful rowing among the rocks, which were now four or five feet beneath the water, now showing their weedy crests above, brought them to the mouth of another cave, only approachable from the sea, and sending the boat in here, the collection went on till it was deemed useless to take more specimens, when they passed out again, greatly to Pradelle's satisfaction.

"How's time?" said Harry. "Half-past four? Plenty of time. High tea at six. What shall we do—sail right out and tack, or row along here in the smooth water among the rocks?"

"Row slowly back," said Louise; and Pradelle took an oar.

At the end of half a mile he ceased rowing.

"Tired?" said Harry.

"No; I have a blister on my hand; that's all."

"Come and pull, Leslie," said Harry. "You'd better steer, Louie, and don't send us on to a rock."

The exchange of places was made, and once more they began to progress with the boat, travelling far more swiftly as they glided on close in to the mighty cliff which rose up overhead, dappled with mossy grey and patches of verdure, dotted with yellow and purple blooms.

"To go on like this for ever!" thought Leslie as he swung to and fro, his strong muscles making the water foam as he dipped his oar, watching Louise as she steered, and seemed troubled and ready to converse with Pradelle whenever she caught his eye.

"Starn all!" shouted Harry suddenly, as about three miles from home they came abreast of a narrow opening close to the surface of the water.

The way of the boat was checked, and Harry looked at the hole into which the tide ran and ebbed as the swell rose and fell, now nearly covering the opening, now leaving it three or four feet wide.

"Bound to say there are plenty of good specimens in there," he said. "What do you say, Vic, shall we go in?"

"Impossible."

"Not it. Bound to say that's the opening to quite a large zorn. I've seen the seals go in there often."

"Has it ever been explored?" said Leslie, who felt interested in the place.

"No; it's nearly always covered. It's only at low tides like this that the opening is bared. If the girls were not here I'd go in."

"How?" said Pradelle.

"How?—why swim in."

"And be shut up by the tide and drowned," said Louise.

"Good thing too," said Harry, with the same look of a spoiled boy at Madelaine. "I don't find life go very jolly. Boat wouldn't pass in there."

He had risen from his seat and was standing with one foot on the gunwale, the other on the thwart, gazing curiously at the dark orifice some forty yards away, the boat rising and falling as it swayed here and there on the waves, which ran up to the face of the cliff and back, when just as the attention of all was fixed upon the little opening, from which came curious hissing and rushing noises, the boat rose on a good-sized swell, and as it sank was left upon the top of a weedy rock which seemed to rise like the shaggy head of a huge sea monster beneath the keel.

There was a bump, a grinding, grating noise, a shout and a heavy splash, and the boat after narrowly escaping being capsized, floated once more in deep water; but Harry had lost his balance, gone overboard, and disappeared.

Madelaine uttered a cry of horror, and then for a few moments there was a dead silence, during which Louise sat with blanched face, parted lips, and dilated eyes, gazing at the spot where her brother had disappeared. Pradelle held on by the side of the boat, and Leslie sprang up, rapidly stripped off coat and vest, and stood ready to plunge in.

Those moments seemed indefinitely prolonged, and a terrible feeling of despair began to attack the occupants of the boat as thought after thought, each of the blackest type, flashed through their brains. He had been sucked down by the undertow, and was being carried out to sea—he was entangled in the slimy sea wrack, and could not rise again—he had struck his head against the rocks, stunned himself, and gone down like a stone, and so on.

Duncan Leslie darted one glance at the pale and suffering face of the sister, placed a foot on the gunwale, and was in the act of gathering himself up to spring from the boat, when Harry's head rose thirty yards away.

"A-hoy!" he shouted, as he began to paddle and tread water. "Hallo, Leslie, ready for a bathe? Come out! Water's beautiful. Swim you back to the harbour."

There was a long-drawn breath in the boat which sounded like a groan, as the terrible mental pressure was removed, and the young man began to swim easily and slowly towards his friends.

"Mind she doesn't get on another rock, Leslie," he cried.

"Here, catch hold of this," cried Pradelle, whose face was ashy, and he held out the boat-hook as far as he could reach.

"Thank ye," said Harry mockingly, and twenty yards away. "Little farther, please. What a lovely day for a swim!"

"Harry, pray come into the boat," cried Louise excitedly.

"What for? Mind the porpoise."

He gave a few sharp blows on the water with his hands, raising himself up and turning right over, dived, his legs just appearing above the surface, and then there was an eddy where he had gone down.

"Don't be frightened," whispered Madelaine, whose voice sounded a little husky.

"Here we are again!" cried Harry, reappearing close to the boat and spluttering the water from his lips, as with all the gaiety of a boy he looked mirthfully at the occupants of the boat. "Any orders for pearls, ladies?"

"Don't be foolish, Harry," cried Louise, as he swam close to them.

"Not going to be. I say, Leslie, take the boat-hook away from that fellow, or he'll be making a hole in the bottom of the boat."

As he spoke, he laid a hand upon the gunwale and looked merrily from one to the other.

"Don't touch me, girls. I'm rather damp," he said. "I say, what a capital bathing dress flannels make!"

"Shall I help you in?" said Leslie.

"No, thank ye, I'm all right. As I am in, I may as well have a swim."

"No, no, Harry, don't be foolish," cried Louise.

"There, you'd better hitch a rope round me, and tow me behind, or I shall swamp the boat."

"Harry! what are you going to do?" cried Madelaine, as he loosed his hold of the gunwale, and began to swim away.

"Wait a bit and you'll see," he cried.

"Leslie, you take care of the boat. I shan't be long."

"But Harry——"

"All right, I tell you."

"Where are you going?"

"In here," he shouted back, and he swam straight to the low opening at the foot of the massive granite cliff, paddled a little at

the mouth till the efflux of water was over, and then as a fresh wave came, he took a few strokes, gave a shout, and to the horror of the two girls seemed to be sucked right into the opening.

As he disappeared, he gave another shout, a hollow strange echoing "Good-bye," and a few moments after there was a run back of the water and a hollow roar, and it needed very little exercise of the imagination to picture the rugged opening as the mouth of some marine monster into which the young man had passed.

CHAPTER III.—DISCORDS.

"DON'T be alarmed," said Leslie quietly, "I dare say it is like one of the zorns yonder, only the mouth is too narrow for a boat."

"But it is so foolish," said Louise, giving him a grateful look.

"Yes, but he swims so easily and well, there is nothing to mind. What are you going to do, Mr. Pradelle?"

"Work the boat close up so as to help him," said Pradelle shortly.

"No, don't do that. We have had one escape from a capsized. We must keep out here in deep water."

Pradelle frowned.

"I think I know what I'm about, sir," he said sharply; "do you suppose I am going to sit here when my friend may be in danger?"

"I have no doubt you know what you are about in London, sir," said Leslie quietly, "but this is not a pavement in the Strand, and it is not safe to take the boat closer in."

Pradelle was about to make some retort, but Louise interposed.

"Try if you can get nearer the mouth of that dreadful place, Mr. Leslie," she said, "I am getting terribly alarmed."

Leslie seated himself, took the oars, turned the boat, and backed slowly and cautiously in, holding himself ready to pull out again at the slightest appearance of danger. For the sea rushed against the rocky barrier with tremendous force, while even on this calm day, the swing and wash and eddy amongst the loose rocks was formidable.

By skilful management Leslie backed the boat to within some thirty feet of the opening; but the position was so perilous that he had to pull out for a few yards to avoid a couple of rocks, which in the movement of the clear water seemed to be rising toward them from time to time, and coming perilously near.

Then he shouted, but there was no answer. He shouted again and again, but there was no reply, and a chill of horror, intensifying from moment to moment, came upon all.

"Harry! Harry!" cried Louise, now raising her voice, as Madelaine crept closer to her and clutched her hand.

But there was no reply. No sound but the rush and splash and hiss of the waters as they struck the rocks, and came back broken from the attack.

"What folly!" muttered Leslie, with his face growing rugged. Then quickly, "I don't think you need feel alarmed; I dare say he has swum in for some distance, and our voices do not reach him. Stop a moment."

He suddenly remembered a little gold dog-whistle at his watch-chain, and raising it to his lips he blew long and shrilly, till the ear-piercing note echoed along the cliff, and the gulls came floating lazily overhead and peering wonderingly down.

"I say, Harry, old man, come out now," cried Pradelle, and then rising from his seat, he placed his hands on either side of his lips, and uttered the best imitation he could manage of the Australian call, "Coo-ey! Coo-ey!"

There were echoes and whispers, and the rush and hiss of the water. Then two or three times over there came from out of the opening a peculiar dull hollow sound, such as might be made by some great animal wallowing far within.

"Mr. Leslie," said Louise in a low appealing voice, "what shall we do?"

"Oh, wait a few minutes, my dear Miss Vine," interposed Pradelle, hastily: "He'll be out directly. I assure you there is no cause for alarm."

Leslie frowned, but his face coloured directly, for his heart gave a great throb.

Louise paid not the slightest heed to Pradelle's words, and kept her limpid eyes fixed appealingly upon Leslie's, as if she looked to him for help.

"I hardly know what to do," he said in a low business-like tone. "I dare not leave you without some one to manage the boat, or I would go in."

"Yes, yes, pray go!" she said excitedly. "Never mind us."

"We could each take an oar and keep the boat here," said Madelaine quickly, "we can both row."

"No, really; I'll manage the boat," said Pradelle.

"I think you had better leave it to the

ladies, Mr. Pradelle," said Leslie coldly. "They know the coast."

"Well really, sir, I——"

"This is no time for interference," cried Madelaine with a flush of excitement, and she caught hold of an oar. "Louie dear, quick!"

The other oar was resigned, and as Leslie passed aft, he gave Louise one quick look, reading in her face, as he believed, trust and thankfulness and then dread.

"No, no, Mr. Leslie, I hardly dare let you go," she faltered.

Plash!

The boat was rolling and dancing on the surface, relieved of another burden, and Duncan Leslie was swimming toward the opening.

The two girls dipped their oars from time to time, for their seaside life had given them plenty of experience of the management of a boat; and as Pradelle sat looking sulky and ill-used, they watched the swimmer as he too timed his movements, so that he gradually approached, and then in turn was sucked right into the weird water-way, which might lead another into some terrible chasm from which there was no return.

A low hoarse sigh, as if one had whispered while suffering pain the word "Hah!" And then with dilated eyes the two girls sat watching the black opening for what seemed a terrible interval of time, before, to their intense relief, there came a shout of laughter, followed by the appearance of Leslie, who swam out looking stern, and closely followed by Harry.

"It is not the sort of fun I can appreciate, Miss Vine," said Leslie, turning as he reached the stern of the boat.

"Well, I know that," cried Harry mockingly. "Scotchmen never can appreciate a joke."

"There, ladies, what did I tell you?" cried Pradelle triumphantly.

There was no reply, and the visitor from London winced, for his presence in the boat seemed to be thoroughly *de trop*.

"Miss Vine—Miss Van Heldre," said Leslie quietly, "will you change places now? Get right aft and we will climb in over the bows."

"But the boat?" faltered Louise, whose emotion was so great that she could hardly trust herself to speak.

"We'll see to that," said Leslie. "Your brother and I will row back."

It did not seem to trouble him now that the two girls took their places, one on either

side of Pradelle, while as soon as they were seated he climbed in streaming with water, seating himself on the gunwale, Harry climbing in on the other side.

"Harry, how could you?" cried Louise, now, with an indignant look.

"Easily enough," he said, seating himself calmly. "Thought you'd lost me!"

He looked at Madelaine as he spoke, but she turned her face away biting her lips, and it was Louise who replied,

"I did not think you could have been so cruel."

"Cruel be hanged!" he retorted. "Thought I'd find out whether I was of any consequence after all. You people seem to say I'm of none. Did they begin to cry, Vic?"

"Oh, I'm not going to tell tales," said Pradelle with a smile.

"I should have had a pipe in there, only my matches had got wet."

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed Pradelle, and the mirth sounded strange there beneath the rocks, and a very decided hiss seemed to come from out of the low rugged opening.

"Try again, Vic," said Harry mockingly; but his friend made no reply, for he was staring hard and defiantly at Leslie, who, as he handled his oar, gave him a calmly contemptuous look that galled him to the quick.

"Ready, Leslie?" said Harry.

"Yes."

The oars dipped, Leslie pulling stroke, and the boat shot out from its dangerous position among the rocks, rose at a good-sized swelling wave, topped it, seemed to hang as in a balance for a moment, and then glided down and went forward in response to a few vigorous strokes.

"Never mind the tiller, Vic," said Harry; "let it swing. We can manage without that. All right, girls!"

There was no reply.

"Sulky, eh? Well, I'd a good mind to stop in. Sorry you got so wet, Leslie."

Still no reply.

"Cheerful party, 'pon my word!" said Harry with a contemptuous laugh. "Hope no one objects to my smoking."

He looked hard at Madelaine, but she avoided his gaze, and he uttered a short laugh.

"Got a cigar to spare, Vic?"

"Yes, dear boy, certainly."

"Pass it along then, and the lights. Hold hard a minute, Leslie."

The latter ceased rowing as Pradelle handed a cigar and the matches to his friend.

"Will you take one, Mr. Leslie?" said Pradelle.

"Thanks, no," said Leslie quietly, and to the would-be donor's great relief, for he had only two left. Then once more the rowing was resumed, Pradelle striking a match to light a cigar for himself, and then recollecting himself and throwing the match away.

"Well, we're enjoying ourselves!" cried Harry after they had proceeded some distance in silence. "I say, Vic, say something!"

Pradelle had been cudgelling his brains for the past ten minutes, but the more he tried to find something *à propos* the more every pleasant subject seemed to recede.

In fact it would have been difficult just then for the most accomplished talker to have set all present at their ease, for Harry's folly had moved his sister so that she feared to speak lest she should burst into a hysterical fit of weeping, and Madeline, as she sat there with her lips compressed, felt imbued with but one desire, which took the form of the following words:

"Oh, how I should like to box his ears!"

"Getting dry, Leslie?" said Harry after a long silence.

"Not very," was the reply.

"Ah well, there's no fear of our catching cold pulling like this."

"Not the slightest," said Leslie coldly; then there was another period of silence, during which the water seemed to patter and slap the bows of the boat, while the panorama of rock and foam and glittering cascade, as the crags were bathed by the Atlantic swell, and it fell back broken, seemed perfectly fresh and new as seen from another point of view.

At last Harry, after trying two or three times more to start a conversation, said shortly—

"Well, this is my last day at home, and I think I ought to say, 'Thank goodness!' This is coming out for a pleasant sail, and having to row back like a galley-slave! Oh, I beg your pardon, ladies! All my mistake. I am highly complimented. All this glumminess is because I am going away."

He received such a look of reproach that he uttered an angry ejaculation and began to pull so hard that Leslie had to second his movement to keep the boat's head straight for the harbour, whose farther point soon after came in sight, with two figures on the rocks at the end.

"Papa along with Uncle Luke," said Louise softly.

"Eh?" said Harry sharply; "the old man still fishing?"

"Yes," said Louise rather coldly; "and, Maddy, dear, is not that Mr. Van Helder?"

Madeline shaded her eyes from the western sun, where it was sinking fast, and nodded.

"Where shall we land you?" said Harry sulkily now, "at the point, or will you go up the harbour?"

"If there is not too much sea on, at the point," said Louise gravely.

"Oh, I dare say we can manage that without wetting your plumes," said the young man contemptuously; and after another ten minutes' pulling they reached the harbour mouth and made for the point, where Uncle Luke stood leaning on his rod watching the coming boat, in company with a tall grey man with refined features, who had taken off the straw hat he wore to let the breeze play through his closely cut hair, while from time to time he turned to speak either to Uncle Luke or to the short thick-set man who, with his pointed white moustache and closely clipped peaked beard, looked in his loose holland blouse like a French officer taking his vacation at the sea-side.

"Mind how you come," said the latter in a sharp, decided way. "Watch your time, Leslie. Back in, my lad. Can you manage it, girls?"

"Oh, yes," they cried confidently.

"Sit still then till the boat's close in, then one at a time. You first, my dear."

This to Louise, as he stepped actively down the granite rocks to a narrow natural shelf, which was now bare, now several inches deep in water.

"If we manage it cleverly we can get you ashore without a wetting."

The warnings were necessary, for the tide ran fast, and the Atlantic swell made the boat rise and fall, smooth as the surface was.

"Now then," cried the French-looking gentleman, giving his orders as if he were an officer in command, "easy, Harry Vine; back a little, Mr. Leslie. Be ready, Louie, my dear. That's it; a little more. I have you. Bravo!"

The words came slowly, and with the latter there was a little action; as he took the hands outstretched to him, when the boat nearly grazed the rock, there was a light spring, the girl was on the narrow shelf, and the boat, in answer to a touch of the oars, was half-a-dozen yards away, rising and falling on the swell.

"Give me your hand, my dear," said the tall grey gentleman, leaning down.

"Oh, I can manage, papa," she cried, and the next moment she was by his side. Looking back, "Thank you, Mr. Van Heldre," she said.

"Eh? All right, my child. Now, Maddy. Steady, my lads. Mind that ledge; don't get her under there. Bravo! that's right. Now, my girl. Well done!"

Madeline leaped to his side, and was in turn assisted to the top, she accepting the tall gentleman's help, while Uncle Luke, with his hands resting on his rod, which he held with the butt on the rock, stood grimly looking down at the boat.

"I think I'll land here," said Leslie. "You don't want my help with the boat."

"Oh, no; we can manage," said Harry sourly; and Leslie gave up his oar and leaped on to the rock as the boat was again backed in.

"That chap looks quite green," said Uncle Luke with a sneering laugh. "Our London friend been poorly, Louie?"

Before she could answer the tall gentleman cried to those in the boat—

"Don't be long, my boy. Tea will be waiting."

"All right, dad. Lay hold of this oar, Vic, and let's get her moored."

"Why, you're wet, Mr. Leslie," said the tall gentleman, shaking hands.

"Only sea-water, sir. It's nothing."

"But," said the former speaker, looking quickly from one to the other, and his handsome, thoughtful face seemed troubled, "has there been anything wrong?"

"Harry fell in," said Louise, speaking rather quickly and excitedly; "and, Mr. Leslie—"

"Ah!" ejaculated the tall gentleman excitedly.

"It was nothing, sir," said Leslie hastily. "He swam in among the rocks—into a cave, and he was a long time gone, and I went after him; that's all."

"But, my dear boy, you must make haste and change your things."

"I shall not hurt, Mr. Vine."

"And—and—look here. Make haste and come on then to us. There will be a meal ready. It's Harry's last day at home."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Vine; I don't think I'll come to-night."

"But you have been one of the party so far, and I should—Louie, my dear—"

"We shall be very glad if you will come, Mr. Leslie," said Louise, in response to her

father's hesitating words and look, and there was a calm, ingenuous invitation in her words that made the young man's heart throb.

"I, too, shall be very glad," he said quietly.

"That's right, that's right," said Mr. Vine, laying one of his long thin white hands on the young man's arm; and then, changing its position, so that he could take hold of one of the buttons on his breast. Then turning quickly: "Madeline's coming, of course."

"Louie says so," said the girl quietly.

"To be sure; that's right, my dear; that's right," said the old man, beaming upon her as he took one of her hands to hold and pat it in his. "You'll come too, Van?"

"I? No, no. I've some bills of lading to look over."

"Yah!" ejaculated Uncle Luke with a snarl.

"Yes; bills of lading, you idle old cynic. I can't spend my time fishing."

"Pity you can't," said Uncle Luke. "Money, money, always money."

"Hear him, Mr. Leslie?" said Van Heldre smiling. "Are you disposed to follow his teachings?"

"I'm afraid not," said Leslie.

"Not he," snarled Uncle Luke.

"But you will come, Van?" said Mr. Vine.

"My dear fellow, I wish you would not tempt me. There's work to do. Then there's my wife."

"Bring Mrs. Van Heldre too," said Louise, laying her hand on his.

"Ah, you temptress," he cried merrily.

"It's Harry's last evening," said Mr. Vine.

"Look here," said Van Heldre, "will you sing me my old favourite if I come, Louie?"

"Yes; and you shall have a duet too."

"Ah, never mind the duet," said Van Heldre laughingly; "I can always hear Maddy at home. There, out of pocket again by listening to temptation. I'll come."

"Come and join us too, Luke," said Mr. Vine.

"No!" snapped the old fisher.

"Do, uncle," said Louise.

"Shan't," he snarled, stooping to pick up his heavy basket.

"But it's Harry's last—"

"Good job too," snarled the old man.

"I'm going your way, Mr. Luke Vine," said Leslie. "Let me carry the basket?"

"Thank ye; I'm not above carrying my own fish," said the old man sharply; and he raised and gave the basket a swing to get it upon his back, but tottered with the weight, and nearly fell on the uneven rocks.

"There, it is too heavy for you," said Leslie, taking possession of the basket firmly; and Louise Vine's eyes brightened.

"Be too heavy for you when you get as old as I am," snarled the old man.

"I daresay," said Leslie quietly; and they went off together.

"Luke's in fine form this afternoon," said Van Heldre, nodding and smiling.

"Yes," said the brother, looking after him wistfully. "We shall wait till you come, Mr. Leslie," he shouted, giving vent to an afterthought.

The young man turned and waved his hand.

"Rather like Leslie," said Van Heldre. "Maddy, you'll have to set your cap at him."

Madelaine looked up at him and laughed.

"Yes, poor Luke!" said Mr. Vine thoughtfully, as he stooped and picked up a small net and a tin can, containing the treasures he had found in sundry rock pools. "I'm afraid we are a very strange family, Van," he added, as they walked back towards the little town.

"Very, old fellow," said his friend smiling. "I'll be with you before Leslie gets back, wife and the necessary change of dress permitting."

CHAPTER IV.—A THUNDERBOLT.

GEORGE VINE, gentleman, as he was set down in the parish books and the West-country directory, lived in a handsome old granite-built residence that he had taken years before, when, in obedience to his sister's wish, he had retired from the silk trade a wealthy man. But there he had joined issue with the lady in question, obstinately refusing to make France his home and selecting the house above named in the old Cornish port for two reasons: one, to be near his old friend Godfrey Van Heldre, a well-to-do merchant who carried on rather a mixed business, dealing largely in pilchards, which he sent in his own ships to the Italian ports, trading in return in such produce of the Levant as oranges, olives, and dried fruit; the other, so that he could devote himself to the branch of natural history, upon which he had grown to be an authority so great that his work upon the *Actiniadæ* of our coast was looked forward to with no little expectation by a good many people, in addition to those who wrote F.Z.S. at the end of their names.

The pleasant social meal known as high tea was spread in the long low oak-panelled dining-room, whose very wide bay window

looked right over the town from its shelf upon the huge granite cliffs, and far away westward from whence came the gales which beat upon the old mansion, whose granite sides and gables had turned them off for the past two hundred years.

It was a handsomely furnished room, thoroughly English, and yet with a suggestion of French in the paintings of courtly-looking folk, which decorated the panels above the old oak sideboard and dressers, upon which stood handsome old chased cups, flagons and salvers battered and scratched, but rich and glistening old silver all the same, and looking as if the dents and scratches were only the natural puckers and furrows such venerable pieces of plate should possess.

There was another suggestion of the foreign element, too, in the glazing of the deeply embayed window, for right across and between all the mullions, the leaden lattice panes gave place, about two-thirds of the way up, to a series of artistically painted armorial bearings in stained glass, shields and helmets with their crests and supporters, and beneath the scutcheon in the middle, a ribbon with triple curve and fold bearing the words *Roy et Foy*.

The furniture had been selected to be thoroughly in keeping with the antiquity of the mansion, and the old oak chairs and so much of the table as could be seen for the long fine white linen cloth was of the oldest and darkest oak.

The table was spread with the abundant fare dear to West-country folk; fruit and flowers gave colour, and the thick yellow cream and white sugar were piled high in silver bowls. The great tea urn was hissing upon its stand, the visitors had arrived, and the host was dividing his time between fidgeting to and fro from the door to Van Heldre, who was leaning up against one of the mullions of the great bay window talking to Leslie upon subjects paramount in Cornwall—fish and the yielding of the mines.

The young people were standing about talking, Louise with her hand resting on the chair where sat a pleasant-looking, rosy little woman with abundant white hair, and her mittened hands crossed over the waist of her purple velvet gown enriched with good French lace.

"Margaret Vine's keeping us waiting a long time this evening," she said.

"Mamma!" said Madelaine reproachfully.

"Well, my dear, it's the simple truth.

And so you go back to business to-morrow, Harry !”

“Yes, Mrs. Van Heldre. Slave again.”

“Nonsense, my boy. Work’s good for every one. I’m sure your friend, Mr. Pradelle, thinks so,” she continued, appealing to that gentleman.

“Well,” he said, with an unpleasant laugh, “nobody left me a fortune, so I’m obliged to say yes.”

“Ah, here she is !” said Mr. Vine, with a sigh of relief, as the door opened, and with almost theatrical effect a rather little sharp-looking woman of about sixty entered, gazing quickly round and pausing just within the room to make an extremely formal old-fashioned courtesy—sinking nearly to the ground as if she were a telescopic figure disappearing into the folds of the stiff rich brocade silk dress, of a wonderful pattern of pink and green, and cut in a fashion probably popular at Versailles a hundred years ago. She did not wear powder, but her white hair turned up and piled upon her head after the fashion of that blooming period, produced the same effect; and as she gave the fan she held a twitch which spread it open with a loud rattling noise, she seemed, with her haughty carriage, handsome aquiline face with long chin, that appeared to have formed the pattern for her stomacher, like one of the paintings on the panelled wall suddenly come to life, and feeling strange at finding herself among that modern company.

“I hope you have not waited for me,” she said, smiling and speaking in a high-pitched musical voice. “Louise, my child, you should not. Ah !” she continued, raising her gold-rimmed eye-glass to her thin arched nose and dropping it directly, “Mrs. Van Heldre, Mr. Van Heldre, pray be seated. Mr. Victor Pradelle, will you be so good ?”

The young man had gone through the performance several times before, and he was in waiting ready to take the tips of the gloved fingers extended to him, and walking over the thick Turkey carpet with the lady to the other end of the room in a way that seemed to endow him with a court suit and a sword, and suggested the probability of the couple continuing their deportment walk to the polished oak boards beyond the carpet, and then after sundry bows and courtesies going through the steps of the *minuet de la cour*.

As a matter of fact, Pradelle led the old girl, as he called her, to the seat she occupied at the end of the table, when she condescended to leave her room; the rest of the

company took their seats, and the meal began.

Harry had tried to ensconce himself beside Madelaine, but that young lady had made a sign to Duncan Leslie, who eagerly took the chair beside her, one which he coveted, for it was between her and Louise, now busy with the tea-tray; and in a sulky manner, Harry obeyed the motion of the elderly lady’s fan.

“That’s right, Henri, *mon cher*,” she said, smiling, “come and sit by me. I shall miss you so, my darling, when you are gone back to that horrible London, and that wretched business.”

“Don’t, don’t, don’t, Margaret, my dear,” said Mr. Vine, good-humouredly. “You will make him unhappy at having to leave home.”

“I hope so, George,” said the lady with dignity, and pronouncing his Christian name with the softness peculiar to the French tongue; “and,” she added with a smile, “especially as we have company, will you oblige me—Marguerite, if you please !”

“Certainly, certainly, my dear.”

“Is that Miss Van Heldre ?” said the lady, raising her glass once more. “I beg your pardon, my child; I hope you are well.”

“Quite well, thank you, Miss Marguerite Vine,” said Madelaine quietly, and her bright young face looked perfectly calm, though there was a touch of sarcasm in her tone.

“Louise dearest, my tea a little sweeter, please.”

The meal progressed, and the stiffness produced by the *entrée* of the host’s sister—it was her own term for her appearance—soon wore off, the lady being very quiet as she discussed the viands placed before her with a very excellent appetite. Mrs. Van Heldre prattled pleasantly on, with plenty of homely common-sense, to her host. Van Heldre threw in a word now and then, joked Louise and his daughter, and made a wrinkle on his broad forehead, which was his way of making a note.

The note he made was that a suspicion which had previously entered his brain was correct.

“He’s taken with her,” he said to himself, as he glanced at Louise and then at Duncan Leslie, who seemed to be living in a dream. As a rule he was an energetic, quick, and sensible man; on this occasion he was particularly silent, and when he spoke to either Madelaine or Louise, it was in a softened voice.

Van Heldre looked at his daughter.

Madelaine looked at her father, and they thoroughly read each other's thoughts, the girl's bright grey eyes saying to him as plainly as could be—

"You are quite right."

"Well," said Van Heldre to himself, as he placed a spoonful of black currant jam on his plate, and then over that two piled-up table-spoonfuls of clotted cream—"she's as nice and true-hearted a girl as ever stepped, and Leslie's a man, every inch of him. I'd have said *yes* in a moment if he had wanted my girl. I'm glad of it; but, poor fellow, what he'll have to suffer from that terrible old woman!"

He had just thought this, and was busy composing a *nocturne* or a *diurne*—probably the latter from its tints of red and yellow—upon his plate, which flowed with jam and cream, when Aunt Marguerite, who had eaten all she wished, began to stir her tea with courtly grace, and raised her voice in continuation of something she had been saying, but it was twenty-four hours before.

"Yes, Mr. Pradelle," she said, so that everyone should hear; "my memories of the past are painful, and yet a delight. We old Huguenots are proud of our past."

"You must be, madam."

"And you too," said the lady. "I feel sure that if you will take the trouble you will find that I am right. The Pradelles must have been of our people."

"I'll look into it as soon as I get back to town," said the young man.

Harry gave him a very vulgar wink.

"Do," said Aunt Marguerite. "By the way, I don't think I told you that though my brother persists in calling himself Vine, our name is Des Vignes, and we belong to one of the oldest families in Auvergne."

"Yes, that's right, Mr. Pradelle," said the host, nodding pleasantly; "but when a cruel persecution drove us over here, and old England held out her arms to us, and we found a kindly welcome——"

"My dear George!" interposed Aunt Marguerite.

"Let me finish, my dear," said Mr. Vine, good-temperedly. "It's Mr. Pradelle's last evening here."

"For the present, George, for the present."

"Ah, yes, of course, for the present, and I should like him to hear my version too."

Aunt Marguerite tapped the back of her left hand with her fan impatiently.

"We found here a hearty welcome and a home," continued Mr. Vine, "and we said we can never—we will never—return to the

land of fire and the sword; and then we, some of us poor, some of us well-to-do, settled down among our English brothers, and thanked God that in this new Land of Canaan we had found rest."

"And my dear Mr. Pradelle," began Aunt Marguerite, hastily; but Mr. Vine was started, and he talked on.

"In time we determined to be, in spite of our French descent, English of the English, for our children's sake, and we worked with them, and traded with them; and, to show our faith in them, and to avoid all further connection and military service in the country we had left, we even anglicised our names. My people became Vines; the D'Aubigneys, Daubney or Dobbs; the Boileaus, Drinkwater; the Guipets, Guppy. Vulgarising our names, some people say; but never mind, we found rest, prosperity, and peace."

"Quite right, Mr. Pradelle," said Van Heldre, "and in spite of my name and my Huguenot descent, I say, thank Heaven I am now an Englishman."

"No, no, no, no, Mr. Van Heldre," said Aunt Marguerite, throwing herself back, and looking at him with a pitying smile. "You cannot prove your Huguenot descent."

"Won't contradict you, ma'am," said Van Heldre. "Capital jam this, Louise."

"You must be of Dutch descent," said Aunt Marguerite.

"I went carefully over my father's pedigree, Miss Marguerite," said Madelaine quietly.

"Indeed, my child?" said the lady, raising her brows.

"And I found without doubt that the Venelttes fled during the persecutions to Holland, where they stayed for half a century, and changed their names to Van Heldre before coming to England."

"Quite right," said Van Heldre in a low voice. "Capital cream."

"Ah, yes," said Aunt Margaret; "but, my dear child, such papers are often deceptive."

"Yes," said Van Heldre, smiling, "often enough, so are traditions and many of our beliefs about ancestry; but I hope I have enough of what you call the *haute noblesse* in me to give way, and not attempt to argue the point."

"No, Mr. Van Heldre," said Aunt Margaret, with a smile of pity and good-humoured contempt; "we have often argued together upon this question, but I cannot sit in silence and hear you persist in that which is

not true. No: you have not any Huguenot blood in your veins."

"My dear madam, I feel at times plethoric enough to wish that the old-fashioned idea of being blooded in the spring were still in vogue. I have so much Huguenot blood in my veins, that I should be glad to have less."

Aunt Margaret shook her head, and tightened her lips.

"Low Dutch," she said to herself, "Low Dutch."

Van Heldre read her thoughts in the movement of her lips.

"Don't much matter," he said. "Vine, old fellow, think I shall turn over a new leaf."

"Eh? New leaf?"

"Yes; get a good piece of marsh, make a dam to keep out the sea and take to keeping cows. What capital cream!"

"Yes, Mr. Pradelle," continued Aunt Margaret; "we are Huguenots of the Huguenots, and it is the dream of my life that Henri should assert his right to the title his father repudiates, and become Comte des Vignes."

"Ah!" said Pradelle.

"Vigorous steps have only to be taken to wrest the family estates in Auvergne from the usurpers who hold them. I have long fought for this, but so far, I grieve to say, vainly. My brother here has mistaken notions about the respectability of trade, and is content to vegetate."

"Oh, you miserable old vegetable!" said Van Heldre to himself, as he gave his friend a droll look, and shook his head.

"To vegetate in this out-of-the-way place when he should be watching over the welfare of his country, and as a nobleman of that land, striving to stem the tide of democracy. He will not do it; but if I live my nephew Henri shall, as soon as he can be rescued from the degrading influence of trade, and the clerk's stool in an office. Ah, my poor boy, I pity you and I say out boldly that I am not surprised that you should have thrown up post after post in disgust, and refused to settle down to such sordid wretchedness."

"My dear Marguerite! our visitors."

"I must speak, George. Mr. Van Heldre loves trade."

"I do, ma'am."

"Therefore he cannot feel with me."

"Well, never mind, my dear. Let some one else be Count des Vignes, only let me be in peace, and don't fill poor Harry's head with that stuff just before he's leaving home to go up to the great city, where he will I

am sure redeem the follies of the past, and prove himself a true man. Harry, my dear boy, we'll respect Aunt Margaret's opinions; but we will not follow them out. Van, old fellow, Leslie, Mr. Pradelle, a glass of wine. We'll drink Harry's health. All filled? That's right. Harry, my boy, a true honest man is nature's nobleman. God speed you, my boy; and His blessing be upon all your works. Health and happiness to you, my son!"

"Amen," said Van Heldre; and the simple old-fashioned health was drunk.

"Eh, what's that—letters?" said Vine, as a servant entered the room and handed her master three.

"For you, Mr. Pradelle; for you, Harry, and for me. May we open them, Mrs. Van Heldre? They may be important."

"Of course, Mr. Vine, of course."

Pradelle opened his, glanced at it, and thrust it into his pocket.

Harry did likewise.

Mr. Vine read his twice, then dropped it upon the table.

"Papa!—father!" cried Louise, starting from her place, and running round to him as he stood up with a fierce angry light in his eyes, and the table was in confusion.

"Tidings at last of the French estates, Mr. Pradelle," whispered Aunt Margaret.

"Papa, is anything wrong? Is it bad news?" cried Louise.

"Wrong! Bad news!" he cried, flashing up from the quiet student to the stern man, stung to the quick by the announcement he had just received. "Van Heldre, old friend, you know how I strove among our connections and friends to place him where he might work and rise and prove himself my son."

"Yes, yes, old fellow, but be calm."

"Father, hush!" whispered Louise, as she glanced at Leslie's sympathetic countenance. "Hush! Be calm!"

"How can I be calm!" cried the old man fiercely. "The Des Vignes! The family estates! The title! You hear this, Margaret. Here is a fine opportunity for the search to be made—the old castle and the vineyards to be rescued from the occupiers."

"George—brother, what do you mean?" cried the old lady indignantly, and she laid her hand upon her nephew's shoulder, as he sat gazing straight down before him at his plate.

"What do I mean?" cried the indignant father, tossing the letter towards her. "I mean that my son is once more dismissed from his situation in disgrace."

ABRAHAM'S CALL.

Short Sunday Readings for January.

By THE REV. GEORGE MATHESON, M.A., D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Gen. xii. 1-6; xv. 5-7; Matt. xvi. 21-28; and Heb. xi. 8-10.

THE eleventh chapter of Hebrews is God's gallery of divine portraits. It shows us the faces of earth reflected in the light of heaven, seen not as their contemporaries saw them, but as they were beheld by God. Yet when we look at the portrait of Abraham our first impression is a sense of incongruity; we are disposed to ask, "Why was this picture admitted into the Academy?" It seems at first sight to be out of harmony with the rest of the group. All the other portraits of the gallery are delineations of the power of sacrifice—revelations of the cross of Christ before its time. The faith of Abel is an offering of his own blood. The faith of Enoch is a high ascetic walk above the pleasures of the world. The faith of Noah is prompted by despair of the existing order of things. The faith of Isaac is elicited by the threatened shadow of death. The faith of Jacob is brightest amid death's real shadow. The faith of Moses esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. But here, in this man Abraham, we seem to have the opposite extreme; it would appear as if the treasures of Egypt were preferred to the reproach. Who would not be a man of faith to get the promise of such a reward? To be brought under the stars of heaven and told to see in these a promise of my destiny, to be directed to an inheritance co-extensive with the points of the compass, to be bidden to seek nothing less than an influence over all the families of the earth—was it not a tempting, a commanding aim? If the voice of God came to me and told me that I would be rich, that I would be powerful, that I would be great, would I not deem myself the most prosperous of men? I would expect to receive the congratulations of my friends that I had obtained a special vision of coming fortune, but surely I would be surprised beyond measure to find that for accepting such a promise I had been pictured in the Royal Academy as a conqueror by faith.

Pause, my brother, you are in a grand mistake, there never *was* a sacrifice like that of young Abraham beneath the stars. Know you not that the struggle never begins until

we have heard God's promise? What do you suppose that promise to have been? It was the aspiration of the heart. The aspirations of the heart are God's promises to the soul. But our aspirations are at first at war with the old nature; they are like a swallow singing in the cold. Did you never stand like Abraham in some night of awful calm under the stars of heaven? Did you never feel as if the peace of that night was going into you, pulsating through you, making you one with itself? Did you never at such a time hear a voice saying to you, "My child, you are worthy of something better than Ur of the Chaldees—better than this life of hypocrisy, of double-dealing, of mask-wearing. Come out into the calm, clear air, where the heavens are telling the glory of the Lord. Come out into this world of transparency, where all the lights speak one language, and where the language of all is luminous. Come out from the fetters of self-interest into the membership of this great celestial army where gravitation is the law of the universe, and where the life of each is the life of all!" But then the lower nature called from beneath, "Come down, swallow, what are you doing singing there upon the heights? Don't you see that this sentimentalism is unfitting you for Ur of the Chaldees? What is to become of your worldly future if you don't live in Rome as Rome does? How will these meditations stand the friction of the exchange; how will they bear the conventions of society? What is to be done with the weights and the measures, what with the sheets and the balances? Are you not *indeed* in search of a city that cannot be made with hands?" From such a dialogue as this many an Abraham returns from beneath the stars disconsolate.

Now I think you will find that in this passage of Hebrews there are four sacrificial elements in the promise made to Abraham. The first was its expulsiveness, and therefore *repulsiveness*; "he was called to go out"—out from Ur of the Chaldees. The word Ur literally means a warm fire. He was to leave a warm fire and go out into the cold. Do not think that there was here anything peculiar in the case of Abraham; it is the revelation of all life. Every transition from a lower to a higher stage of being is the leaving of a

warm fire ; it is promotion, but none the less does it involve a sense of cold. Take the earliest transition—that from infancy to childhood. Perhaps the boundary line is the experience called “going to school.” Do you remember the night before you first went to school ? To-morrow you were to get promotion ; they said they would make a man of you. But oh, how you dreaded that to-morrow ! The fires of Ur were never so warm as on that last evening of your infancy ; you wished you had prized them more. Or take the second great transition—that from childhood into youth. Perhaps the boundary here is the experience called “leaving school”—going out into office life. It was again promotion ; but you felt very sad. School, once the cold place, had become your Ur of the Chaldees—your warm fire. Its friendships had fastened round your heart, and you felt that no later friendships could ever be so disinterested, so dear. Or take one other transition—the passage from the youth into the man. Paul says that it is a putting away of childish things ; true, but it is a putting away—a parting with something ; it kindles starlight, but it puts out a fire. There are a hundred avenues through which this passage can be made, but we shall take one, that of Abraham himself—the mission call. Many a youth stands under the stars and hears that call—hears of lands sown thickly in the Orient, which with Christ’s light and love he is bound to bless. It is a glorious destiny, but think you it is painless ? There is a call to go out, but is there no voice which says, “Keep in” ? Do there not rise before the prophetic eye of the young missionary, memories which dim his vision—sights of the old home, glimpses of the household fires, scenes of domestic joy, spots endeared by affections of the living, places hallowed by remembrances of the dead. I have said that this was Abraham’s own case, and I believe it to be true. I think we have mistaken the character, the motive, the aims of this man. We look upon him as an ambitious adventurer, an emigrant in search of gold. To me he is the earliest of all missionaries, willing to give up his gold for a humanitarian interest. He is the fore-runner of Moffat, of Livingstone, of Duff, of Carey, of Stanley, of Francis Xavier, of all who, called by whatever name—evangelist, traveller, explorer—have had it in their heart to benefit mankind. He was the first in whom stirred the pulse of universal brotherhood, the first who strove to break through the limits of nationality, the first who recog-

nised the fact that man is more than his surroundings. His was not the outlook from a land of savages to a centre of civilisation ; it was the outlook from a centre of civilisation to a land of savages. He dwelt already in the most cultured part of the earth, in the region where hitherto humanity had shone at its best. It was the sense of privilege, not the sense of privation, which drove him out. He did not see why he should be privileged alone. He did not see why all the families of the earth should not be blessed with the same culture and the same revelation which had been vouchsafed to him. In a more direct sense than in the sacrifice of Isaac he was in his call the prophet of the Lord. There swam before his eyes the vision of a kingdom of God, of an empire which should be rooted and grounded in the love of man for man. There gleamed before his sight the glory of a common brotherhood in which the Hagars and the Ishmaels should not be forgotten, and where the sons of the stranger should rest with the children of the soil. In the presence of that vision the sacrifice of the cross was prefigured ; he who was rich became poor ; he emptied himself of home, and friends, and country ; he went out into the silent night ; he was found in fashion as a pilgrim man.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Gen. xii. 7–9 ; xiii. 14–18 ; and Matt. xxiv. 42–51.

The second of the sacrificial elements in the promise given to Abraham was its indefiniteness ; he was called to go out “into a place which he should after receive.” The call did not come to him in a specific form. He was not told at the outset what land he was to inherit ; he was only told that there was a land. There is a familiar saying in common life : “Something will turn up.” With reverence I say it, that is the form in which the promise came to Abraham ; it was not the sight of any particular good ; it was simply the vague presentiment of good in general. And here again we have a revelation of the law of all being. God has a promise for the life of every man as well as of Abraham, but to every man as to Abraham that promise is at first indefinite. Ask a boy what he is going to be when he grows up, he will almost certainly tell you that he does not know. Yet it is equally certain that this same boy is at this same moment indulging in the most seraphic dreams—dreams that never have taken any shape nor ever revealed any road to their own accom-

plishment, but which none the less tell of skies resplendent and of streets all paved with gold. Somehow, somewhere, there is for him a New Jerusalem, a paradise of fruits and flowers. Where it is he does not know; how it is to be reached he cannot guess. Often in the struggle of life his reason tells him that the doors are too thick to be penetrated, but the voice of the swallow sings on the tree-tops above his reason, and hope in defiance of sight beckons him to the "place he shall after receive."

I have said that this indefiniteness involves pain, and so it does. It is like Paul's thorn in the flesh; it keeps us humble amid exaltation. Many a youth with a definite prospect speaks superciliously of particular places, "It is not worth having; I would not take it if it were offered." But when the promise comes in the form, "there is a place which you shall after receive," it leaves no room for grandiloquence. I dare not say of any locality, "I would not take it;" it may be the place, God's place, Christ's place for me. The indefiniteness of the promise makes me wondrously reverent to all things. I never can tell what to me may be the day and what the hour of the fulfilled promise. The meanest-looking entrance into life may turn out to be the "ivory gate and golden," the gate which leads right into the centre of my destiny. All I can do is to watch, to keep my mind open; but to keep my mind open is to keep my heart reverent. I must beware lest I call anything common or unclean; the spot I condemn may be the place for me. In reading the Old Testament passages prefixed to the head of this section, did it ever strike you to ask why at every stage of Abraham's journey the record is made, "there he built an altar unto the Lord"? Why should Abraham have built so many altars? The common answer will be, "on account of his piety." I do not believe that was the reason at all. I think those repeated altars at every place came not from his piety but from his uncertainty. He never knew but that this place might be the place—the metropolis of the coming empire, the foundation-stone of the city of God. He built his altar to a possibility; he uncovered his head to a contingency. Like the Athenians of Paul's day he wrote an inscription to something which as yet he did not see—not to the unknown God but to the unknown circumstance. He consecrated every circumstance of life beforehand. However adverse it might be, however unpropitious it might seem, he hallowed it in his imagination as

the possible door into his destiny, the possible hour for the coming of the Father's kingdom. It was a higher faith than that of Jacob. Jacob set up an altar at Bethel and vowed a vow unto the Lord; but the place which he hallowed had already been hallowed; it was an altar of retrospect, of gratitude, of thanksgiving for glory seen. But Abraham set up his altar before there was any glory, any visible ladder between earth and heaven. He set it up in pure faith, in sheer hopefulness, to proclaim his trust in the good time coming, to "ring in the Christ that was to be." It was erected in memory of the "place he should after receive."

Now, this revelation of the life of Abraham is a revelation of the life of humanity. At the end of four millenniums the experience of the ancient patriarch is as fresh, as green, as vivid as it was on the plains of Mesopotamia. We too have to build our altars in advance of the event; we too have to consecrate each spot of the pilgrimage on the chance that perhaps it may be the place appointed. I never can read this passage in the life of Abraham without thinking of the quaint words of Martin Tupper, "If thou art to have a wife in thy youth, she is now living upon the earth; therefore think of her and pray for her even though thou hast not seen her." That is building an altar to the possible, consecrating in imagination the "place we shall after receive." But it is not for marriage alone that the principle holds true. The uncertainty of life not only makes all things solemn but it makes all things equally solemn. You cannot discriminate between the climbing of a mountain and the crossing of a street as to their relative influence on your future. You may climb the mountain and meet nobody, you may cross the street and encounter one who shall change the current of your life. There is only one course for you and me. Walk softly through the temple of the universe; every scene is a possible sacrament. Into whatever house you enter, salute that house; it may be one of the many mansions in your future city of God. If you are passing through scenes of poverty do not look with contempt on them; that may be Christ's place for you; you may be destined like Joseph to meet him in the dungeon. If you are passing through gorgeous palaces thank God; that may be Christ's place for you; your lot may be that of Nicodemus—to bring the myrrh and aloes to anoint the buried Lord. Speak gently to that little child; you do not know

how one day it may be related to your life. Tread tenderly over the fault of your brother; you do not know how one day that same brother may need to tread tenderly over yours. Move solemnly through the courts of the commonplace; one day you may awake to find that the courts were paved with gold and that the dusty lanes of earth were the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. The whole world shall be a hallowed shrine if you shall build your altar "to a place which you shall after receive."

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Gen. xxii. 1-14; and Matt. vi. 25-34.

The third of the sacrificial elements in the promise given to Abraham was the cloudiness of the actual journey, "he went out not knowing whither he went." Not only was the place of his ultimate destiny kept a profound secret; the places of his daily resort were environed with peculiar difficulty. He was never allowed to see far before him. He was never suffered to get a glimpse of the day after to-morrow. Of to-morrow he had always a clear view. There never was any doubt in his mind about the step immediately in advance. "Go up to Bethel, Go forward to Hai, Go down to Egypt, Go back to the place where your altar was at first, between Bethel and Hai"—these and such as these were commands that came crisp and clear. But the cloud lay over the step *after* the immediate one: it was the day *after* to-morrow that was dark. He saw well enough to go to Egypt, knew well enough that he *ought* to go to Egypt; but over Egypt itself there was a screen. He had no difficulty whatever in reaching it, but what he was to do when he did reach it he did not see. The step after the first was always a step of darkness; "he went out not knowing whither he went."

Now, I think the experience of Abraham is here in singular harmony with the experience of all life. You will find that what we torment ourselves about is the day *after* to-morrow. We like Abraham have generally a clear enough vision of the step immediately in advance. Newman says, "I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me." But we are entitled to that one step. I believe that the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer ought to be rendered, "Give us this day our bread for to-morrow;" it is the earliest reading and it is nearest to the etymology of the word. But if so, what is that but man's charter to a certain amount of foresight? What is it but to say that we

have a right to the one step, a right to see unclouded the duty immediately at the door. But where our trouble comes in is in the duty *behind* that duty. We want to see our bread for the day *after* to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow is in a cloud. We can go quite well up to the middle of the week, but there is a wall there that seems to be without a gate, and we don't know how we are to get through. We are paralysed not by the coming moment but by the moments coming after it. It seems useless to go on. The vision of one step does not appear enough to give us hope, and we sit down with folded hands and say, "the promise is vain."

But in these moments of despondency there is one thought which never strikes us, which, if it did strike us, would give us strength to move forward. We want a revelation of the day after to-morrow; what if that revelation should come with the intermediate day, what if the light on the day after to-morrow should dawn *with* to-morrow? Our Lord declares that it is so; He says, "to-morrow shall take thought for the things of itself," i.e. shall *give* thought for the steps into its successor. The wall in the middle of the week appears on Monday to be without a gate, but on Tuesday we find that this was an optical delusion; there is a door in the centre of the wall and we know we can pass through. I may well say, "one step enough for me" if, in the very act of stepping, the paralysis quits the limb and leaves me strength for more. Here is a young preacher who has sermons only for one year—a hundred and four golden sermons, and after that the deluge. He is tormented by the thought of the finished year. He feels that by that time not only shall his stock be exhausted but that his mental resources shall be exhausted; there shall be no more to come. But there is one thing he never thinks of—the developing power of this year itself. He forgets that this year may for him be Keble's golden year with its Epiphany and its Easter and its Pentecost, with its times of mental refreshment and its days of illuminating glory. He forgets that at the end he may be a larger man than at the beginning, seeing a million doors where once he saw but one. There is not a finer instance of this than Abraham himself. He was told once to go up to Mount Moriah; so far all was clear. But the day *after* to-morrow—that was the dark thing. He could easily see his way to the top of the mountain, but on the top there was a cloud of sacrifice

which obscured the sun. He felt that a victim was demanded and he saw no victim there; what if the sacrificial fire should be kindled for *him*? He went on in sheer faith that to-morrow would reveal something, that the top of the mountain would bring its own light. And truly he was not disappointed. He reached the crown of the hill and looked round, and lo! behind him a ram caught in a thicket. Yesterday had been an optical delusion; it had told him that there was no victim on the mountain's brow. Yet here was the victim all the time waiting for him. It was no new creation devised to meet an emergency. It had all along been there. It was already *behind* him; he had passed it on the way through excitement. Nervous fear had blinded him to his own blessings, but he had pushed on in spite of darkness and he had reaped his reward. The optical delusion vanished as he drew near, and in the place which once seemed vacant there stood a victim in substitution for his own sacrifice. The morrow had taken thought for the things of itself.

Even so, my brother, is it with you. Are you standing with folded hands in the shadow of the day after to-morrow? Are you perplexed by the sight of a wall without a door, of a sacrifice from which there seems no gate of exit? Nay, but Olivet is only visible from the top of Calvary. If you want to see the gate of exit you must go up—must climb with the Son of Man the stair of sacrifice. Within the garden of sorrow there are hiding angels of strength, but it is only when we have entered the garden that they “*appear* to strengthen us.” Within the thicket of Moriah there is concealed the substitute for our pain, but it is only when the ascent is made that we catch a glimpse of our deliverance. The divine life like the lower world moves by instinct, it must be content at first not to see. You must go up with the Son of Man in *faith*, in the crucifixion of the heart, in the surrender of the will. You must go up without revelation of the day after to-morrow, without demanding a sight of the steps beyond the hour. But when you have made this surrender, when you have ascended the hill of sacrifice, there shall come to you a wondrous revelation. It will not be a *new* revelation; it will be something which all along was lying within the folds of the coming day; in a spot so commonplace that you shall only see it when you have passed it by. In that hour you shall learn that the instinct of love is as powerful a guide as the instinct of the bee,

and shall understand the glory of the inscription on the life of Abraham, “he went out not knowing whither he went.”

FOURTH SUNDAY.

— Read Gen. xxviii. 10—17; and Matt. xvii. 5—13.

The fourth sacrificial element in the promise given to Abraham was the seeming inconsistency between that promise and the facts of the patriarch's life. I have been often struck in reading verses 9 and 10 of this eleventh chapter of Hebrews with the remarkable antithesis the author draws between the goal which Abraham expected and the fate which he had actually received. He looked for a *city*; he was pent up within a *tabernacle*. He looked for a city which had *foundations*—a place of permanent rest; as a matter of fact, he was *sojourning*—moving from locality to locality. He looked for a distinguished line of descendants—for children who should be “heirs with him in the same promise;” as a matter of fact, his son and grandson were no further advanced than himself; Isaac and Jacob dwelt with him in the same tabernacles. One feels as if this last were the sorest trial of all. It is bad enough that a man himself should have been unable to make progress in the world, but it is worse still when he sees his very grandson not out of the bit—sees the young hopeful that should have begun to fly, cowering ignominiously in the nest of the parent bird. The greatest damper for a builder of the city of God is to feel that the work which he has been powerless to finish will not be prosecuted by those who are to come after him. Abraham might well have felt that the rainbow of the past evening had predicted in vain the promised land. Was there any comfort amid all this seeming misery? There was—a glorious, a golden comfort. At this very hour of apparent neglect the prediction of the rainbow was really being fulfilled. For, have you ever considered that all this time Abraham was actually *in* the promised land? For a long while he himself did not know it. The writer of Genesis tells us that he passed through the whole inheritance without recognising the fact that it was *his* inheritance; the writer to the Hebrews tells us in language still more plain that he “sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country.” He was like a man begging bread at the door of a mansion which was in after years to be his own. Do you think this experience of Abraham was an isolated experience—something which only happened three

thousand years ago? It is as true in England as it was in Mesopotamia. There are multitudes to-day who are bemoaning the failure of their rainbow vision and who, unknown to themselves, are all the time in the promised land. In the presence of the cloud that dimmed the transfiguration glory they have asked when Elias shall come; and lo! Elias has come already, and they have treated him as an ordinary man. With their head on the stone pillow they have lain down to dream of the far-off God, and lo! the Lord was in this place and they knew it not; *this* was the house of God, *this* was the gate of heaven. Here is a young woman in search of a mission, living in the belief that she has a call to do some work for God. What it is she does not know; to her, as to Abraham, the promise is indefinite. Often she chafes at the delay, wonders what retards the revelation. Meanwhile she occupies till the Lord comes—till the mission call comes, attends to her domestic duties, bears the household cares, works at what she calls the common things of life. And all the time it never strikes her that Elias has come already—come in these common things, in these domestic duties, in these household cares. It never strikes her that she is even now in the promised land, that the rainbow has fulfilled its pledge, that the mission call has unbarred its sphere, that the resting place of common stone has become the answer to her starry dreams. Dare I use a bolder, a more solemn illustration? Have you never read of One who, under the shadow of the deepest sorrow earth has ever known, cried aloud in the agony of prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me"? Did that sublime spirit think it had missed its destiny? For one moment I believe that it did. I think that in the human soul of Jesus there was for one brief instant a fear lest the cloud should cover His promised land. "Let *this* cup pass from me"—send me what Thou wilt and I will bear it, but if it be Thy will, save me from this one form of sorrow. Such a prayer could only have proceeded from the fear that this one form of sorrow might retard the coming of His kingdom, might delay the promise of the summer glory. Now, how stood the fact? Christ was at that very moment in the promised land. In the hour that to His human soul seemed the death of empire, in the day which to His human heart appeared the destruction of His divine dreams, in the moment that to His human will wore the semblance of crucified hope, He had already touched the summit of His highest power. In

a more marked sense than that of Jacob His pillow of stone was the foundation stone of His glory. Never had He been so great, so crowned, so ennobled as in that undesired hour. Not when the angels sung at Bethlehem, not when the waters sparkled at Jordan, not when the beatitudes fell on Hermon, not when the vine grew prolific in Cana, not when the transfiguration light glittered on the summit of Tabor, had He been so near to His goal as then. He thought himself neglected, forsaken, and He had reached His place in history—the place of His destined inheritance. He thought himself alone, separated from the lives of men, and He had become, for the first time, the meeting-point for all the universe. He thought He had missed His destiny and wandered into a strange country, but in the heart of His desert His destiny was fulfilled, and in the strange country He found the promised land.

My soul, when thou art weary, remember Gethsemane. When, like Abraham, thou art pent up in a tabernacle instead of roaming through the expected palace, remember Gethsemane. When thy life is seeming desert and the places of outward power are being filled by other men, remember Gethsemane. Remember how the central act of this world's drama was an act unseen—outside the city, outside the camp, in a lonely place where few were near to witness. Does thine invalid's couch, with its pillow of stone, seem to contradict the promise of the morning—the promise of a race to run, of a great work to do? So, doubtless, thought in the garden the human soul of Jesus; yet the chariots of God that hour were circling round Him, and the wreath of empire then was placed upon His brow. When thy heart is overwhelmed by the poverty of its earthly tabernacle, go down to Him amid the shadows of the garden. Go down and see the cup that trembled in His hand—the cup of loneliness, of despisedness, of seeming neglectedness. Go down and gaze until the loneliness becomes a crowd, until the cross becomes a crown, until the burden becomes a weight of glory, until the neglected hour becomes the hour of God. And when thou hast seen that vision, go back to thy narrow tabernacle with a heart enlarged. Go back to it with reverence as to a place of unknown possibilities. Go back and build, like Abraham, an altar to the Christ that is to be, and write upon it the inscription in which faith has already passed into fruition, "Who knows but now I am in the promised land?"



*Yours very truly
Ada Ellen Bayly
"Edna Lyall."*

W. Wymper

EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "A HARDY NORSEMAN," ETC.

(Engraved by Wymper, from a Photograph by Elliott & Fry.)

A SNOW IDYLL.

By WILLIAM BLACK, AUTHOR OF "A PRINCESS OF THULE," "MADCAP VIOLET," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—PICTOR IGNOTUS.

IT was on a wild March morning that a young English stranger left the snug shelter of the inn at Inver-mudal and adventured forth into the wintry landscape that lay all around. He was accompanied by two stalwart gillies who carried his angling gear for him; for this intrepid young man, notwithstanding the weather, was bent upon trolling for salmon on Loch Naver. What else, indeed, could he do? By profession a landscape painter, he had come into these wilds with some notion of making a series of studies of early spring; but he had found the whole country clad in a monotonous garment of snow; subjects there were none; so, being something of a fisherman as well, and having fortunately brought his rods and tackle with him, he thought he could not do better than go after the salmon until nature should choose to reappear from under her shroud of white.

How could he have painted in this weather? The air was filled with driving sleet; a bitterly cold wind was blowing down from the hills and along the strath; it seemed to him, as he trudged through the thick, soft-yielding snow, that very soon he would be choked, blinded, and benumbed all at once. No doubt the scene around him, even as he saw it through this veil of sleet, was impressive enough—the white, hushed moorlands leading away up to the solitary ghost-like shoulders and peaks of Ben Loyal; the long loch before him driven into a livid blackness, save for certain patches of blue-grey near the shore which he guessed to be ice; then above him, stretching far into the moving mists, rose the giant bulk of Ben Clebrig, the cloud-compeller and brewer of gales and hurricanes. It was an impressive sight, no doubt, but to him it was useless. Nay, as he tramped along this highway, he began to say to himself that snow was the very ugliest thing in nature—or, at least, that it made everything else look mean and dirty and depressing. The water down there was black; the stems of the trees blown bare by the wind were black; any bit of exposed rock was a blot in the landscape; even the russet scars of the moorland, showing here and there through the driven snow, had no grateful warmth of colour in them. It was all unpaintable, unusable, a disappointment to a pair of eyes that were accustomed to seek

eagerly and lovingly for the beautiful aspects of the world.

However, here was the salmon-fishing. They got away down to the side of the loch; and while the gillies brushed the snow from the seats of the boat, and broke the ice in the bottom, he began to get together his tackle as well as his benumbed fingers would allow. Then, when everything was ready, they shoved the boat some way through the ice; they all got in; they shoved her still further and further through, until at last they reached open water, and now Mr. Sydney Durham proceeded to get out his lines. These moments, as every salmon-fisher knows, are moments of blessedness. All unknown as yet are the long hours of waiting, the growing hopelessness and apathy, the joyless trudge home in the evening: when the phantom minnows are dropped into the water, when the thirty yards of line have been paid out, when the fisherman settles down to watch the points of the two rods, his imagination peoples the loch with eager-roaming salmon, and he knows that any passing second may be succeeded by a sudden whirr and shriek of the reel. Our young artist forgot all about the colourlessness of the landscape around him. The water might be like ink—he cared not, if it held fish. And so the two gillies slowly pulled the boat along these winding shores, the while his eyes were intently fixed on the surface of the loch, watching for the swift springing into the air of a twenty-pounder—or even a ten—that would reward him, and more than reward him, for all his pains.

For it was bitterly cold. The wind blew down from Clebrig's snow-slopes and swept across the loch; swirls of sleet swung round him, half blinding him and getting in at neck and wrist; his hands were soaking wet through the woollen gloves; his feet were stone dead. And still the two gillies patiently explored every bay and crept round each successive headland; and not a sound broke the silence of this hushed white world. As time went by his eager hopes departed one by one. Absently he began to regard the features of the landscape—the indented bays, the birchwoods, the wide moorlands, the far peaks and shoulders of the hills; and perhaps he may have asked himself what he should do in this remote neighbourhood if it turned out that neither painting nor fishing was possible as an occupation. Another

fancy may have struck him. It should have been said that three objects, and not two, had brought him to Inver-mudal. In town Sydney Durham was an exceedingly sociable person and an excellent companion (at the Arts Club no one but the hall porter ever thought of calling him anything but Sydney), but from time to time a craving for absolute solitude would come over him, and he would go away and hide himself in some distant and lonely place, passing the time there no one knew how. It was partly on this account that he had come to Inver-mudal, the seclusion of which in winter time was well known to him; so it is to be imagined that when, on his arrival, he was informed that a lady and gentleman were expected on the very next day, and moreover that they had bespoken the private sitting-room that usually fell to his share—he was none too well pleased. And now in this boat, as the slow hours went by, and as he became frozen to misery point, with never a single salmon showing a sign, he may with some cause have complained of his evil fortune. He had come to Inver-mudal with three objects in view—landscape-painting, salmon-fishing, and solitude—and it seemed as if he were not to secure any one of them! And what right had these strangers to come and occupy his particular room?

"Look here, Duncan," he said, turning round from the useless rods and addressing one of the gillies, "have those people who are coming here to-day ever been at Inver-mudal before?"

"Oh, yes, sir," responded Duncan, "they were here the last summer for two or three weeks."

"But what's the use of a woman coming up here just now?" he said rather petulantly. "Is she going to come out fishing in weather like this? The man must be mad to bring his wife to such a place at this time of the year!"

"It's his dochter, sir," said Duncan.

"Well, that's worse! How is a girl likely to stand this kind of thing?"

Duncan did not know, so Duncan did not answer. The young artist turned to his rods again, and the boat went on in silence.

At lunch time they shoved the boat through the ice and got ashore, while Sydney Durham walked along to a large rock where he expected to find some shelter. Alas! when he began to undo the little parcel with his frozen fingers, he found that the wind was coming in fierce swirls, and nowhere could he get away from those blasts of sleet.

So there was nothing for it but to stand about in the wet, and kick his toes on the stones, and eat the moist cold mutton and still moister bread. Thereafter a pipe consoled him somewhat; then they all three got into the boat again, and resumed their slow and unprofitable labour.

In the afternoon, however, this dull apathy was suddenly broken in upon. While he was thinking of far other matters a violent shaking of the rod—a long, wild scream of the reel—a flash into the air some fifty yards away—all these things seemed to happen at once; and the next moment he found himself standing up in the boat, the rod in his left hand, the frozen fingers of the right trying to reel in the line rapidly, for the salmon was coming quietly towards him. Quietly—but only for a second or two: he changed his tactics—plunged with a sudden jerk, and lay deep in the water tugging and tugging—then he yielded a little—again he was off with a long shriek from the reel—presently he was on the surface lashing with head and tail, a fearful sight to see!

"He's a wicked beast, that," said Duncan, as the fish again disappeared and plunged away down into unknown deeps.

"There's no mistake about his being a clean salmon any way," the fisherman said, as he anxiously waited for the next movement of his invisible foe. "There's nothing of the kelt about a fellow who can fight like that."

"Oh, he's a clean fish, sir, sure enough," the tall gillie said, "ay, and a good fish too. I'm thinking he'll be twelve pounds whatever."

The salmon lay deep down and sulked. It was a treacherous calm, and not to be trusted. Durham was quite certain that his enemy meditated something desperate after this temporary rest, and anxiously he watched the line, and nervously he scanned the water. All of a sudden there was a slackening that sent his heart to his mouth, for he made sure the fish had dropped off; but a rapid reeling in told him that he was still there, though continuing to come to the surface. And then away went this splendid creature with a mighty rush, tearing the water with the line; and again he sprang into the air; and again he fell on the surface with a crash; and again he plunged below, and tugged and shook to get rid of this dire thing that he had snapped at in an unguarded moment. But these various performances were clearly exhausting his strength. By-and-by there were no more rushes and leaps into the air. He was coming nearer to the surface. The fisher-

man felt he had the mastery now ; the pliant rod kept on its equal strain ; now and again they caught a glimmer of the salmon, slowly moving, and not more than twenty yards off. Cautiously the boat was backed down on him ; the line was reeled well in ; then a steady strain was put on the yielding fish, and Peter, the other gillie, came down into the stern of the boat, with the bright steel clip in his hand. The fateful climax was approaching, and it cannot be doubted that the artist-fisherman was exceedingly nervous and breathless, for the first salmon of the season is an important kind of creature. Nearer and nearer the big fish was raised to the surface of the water, though he was now aware of his danger, and kept swerving away as much as he was able. More than once Peter put out the gaff to see if he could not reach him. Inch by inch Duncan kept backing the boat.

"Now, Peter, you'll have him this time!"

Peter, with one hand on the gunwale, stretched out the gaff with the other, and watched for the slow-moving fish to come under it. At the same moment—could they credit their eyes?—was such a thing possible?—the phantom minnow lost its hold and sprang into the air—the salmon, just out of reach, hung in the water for a second or so—then it seemed to feel that it was no longer a captive, and the next instant it had sunk out of sight and was seen no more.

For several seconds not one of the three men spoke—the gillies were too awestricken by such a catastrophe; the fisherman, with affected resignation, merely got in the phantom-minnow to see that the hooks were uninjured. But presently, when he found that the men were pulling back to the fishing ground, he bade them alter their course; he was going home. It was altogether too wet, and cold, and miserable, he said; they had had their chance and lost it; the afternoon was wearing on; he would try some other day in better weather. So they rowed him in to the land; he left them to get the tackle together; and then he set out for the inn, through an afternoon that was prematurely darkened by the soft-falling snow.

When, later on in the evening, Sydney Durham, having got into a dry costume, came down to the small public-room of the hotel, which had been assigned to him in lieu of the sitting-room from which he had been dispossessed, and found covers laid for three, he was not in the very best of humours. He had lost the only fish he had

seen as yet, and he had been shunted out of his sitting-room by two strangers. Moreover, would he not have their society thrust upon him morning, noon, and night? Even if he escaped from them during the day, and got away upon the loch, would not they be bawling to him as the boats crossed, and disturbing his observation of landscape effects or his wandering reveries? Accordingly, when the soup had been placed on the table, and when he heard footsteps in the passage without, he was not at all grateful that he should have found neighbours in this remote and lonely spot, and he was not prepared to accord them a very enthusiastic welcome. No doubt they were a couple of discontented English tourists, grumbling at everything they met, wondering why they had ever come to such a place, and ridiculing everything not in consonance with their own habits and circumstances in the south. No doubt they were—

But here the door was opened, and a short, stout, elderly gentleman made his appearance, holding the handle of the door until his daughter had passed into the room. Now a young man's resentment very speedily vanishes, when he finds the shy and modest eyes of a pretty young lady regarding him, and that in no unfriendly fashion. Even the papa—with his wholesome pink and white complexion, his clear blue eyes, and grizzled hair and short grey whiskers—seemed a pleasant-looking person; while as for the daughter, Sydney's first swift glimpse of her rather startled him: this was not quite the kind of tourist he had expected. The two strangers bowed; Mr. Sydney Durham bowed. No names were mentioned; but all of them were aware that each knew the other's name through the intervention of the Highland servant-lass Nelly. Mr. Hague took the head of the table; his daughter sat on his right hand; and the artist-fisherman accordingly found himself sitting opposite the young lady.

At first, of course, the conversation was confined to the weather, and to the perils the two travellers had encountered in driving from Lairg, for several times their carriage had had to leave the highway on account of the deep snow-drifts. But by-and-by the talk became more friendly and personal; and the young lady's papa (what an important position to hold!) was quite frankly communicative about himself, about herself, and their bygone experiences and their present plans. As for Sydney Durham, under the benign influence of those soft grey-blue eyes

that glanced across the table towards him from time to time—and always with a kind of pleased, sympathetic, and interested expression in them—he was cordiality itself. He gave splendid accounts of the salmon he had caught in Loch Naver, even in the wildest weather. He talked enthusiastically of the grandeur of the scenery; and of the difference between the Highlands now and during the autumn season, when the mosquito-tourist buzzes everywhere abroad. These two were no longer tourists in his eyes. No, no; they were valuable human beings, whose companionship in these solitary wilds would produce many a snug and pleasant evening. He called on the willing Nelly to heap more peats on the glowing fire; the twin lamps on the table burned brightly; and even as he talked he knew, or felt, that the young lady with the pale clear complexion and soft chestnut-brown hair was regarding him with those gentle, timid, friendly eyes—eyes, moreover, that sometimes forgot their timidity and glanced up with a quick, bright laugh, very pleasant to see. He no longer resented the coming of these strangers to Invermudal.

During the course of the evening, Durham learned that this Mr. Hague was a Calcutta merchant, who had just retired from business, and who meditated setting up an establishment of some state in London. But it was not fashionable society that Mr. Hague wanted to enter or to entertain. From sundry hints and admissions the young artist came to the conclusion that this elderly gentleman was as ambitious as Mr. Gilead P. Beck himself to make the acquaintance of distinguished persons; nay, he had been more fortunate than that famous worthy, for on one awful occasion he had had speech of the Laureate. It was in a railway carriage on the Portsmouth line, Durham gathered. Whether Mr. Hague suddenly turned pale and trembled when he found who was sitting opposite him, will probably never be known; nor yet whether he tried to flee from the carriage at the very next station; for he was unusually reticent about this notable interview; and, indeed, it may be suspected that the conversation that took place between the great poet and his humble adorer merely related to the opening or shutting of a window. At any rate, Mr. Hague admitted that he had gone on to the Isle of Wight, and even hung about the neighbourhood of Freshwater for a few days; alas! in vain, for the acquaintanceship was not renewed.

But just imagine the old gentleman's joy

when Sydney Durham hinted that if Mr. Hague began to purchase a series of pictures for this big house he had set his mind on, it was quite within the bounds of possibility that he might be invited to the Academy Dinner.

"The fact is, nobody is anybody in England who hasn't been at least once to the Academy Banquet," continued the young man. "It's a distinction in itself—better than a bit of blue ribbon. They say—of course, I don't know—I'm an outsider, but they say that several wealthy men keep on buying expensive pictures just that they may have their invitation to the banquet renewed. Of course, the Academicians are quite right in paying a compliment to men who have the sense to buy the best of contemporary art, rather than spurious old masters or copies. And the outsiders may talk as they please, but the Academy does take in all the painters who are worth anything—in time, of course—a fellow must show what he can do—and sometimes prejudices are to be overcome, but in the end the best men get in, undoubtedly."

"I certainly looked forward to buying pictures for my house," Mr. Hague interrupted somewhat eagerly. "Yes, yes; what is a house without pictures? Not that I should set myself up as a judge. I would rather have the opinion of somebody who knew—and I should want good pictures when I am about it."

"Mightn't you ask Mr. Durham to advise you, papa?" Miss Anne Hague put in very prettily, "if he would be so kind."

"Oh, I should be delighted!" the young man exclaimed. "The very thing I should enjoy, if I can be of any use to you at all. Of course, you can't get just exactly what you want. I should like to be able to step into the open market, with an unlimited purse in my pocket, and have a chance of buying up all my favourite pictures for a gallery of my own. Just think! I would have Millais's 'Effie Deans'—was there ever anything painted more tragic and pathetic than that?—and Leighton's 'Slinger,' and Tadmara's 'Sappho,' and Pettie's 'Chieftain's Candlesticks,' and Orchardson's 'Queen of Swords,' and Watts's 'Sunrise,' and Burne Jones's 'Mermaid,' and Boughton's 'Waning of the Honeymoon,' and many another that I can recall; but of course that is impossible. The lucky people who have pictures of that kind are not likely to part with them. So, Mr. Hague, you would simply have to take your chance; and the first picture I should

have, if I were you, would be a portrait of Miss Hague by Millais."

The young lady opposite him started a little, but instantly lowered her eyes; then this bold young man continued,

"Yes, I would; there's no one can paint women like Millais. Then I would have examples of all the men I have mentioned, just as I could get them, picking up one here and there. You must have a Faed, of course—a Highland subject, soft, rich colour, and beautiful light and shadow; a MacWhirter, birches and blue sky, perhaps, for you can't get 'Loch Coruisk,' I know; a Peter Graham—a hill-side dappled with sun and shadow that makes you think you can smell the bog-myrtle—then, for change, one of Marcus Stone's courtship scenes in an old-fashioned garden, with blue haze under the trees—Briton Riviere might paint you a replica of one of his moonlight scenes, with green-eyed lions wandering over ruins—my goodness! there's one picture of his I remember that is enough to make anybody shiver, it is so lonely and eerie. Then you must have a Colin Hunter—I should have six if I could afford it; for the longer I look at water, either sea water or loch water, the more I am convinced that no man, living or dead, has ever painted it as Hunter can paint it, with such a life and motion and glancing of light—I am certain no man has ever painted the sea as vividly and truly as that fellow has done it—confound him! for I should like to have had a try myself; but when I look at those things of his, I give in—then you must have one of Henry Moore's Channel pieces—a blue one, if possible—then a bit of the fen country by Macbeth—some birds by Marks—a rustic wedding by Fildes—one of Hook's Cornish sea-pieces—"

And so he went on, naming this one and that, both among the Academicians and the outsiders, until he had constructed a gallery very fairly and widely representative of contemporary English art; but ever he returned to the point that while he, Mr. Hague, ought to have his own portrait painted by Oulless or Herkomer or some equally capable artist, it was his first and bounden duty to have his daughter's portrait painted by Sir John Millais.

"He wants a long price," said the Calcutta merchant thoughtfully.

"But he gives you value for your money, and what more can any one want!" the young man exclaimed. "Why, the rich men of this country ought to be precious glad that there is such an artist alive as Millais to

paint their wives and daughters for them! If ever I were to marry, I'd have my wife's portrait painted by Millais if I had to take the coat off my back to pay for it."

"I'm afraid the coat wouldn't go far with Sir John," observed Mr. Hague, without meaning any disrespect to the young man's attire. "Still, I think you are right; I shall have the best men all round, if I can manage it; and I shall be extremely obliged to you, Mr. Durham, for any advice or note of introduction you may deem advisable. I presume those artists would not consider it impertinent if I called upon them with a view to buying a picture or two?"

"I think they would rather like it," said Sydney Durham modestly, "from what little I know of them."

Dinner had been over some time.

"Are you ready, Anne?" said Mr. Hague, and then he rose; while the young man sprang to the door.

"Good evening," said Miss Anne, with a very charming smile and an inclination of the head, as she passed him.

"My daughter and I have passed a most agreeable evening, thanks to you," the papa was good enough to say; "and I hope to talk to you further about those pictures, if you will be so kind as to give me your advice."

So the young artist was left to light his pipe and sit in front of the solitary fire, dreaming idle and not unpleasant dreams. He came to think that if only he could paint like Millais—what a gigantic if!—he knew where he should go for his first subject. The face—every lineament of it, and its gentle and expressive eyes—came between him and the crimson smouldering of the peat.

CHAPTER II.—A SUMMONS.

NEXT morning Sydney Durham looked out eagerly. Alas! there was the same misty drizzle of snow; everything looked bleak, and cold, and miserable; in such weather it was hardly probable that Miss Anne, or her father either, would come down to the boat. Indeed, the old gentleman had confessed the night before that this was not at all what he had bargained for. He had been told that salmon-fishing in the spring was an interesting and not too arduous pastime; the inn at Inver-mudal had been recommended to him as comfortable quarters; and he had easily persuaded his youngest daughter to accompany him on a journey of exploration. But when he arrived at Lairg to find the whole country-side covered with

snow—the mail-carts stopped, and the moors almost impassable—and when, having eventually arrived at the inn, he heard from the young artist-fisherman of the ice on the loch and the discomforts of sitting in an open boat amidst sleet and driving winds, he concluded to let the salmon alone until some pleasanter weather should arrive. Accordingly, when Sydney had breakfasted, he got his traps together, summoned his two gillies, and somewhat disconsolately set off for the loch, which he found to be just as cheerless, and dismal, and uncomfortable as on the previous day.

But you never know what is going to happen on Loch Naver. Ben Clebrig, the cloud-compeller, is full of surprises; the giant magician plays with the weather as with some splendid toy. Towards eleven o'clock the sleet and snow gradually ceased; the air seemed to grow whiter and more white; all of a sudden the heavens opened, and behold!—ere one was aware of the change—the ruffled loch became of the intensest blue, while a warm sunshine spread itself abroad. A want of colour in snow time?—look at the birch woods that the winds have shaken bare—they are of the most delicate ethereal purple; look at the exposed knolls of withered grass and bracken—they burn like gold. And ever, as he sits and watches this magic transformation, the skies above grow clearer and clearer, and the loch becomes of a darker and darker blue; while the great white amphitheatre of mountains—Ben Hee and Ben Hope, Ben Loyal and the giant Clebrig—seem to enclose a smiling and beautiful, if voiceless and untenanted, Paradise. How grateful this warm sunshine on face and hands! How gladdening to the eyes the dark and vivid colour of this lapping water!

And then, far away, he suddenly descried certain small black figures on the waste of snow.

"Duncan," he exclaimed, "are they coming down to the other boat?"

"Yes, sir; I'm thinking that," Duncan answered.

He looked again.

"Is the young lady with them?"

"Yes; I'm thinking that too," said Duncan, who had the eyesight of a sailor.

"Well, you must pull me back to the landing-place," the young man continued. "Mr. Hague hasn't brought the right sort of traces with him, and we must see him properly rigged out."

"Will ye go ashore, sir?"

"Yes; pull back to the landing place."

Now if Sydney Durham had been con-

siderably impressed by the appearance of the fair young stranger who had wandered into these wilds, he was still more convinced that she was remarkably good-looking when he now landed and advanced towards the little party; for the walk along from the inn through the crisp air had brought some colour into Miss Anne's face, which was naturally rather pale; and this rosy glow showed all the more that round her neck she wore a boa of white fur, on which her chin softly nestled. She bade him good morning with friendly eyes. There were mutual congratulations on the change in the weather; and she was enthusiastic about the beauty of this white snow-picture. Then he was perforce obliged to turn to the purpose for which he had come ashore; and presently he was over hauling the old gentleman's fishing-tackle, and offering his own where that seemed preferable.

Mr. Hague, being fully equipped, embarked, and his gillies began to shove the boat through the ice; but when Sydney suggested that Miss Anne should accompany her papa, the young lady declined. She would merely be in the way, she said; she would rather go for a walk along the loch-side; but as she understood the two gentlemen were coming ashore to lunch at the big rock down there, she would return in time to join them. Sydney told her to keep a sharp look out, and probably she might see a few hinds or a stag or two—for the deer had become very tame by reason of the snow. And so she set forth, and he went back to his boat and his slow circumnavigation of the lake.

That proved to be a very pleasant little luncheon-party under shelter of the big rock; and Miss Anne, being the only one whose fingers were not frozen, was so kind as to take off her gloves and untie the little parcels for them. Nay, she cut the bread for them; and carved for them when carving was necessary; and would have opened the bottled beer, too, if Sydney had allowed her, so compassionate was she over their poor benumbed hands. As for her, after her brisk walk, she looked very warm and snug and comfortable; and her eyes were most amiable and good-humoured; and her pretty, oval face was as bright and fresh-coloured as ever, nestled upon that thick white fur. It is true that as they sat here and chatted—it was about pictures, mostly—Sydney was somewhat chagrined to discover that neither Mr. Hague nor his daughter had ever seen any of his work. No doubt (he said to himself) Miss Anne had heard of his name or

she would not have asked him to advise her father in his purchases; but he was pretty well convinced, from what they said, or from what they did not say, that they entirely misunderstood his position. They had not heard, then, that his chief picture of last year had been bought by the Academy out of the Chantrey Fund? They were not aware that his imminent election into the sacred body was regarded as a foregone conclusion by the artist fraternity of London? No; to them he was "*but* a landscape-painter," endowed perhaps with some vague reputation as being a young man of promise. Well, Sydney Durham was a modest young fellow; he was not likely to vaunt himself; indeed it rather amused him to notice that when Mr. Hague was talking of all the artists whom he should like to see represented on his walls, no mention was by any chance made of the very one whom he was addressing. Neither father nor daughter had asked to be allowed to see *his* sketches.

And yet she had heard enough of him to know that he was a landscape-painter—to this small eminence of fame had he crept—for here, as they still chatted about pictures, she asked him when he was going to leave off fishing and resume his work.

"I have had no chance as yet," said he, "the weather has been so bad. And universal snow is too monotonous—though it is wonderful what gradations of light and even colour you find in it, when you come to look at it closely. However, I'm going to wait until some of it is melted on the lower ground, to let the moors and the woods show through; then the mountains will still be white, or mostly white."

"But just what is before you now," she suggested, "wouldn't that make a beautiful picture by itself?—the little bay, the boats at the point, the reflections on the ice, the blue water beyond, and then the snow-peaks, wouldn't that do?"

"It would make a pretty drawing-masterish kind of a sketch," said he carelessly. "But you can't paint a serious picture without thinking about it."

"Mr. Durham," said she, laughing, "I'm afraid you find the salmon-fishing too attractive. I understood that this was the time of the year when artists were at their busiest, getting ready for the Academy. Do you exhibit at the Academy?"

"Oh, yes," he replied gravely, "when they are good enough to give me a place."

"And shall you be sending anything this year?" she asked.

"I hope so."

"Then I shall see it," she said. "Fancy, this will be my first Academy! I was taken away from England when I was twelve—and though we have been home again more than once, I have always missed the Academy somehow. Of course, papa will have an added interest, if he goes with the intention of securing some of the pictures."

"I think I could get you a couple of tickets for the Private View," said he.

"Oh, could you?" she said, with her eyes brightening.

"I think so. Then you could give the early morning to looking at the pictures and the afternoon to looking at the people."

"But we should want some one to point them out."

"The pictures or the people?"

"Both," she said, with a laugh. "At least I for one should feel an absolute stranger."

"If I could be of any service to you—" he timidly suggested.

She glanced towards her father; but the old gentleman had left the young people to talk to themselves; he was contentedly munching a piece of cake, while his eyes were fixed absently on the blue water and the far white shores. Seeing that she did not respond, Sydney proceeded more boldly—

"If you like, I will write at once, and see if I can't get three tickets promised. Then, if that turns out all right, we could appoint a meeting-place—the central sculpture-gallery—at ten sharp; and I shall have had a look round on Varnishing-Day—I shall be able to direct you to the chief pictures without any loss of time."

"Well, it is most kind of you," said the young lady, with downcast eyes. "But I don't think we can allow you to take so much trouble—"

"Trouble!" he exclaimed; "it will give me the greatest pleasure. And perhaps I shall be able to show you on the walls something that will remind you of your visit to the Highlands in mid-winter."

And with that the old gentleman came out of his contemplative dreams only to learn that this forward young man had made an assignation with his daughter, to the effect that all three should meet in Burlington House, at ten o'clock sharp, at the next Private View of the Academy.

After luncheon Miss Anne was persuaded to accompany her father, and forthwith got into his boat; so that Sydney was somewhat reluctantly forced to separate from these two

companions whose intrusion upon his own favourite retreat he had at first bitterly resented. He was very nearly offering to go with them, under the excuse that Mr. Hague's tackle might want some supplementing; but a wholesome fear of suspicion deterred him; so he set to work on his own account, and resumed his patient trolling along the solitary little bays.

There was small chance of fishing. The wind had veered with the sun; the sky was perfectly cloudless; the strong sunlight poured down on the loch; and but for the fact that there was still some wind to ruffle the dark blue surface of the water, they might just as well have remained on shore. Sydney, indeed, paid little heed to his two rods. He watched for the coming round of the other boat; and as the two cobbles passed each other, there was always some word of inquiry or encouragement called across; and he had a glimpse of Miss Anne's pretty face. He began to wonder if she had a sweetheart—as if that were any concern of his. He convinced himself that she had—a remarkably good-looking and pleasant-humoured and engaging girl like that could not have reached her twentieth year (as he guessed) without having attracted the attention of plenty of impertinent young fools. And perhaps one of them had had the audacity to claim her for his own!—for the very prettiest and finest-natured girls were always throwing themselves away on nincompoops and boobies. A girl like Anne Hague never knew her own value; she was always too modest; she was ready to take it as an enormous favour and compliment when some microcephalous simpleton condescended to ask her to become his wife; of course Miss Hague must be engaged. And to what kind of a person?—this was his next speculation. Some lanky, long-legged sub-lieutenant whom she had met on board the P. and O. steamer that had brought her home—a cigarette-smoking kind of a creature, with no more brains in his head than pence in his pocket? Or perhaps some fat old Indian merchant, with puffed cheeks and bilious eyes, had had the monstrous impudence to seek a young bride, and had been successful in his hideous wooing by pleading a long friendship with her father? And what was more likely than that the accepted suitor would be following his lady-love into the Highlands? Whom should he be prepared to meet, then?—the lanky young subaltern or the yellow-eyed nabob? A pretty addition to the household at Inver-mudal! Perhaps he would be expected to give up his

boat to the new-comer—as a compliment to Miss Hague!

"They've got hold of a fish, sir," said Duncan suddenly, startling him out of his jealous and wrathful reveries.

"Have you seen him, Duncan?" he asked eagerly. "Is he a clean fish?"

"No, sir; he has not showed above the water yet."

"Why doesn't the old gentleman stand up?—he'll never fight a fish like that!"

"Mebbe he is feared, sir," the gillie said, with a demure grin. "I hef seen chentlemen not used to the salmon that would hef their knees shaking at the first run—ay, and them not able to stand up at ahl. There he goes, sir!—it's a clean fish!"

"Oh, that's all right; I hope he'll get him now. It is the young lady who has brought them luck."

And very keenly did the three pair of eyes in this boat watch the struggle going on away at the other side of the loch. Of course they could not hear the scream of the reel; they could only make out what the fish was doing when he broke the surface of the water; and they could guess by the elevation of Mr. Hague's rod that he was not putting any great pressure on the salmon, so that the fight promised to be a long one. Indeed Sydney's men had time to row all across the head of the loch, and down the other side until they were within hailing distance of the other party before the quick glitter of a white thing in the air showed that the fish had been safely got into the coble.

"I congratulate you!" Sydney called as they drew near; but the old gentleman was far too much agitated to reply.

"What weight is he?" the young man called again.

"Eleven pounds, sir," answered one of Mr. Hague's gillies.

"You'll get another before the afternoon's over."

"It is your turn, Mr. Durham," was Miss Hague's rejoinder, as the boats again slowly separated.

But it was not salmon that were in his mind as the calm afternoon wore into a still calmer evening, and for the time being he almost forgot Miss Anne. The extraordinary beauty of the scene around stirred the artist's soul within him, and yet with a touch of sadness, for it seemed so impossible that any adequate record or transcript of it could be made and carried away—even in memory. Who could put upon any canvas those far-reaching snow-slopes, that

were now of rarest rose, with every dell and corner marked in lines of faintest azure ? In the wan green sky of the east hung a solitary orange cloud, soft and motionless and distant, as if belonging to another world altogether ; while high above Clebrig hung the silver crescent of the moon, looking down upon the dying glory of the west. It was all too wonderful—too ethereal in texture and subtle in its atmospheric gradations—to be attempted by mortal brush. He might as well have tried to convey the curious sense of solitariness produced by those now darkening shores, where not even the cry of a home-winged bird broke the silence. After this display of splendour the world was sinking into the still, hard, voiceless sleep of a winter night.

And yet, as the boats were brought to land, and the black figures proceeded to make their way home through the snow, some faint remembrance of that evening glory still hung in the sky ; and Miss Anne was asking her companion at this moment whether the beautiful snow-picture that had surrounded them while on the loch had not tempted him to forsake salmon-fishing for ever and set seriously to work.

"All that was beyond me," he said. "But I have been thinking I might take your suggestion of the luncheon-party at the rock, the boats at the point, and the gillies crouching under the stone wall. The reflections on the ice will be difficult to manage, perhaps. I'll have another look to-morrow. You must come down at lunch time, Miss Hague, for I want a group of figures at the rock."

"Oh, yes, certainly," said she at once and pleasantly. "I shall be glad to come down and see how you have been getting on."

That seemed a simple promise and one easy of fulfilment ; and yet it turned out otherwise. They had just gained the welcome shelter of the inn, when Miss Anne, who was leading the way through the lobby, picked up an envelope from the table.

"Here is a telegram for you, papa."

"I hate telegrams," he said snappishly. "I wish people would let me alone when I wish to be alone." But, of course, he had to read the message ; and when he had done so, he said deliberately—

"It is vexatious ; but it's got to be done. Anne, I shall have to start off for the south to-morrow morning."

"Papa !"

"Oh, it's got to be done, that's all," he said. "Most likely I shall only have to in

London a few days, and then I'll come back, for I want to see some more of this salmon-fishing. You will remain here, of course ; it wouldn't be worth your while to travel all the way to London and back for nothing. If it turns out that I must go on to Lisbon, then that would be too long for you to remain here ; probably I should not think of coming back ; and in that case I will telegraph to you, and you must make your way south by yourself ; I shall have some one waiting for you at Euston. But if I have merely to be in London for two or three days, you'll be able to find something to do during the time I may be gone."

"Oh, yes," she said, cheerfully enough, and that was all that Sydney heard of the matter.

But as he went to his own room to prepare for dinner, it may frankly be confessed that he regarded this new condition of affairs with a good deal of concern, not to say absolute dismay. For what would be his relations with Miss Anne when she was left alone in this remote and solitary little inn ? They could not become strangers all at once, and pretend to ignore each other's existence. For mere courtesy's sake, he was bound to do what he could to enliven her solitude ; but how much of her society could he claim, in these peculiar circumstances, without causing her embarrassment ? Take the next evening, for example. The three of them had dined together, not because this room was regarded as a public room (for it had been handed over to Sydney in exchange for the one from which he had been ousted), but because it was more convenient for the servants than the other sitting-room, which was in a wing of the house. Very well ; to-morrow evening would Miss Anne make her appearance, alone, to dine with him *à tête-à-tête* (which would be just about as awkward for him as for her) ; or would she be forced into the apparent discourtesy of a refusal, which would leave a distinct sense of constraint between them, even if she did not wholly avoid his society as the easiest way out of the difficulty ? Sydney did not like this situation of affairs at all ; it seemed hard, just as this very pleasant alliance and companionship was being formed, that it should fall to the young lady herself to be obliged to sever it, even at the risk of seeming discourtesy. But what else could she do, he sadly asked himself : the possibility of a little dinner-party of two—he and she, and no one else—was far too wild and wondrous a thing to be seriously entertained.

(To be continued.)

PRINCIPAL SHAIRP.

By THE EDITOR.

FOUR biographies of remarkable Scotsmen, with strongly accentuated differences of character, have recently appeared within a few weeks of each other. Principal Tulloch, keenly intellectual, tender as a girl, and charged with enthusiasms which burned in him as a passion, representing the healthy side of that Broad Church movement in Scotland which has broken up traditional narrowness without compromising what is vital in the ancient faith; Robertson of Irvine, the poet preacher, humorous, devout, and deeply touched by the spirit of a religious art too greatly neglected by his countrymen; William Denny, the shipbuilder, the embodiment of modern labour, consecrated to the highest moral ideals, a veritable hero, a Christian statesman and unaffected brother among his workmen, and while mastering every detail of a great business, able to soar and dwell in the purest air of religious contemplation; and, finally, John Campbell Shairp of St. Andrews, scholar, philosopher, and poet, of whose character and work we propose to give a brief sketch.

Principal Shairp was the younger son of Major Shairp of Houston, in Linlithgowshire. The family is nearly the oldest in the county, and the estate, now dwindled to a very moderate size, was at one time extensive and valuable. Houston is the ideal of an old Scotch Mansion House; high and square set, with crow-stepped gables, it rises shoulder high above the trees, and looks out on a wide panorama. The avenue of limes that leads straight up to the portal reminds one of the nave and aisles of a cathedral; and by the house, with its antique gardens and plots of flowers, are hedges of yew that must date centuries back. With a boyish delight he used to show the place to his friends, drawing attention to the portrait of the ancestor, grim and stern, who had built up the property, and to the picture of the other, jovial and rubicund, who had squandered it.

My recollections of Shairp go back to my childhood, when he was a student in Glasgow College, and living with my aunts, the daughters of the Manse described in "A Highland Parish." At that time Norman Macleod was also a student, and completing his studies for the Church. He had recently

returned from a residence in Weimar, and was overflowing with young enthusiasm. Three other students were boarded in my father's house, one of whom was John Mackintosh, "The Earnest Student," large-eyed, reflective, already a saint in devotion and self-discipline. When the hours of study were over, and when Shairp came to join the merry party in what they called their "coffee-room," the outburst of animal spirits and the marvellous talk, ranging from what was most comic to what touched the loftiest themes, was such that all looked back upon that time as upon the fresh dawn of a new and wondrous life. Norman was the very soul and inspiration of these memorable hours. Poetry and humour were with him in full flood, his imagination and suggestiveness were exhaustless, and the others—themselves lads of rare intellectual wealth—were kindled into a fine excitement which brought out the best that was in each of them. It was for Shairp the first opening of the soul to those impressions which formed his character. On one side of his nature he was then a boisterous fox-hunter and a splendid rider. His entrance into the room was not unfrequently followed by a view-holloa and a leap over sofa or chair, and then rushing to assume his favourite attitude, leaning back over the fireplace with hands below his coat-tails, he would challenge the company with some new bit of Wordsworth or some thought that had caught his imagination. About this period he contributed to the University Album a poem, the first, I suppose, he ever wrote, and which indicates the fervour of his sporting proclivities. It has never, I think, been republished. It is entitled "The Old Huntsman's Farewell to his Pack," and the following are characteristic lines:—

"How oft together have we hied
At morning, to the wild wood-side,
When clouds were rolling grey;

"One cheer—and every hound was in;
A moment's pause—then hark the din!
Hark forward! Hark away!

"Hounds onward dashing, the cover crashing,
Your voices singing, my bugle ringing,
Hark forward! Hark away!"

Gradually his love of sport passed away, not that he deemed hunting or shooting

wrong in themselves, but, as he expressed it when we were enjoying a walk on the heather above the home of his later years at Aberfeldy, increasing sympathy with nature and with every living thing God had made took away the pleasure from him which some men have in destroying life. The spirit of the poet as it grew into perfect refinement could not brook what is called "sport."

The great event of that time at College was the election of Sir Robert Peel as Rector of the University. Not the students alone, but the entire west of Scotland went mad over the victory. The banquet given to Peel is still an epoch in the memory of many an old man, and to those young spirits who had been engaged in the thick of the battle it was a wild excitement. For days afterwards nothing was heard but fragments of speeches that still rung in the ear—especially the finer passages of the Rector's address. Shairp was full of it, and was wont to shout the part where the orator had touched his Celtic fire by the fine use of the sonorous names of Highland scenes. "I want no guide to the mountains and the glens of Badenoch. I know the paths from Dalwhinnie to Corryarrick, and from Loch Laggan side to Cairn Gorm."

It was at this time he came first under the power of Wordsworth, and found in Norman Macleod an ardent fellow-student of poems not appreciated then as they have been since. The influence of Wordsworth on Shairp was of the deepest and most penetrative character. His own poetry is steeped in the spirit of the master; and while there is no imitation Wordsworth is felt imbuing it all. It is probably the memory of those first impressions which he describes in his finely-touched essay on Wordsworth. "There are many . . . who can recall the very place and the hour when, as they read this or that poem of his, a new light, as from heaven, dawned suddenly within them. The scales of custom fell from their eyes, and they beheld all Nature with a splendour upon it as of the world's first morning. The common sights and sounds of earth became other than they were. The heart leapt up to the white cirrhi clouds, and looked on the early stars of evening with a young wonder not felt before. . . . No time can ever efface the remembrance of that first unveiling, nor destroy the grateful conviction that to him they owe a delicate and inward service such as no other poet has equally rendered."

After completing his studies at Glasgow, Shairp won the Snell Scholarship, which secured for him an honourable entrance and residence at Balliol College, Oxford. To his keen temperament Oxford proved the highest possible stimulus. It was a period of unusual ferment, for Keble and Pusey and Newman were then exercising that fascinating influence which has altered so many time-honoured features of the English Church; and on the other side Carlyle and Arnold of Rugby, represented by his best scholars, had stirred an opposite and liberal current of thought. There was then also at Oxford a splendid "set" whose names have since become famous. Among the contemporaries, and all of them the intimate friends of Shairp, were Dean Stanley, A. H. Clough, Matthew Arnold, Dean Bradley, Theodore Walrond, Professor Sellar, Bishop Temple, Lord Coleridge, and others, who contributed the finest elements of thought and feeling to those gatherings in college hall, or in private rooms, when every phase of the intellectual and religious movements of the time were discussed, and when soul caught fire from soul, as philosophy, poetry, or song led the brilliant talk. Shairp, with his impulsive nature, became charged with the new wine that was being poured forth from so many centres. If we said that he was swayed hither and thither according as Carlyle and Clough and Arnold, or Keble and Newman held him in thrall, we should misrepresent the situation. That his sympathetic nature was absorbed for a time with each of these schools is true, because it was his character to try to understand as thoroughly as he could the real nature of whatever appeared lofty in religious character. He therefore let himself swing into the currents, but he never raised his anchor. He had brought too strong a personal faith with him from Scotland to be wholly the sport of Oxford parties, and I remember his telling me how he traced his preservation from many of the extremest teachings on either side, to the habit of private devotion which, even in the darkest hour of intellectual difficulty, he never laid aside. That he was attracted greatly by the representatives of the various schools was to be expected. Clough and Stanley were his close friends, and Newman was to him a living poem—an ideal. When he came to Scotland he usually visited Norman Macleod, and I think these visits had no small effect in steadying him. What talks they had! Shairp seated with one leg thrown across the other, and,

grasping the ankle, would swing back and forwards, while he recited, or rather sang, some "bit" from Newman, or any poem that had caught his imagination; or coming out every now and then with an emphatic "I tell you what, Norman," he would announce some startling view, given purposely to draw out a reply. On far into the night would they hold converse that grew more interesting as the witching hour was long past, and broken only to be resumed when morning brought them together again.

The outer events of Shairp's life may be briefly noted. From Oxford he went to Rugby, where he served as one of the masters for ten years, first under Dr. Tait, the late revered Archbishop, and subsequently under the present Dean of Norwich. Among his colleagues were the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Bradley, Dean of Westminster, the late Bonamy Price, and Cotton, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, whose friendship formed an epoch in Shairp's life. He left Rugby in 1857 to fill the chair of Humanity in St. Andrews; and on the death of Dr. Forbes he was appointed Principal of the United Colleges. In 1877 he became Professor of Poetry in Oxford.

It was not his erudition as a scholar which gained for him the high place he occupied among his contemporaries, for although a fair classic, he was not distinguished as such, the art of writing Greek and Latin verse never having received the attention in the "grounding" of boys in Scotch schools which it does in England. It was Shairp's personality, his enthusiasm, his appreciativeness, and his general vigour of thought and varied accomplishments, which won the hearts of the best men of his time. He was phenomenally Scotch in sympathy, charged to the brim with the ballads and the romance of the Borders and Highlands, glorying in a past of which Oxford knew little, and not ashamed to hold up his head in the face of all comers on behalf of Presbyterian and Covenanter, as well as of Bonnie Dundee and Prince Charlie. Shairp was not self-assertive, as many Scotsmen are apt to become in presence of the unconscious arrogance characteristic of John Bull, especially of the clerical and *Donnish* John Bull. On the contrary, his Scottish enthusiasm lent one of the greatest charms to his character, and it may be safely affirmed that not a few of his friends at Oxford were aroused by the glow of his patriotism, his pourings forth of song and story, his descriptions of

scenery, and his representations of a religious life nourished under different conditions from that of Anglicanism, to look on Scotland with a new eye. His own heart was among the hills. However passionately he loved Oxford, and gave of his best to the lads at Rugby, he breathed another life whenever he crossed the border, and found himself by Ettrick or Teviotdale, or among the solitary Bens of Badenoch.

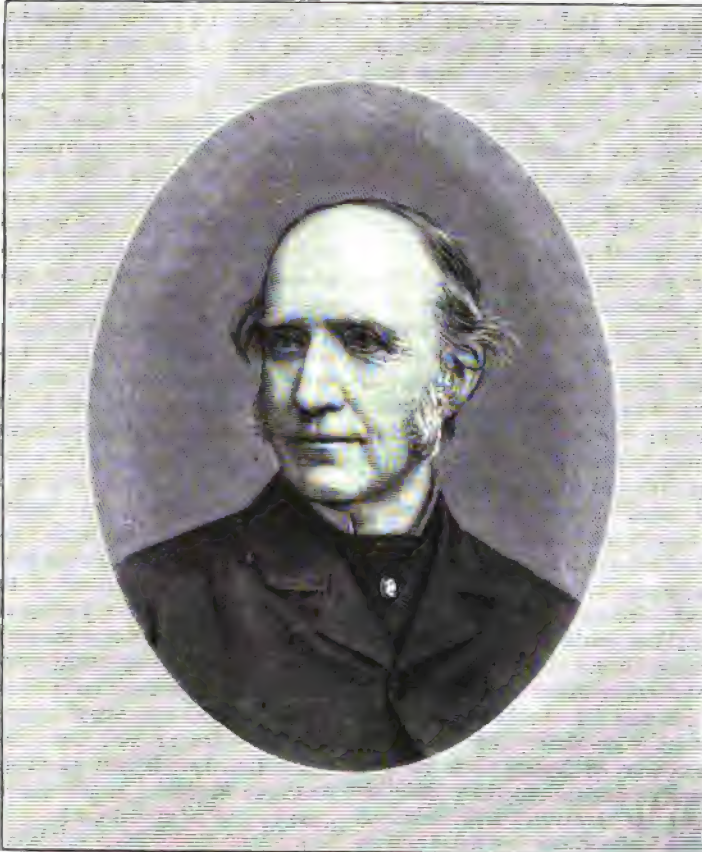
The influence which Newman exercised on Shairp was thoroughly healthy. The hours during which he worshipped in St. Mary's and listened to that silver voice were full of a high spiritual inspiration. Newman did not in the least touch him with his sacerdotalism, but he searched with a fine subtlety into the secrets of his spirit, and raised this young Scotsman, accustomed at home to a totally different style of oratory, into a new heaven of purest saintliness. He was awed as well as elevated by the venerable church, the striking audience, and that half-mysterious preacher who, without declamation or apparent effort, spoke in words that were vivid as light, and glorified by poetic feeling—passion held in check by absolute taste. To the end of his life Newman's sermons and Keble's "Christian Year" were his favourite devotional reading. The finest parts of both he knew by heart. But if he owed much to Dr. Newman he did not leave the debt wholly unpaid, for no one has done more than he to make the world understand the charm which Newman exercised. How suggestive is the picture:—"In Oriel Lane light-hearted graduates would drop their voices and whisper, 'There's Newman!' when, head thrust forward, and gaze fixed as though on some vision seen only by himself, he glided by. Awe fell on them for a moment, almost as it had been some apparition that had passed." Or, again: "The look and bearing of the preacher was as of one who dwelt apart; who, though he knew the age well, did not live in it. From his seclusion of study, abstinence, and prayer, from habitual dwelling in the unseen, he seemed to come forth that one day of the week to speak of the things he had seen and known. . . . Through the stillness of that high Gothic building the words fell on the ear like the measured dripping of water in some vast, dim cave. You might come away not believing in the tenets peculiar to the High Church, but you would be harder than most men if you did not feel the things of faith brought closer to the soul." Shairp has rendered a no less valuable service to Keble, for his Essay on

Keble is the best antidote we know to the "Life," which leaves the impression, true or false, of a cultivated but narrow ecclesiastic, full of unreasoning prejudice and of a sort of sulky bigotry, which those who love "The Christian Year" receive with pain.

The years spent in St. Andrews were filled with literary work; and it is pleasant

to recall the fact that many of his essays and poems first appeared in the pages of this Magazine.*

His influence as a teacher was more intense in the case of a few than general. Many a man now doing noble work can trace the first stirrings of those higher thoughts and aims that have dominated



From a photograph]

[By Samuel Wane, Edinburgh.

John Campbell Shairp.

his life to the tender, penetrating power which Shairp exercised. But there was one kind of student whom he failed to reach, and who was repelled rather than attracted by him. The boisterous lads, coarse in manners and in nature, however clever they might be, who were untouched and apparently untouchable by the finer aspects of religion and poetry, had little appreciation of the man who sometimes stung them with an appropriate epithet or restrained them by a discipline more com-

monly experienced at a public school than a Scottish university, where the freedom resembles the German rather than English type. But the poorest and most friendless, if showing sincerity of spirit, found in him the tenderest of guides. The Highland students especially interested him, and more

* It may be well to name here Principal Shairp's principal works: "Kilmahoe and other Poems," 1864; "Studies in Poetry and Philosophy," 1868; "Culture and Religion," 1870; "Interpretation of Nature," 1877; "Aspects of Poetry," 1881; and, after his death, "Sketches in History and Poetry," 1887; "Glendary and other Poems," 1888.

than one of his poems was inspired by the romantic lives and splendid sacrifices which these earnest fellows made to gain learning.

The impression which one chiefly cherishes of him is an exquisite combination of highest culture with the most devout religious spirit. The poetic and romantic side was always in evidence, but every gift and accomplishment was consecrated to Christ. The passionate keenness of his natural temperament was in later years hallowed and chastened by an abiding reverence and sense of the Divine Presence, enriched by large experience and a constant stream of fresh thought.

In his personal dealings with men of the most diverse schools he was brotherly to a degree, although he retained a certain dogmatism and even intolerance as to questions of faith. He might be in closest contact and share his dearest friendships with High Churchman or Rationalist, Anglican or Presbyterian, yet he came away gathering from them all whatever he could assimilate for the nourishment of the higher life, but wholly untouched by their peculiarities. What is quoted by him as said of Keble might be applied to himself: "What he hated instinctively was heresy, insubordination or claims of independence, disloyalty, innovation, a critical or censorious spirit." He had been nourished in Presbyterianism, and was by conviction warmly evangelical—not in the party sense, but in the wider and fuller meaning in which the teaching of Macleod Campbell, and Erskine of Linlathen could be called evangelical, while he could use the phraseologies of the ordinary school with stricter conformity than they. He was, on another side of his nature, especially in later life when his duties as Professor of Poetry took him to Oxford, greatly drawn to the English Church, loving its reverent and cultured ways. When he had nothing but Anglicanism during his undergraduate days, he used to long, as he said, for some living voice to break up the monotony of fixed prayer. But when he had nothing but Presbyterianism he equally longed for a change, now and then, to the Liturgy. This natural conservatism led him into extremes. It prevented him from doing full justice to Broad Churchism, and rendered him stubborn in resisting any change in Presbyterian worship which interfered with the old and what many have felt to be the needlessly bald aspects of the service. He never cared for "intellectual" preaching, and would have preferred the simple strain of a sincere "talk" in the pulpit to the best sermons

of the best preachers who dealt with "questions of the day." When the custom of standing at singing and kneeling at prayer was introduced in our Scottish churches, Shairp entered a silent but vigorous protest by holding to the old forms, and with his grey plaid on his shoulder would sit when others stood and stand when others knelt. These may appear prejudices, but they were really the outcome of poetic sympathies with a past which he revered.

He was at his best when he was among the hills. Armed with a huge "cromach" (Highland shepherd's crook) as long as an Alpine stock and much thicker, he would wander for days over untrodden tracts of the Highlands or of the Border country, sleeping in shepherd huts, or sometimes even benighted on the mountains. Of splendid physique, he knew no fatigue, and would breast a corrie or face a summit with the elastic step and sound "wind" of a ghillie. There was scarce a solitude from Eskdale to Minchmoor he had not visited. He knew each "water" from Liddesdale to Manor. Yarrow and Ettrick were a part of himself. He had gazed from every chief range from Broadlaw to the Criffel, and from Tinto to the Cheviots, and had dwelt with loving eye on each historic scene from Enterkine to Otterbourne. The shepherds of Tala and Teviot knew him well. As he strode across heather or bent he was for ever crooning to himself old songs that kept time to his steps, or went pondering lines he was composing, selecting the aptest words to utter what his eye beheld. This is the charm of his poetry. It is the direct expression of nature as he beheld her, the sincere and pure utterance of a spirit that loved her every aspect. How fine, for example, is his description of the bare height of Broadlaw!

"The bent grass grows not here; only the moss,
The short, smooth moss, all weather-bleached to gray,
Was soft beneath our feet, as miles on miles
We walked, companioned by no living thing
Save startled plover, and the shearing wind.

Ridge rolled on ridge tumultuously away,
Dusky and desolate with some stray flock
Of sun on hill-side, here and there a glint
Of the great river, wan beneath the gloom.

In all that mighty round, but one sole life,
One Presence, the vast movement of the heavens,
With the answer of the sympathetic hills."

Every word in the following description of autumn is steeped in the October air:—

"What time the frosty-bright October lays
Transfiguring hand on wild wood, bank, and bae,

Kindling the coopes to a rich calm blaze,
A glory of decay;

"All hues, made brighter in the clear still air,
Light amber, pale green, golden, russet-brown,
With scarlet dashed and purple, waiting there
Till the storm-wind come down."

Lowlander as he was, in spite of the fact that in his veins ran Highland blood, he felt the glory and knew the traditions of the Highlands as few Highlanders now do. There was not a Ben he did not know by headmark from Ben Wyvis to Ben Lomond, there were few glens he had not visited, and his footsteps led him over moors and through wildernesses usually trod only by the deer-stalker or shepherd. Far from beaten paths, he wandered over many a solitude from Assynt to Morven. Loch Torridon and Loch Hourn were not reached by him as they are by yachtsmen and tourists, but with the freedom of the pedestrian to enjoy each effect of form and colour. Morar and Moydart were as familiar to him as the more open ground stretching from Craigellachie to the Moor of Rannoch. His friend, the late Dr. Clerk of Killmallie, was an unfailing storehouse for Highland tradition and poetry, and although he could not speak Gaelic, Shairp gained such an appreciation of its force and beauty as to enter into the spirit of Duncan Ban M'Intyre and Rob Donn.

The impressions caught during these wanderings live in many of his poems. How fine this is !—

"From beaten paths and common tasks relieved
My face I set toward the lovely grounds
Where Moidart and Lochaber northward heaved,
Meet with rough Kneydart bounds.

"O'er 'Faeth,' 'Maam,' 'Gual,' each shape of mountain
pass,
From morn to eve an autumn day we clomb,
A lone, waste wilderness where no man was,
Nor any human home.

"And looked o'er mountain backs, misty or bared,
Ridged multitudinous to the northern bourn,
Where, high o'er all the great scours watch and guard
Loch Nevish and Loch Hourn!

"Saw far to west, through yawning gaps upleap,
Dark Moidart mountains with their cloven defiles,
And here and there let in the great blue deep,
With the far outer Isles;

"While close beneath our feet clear streams are flowing
Down long glens walled the steep, dark hills between;
With their long streaks of grassy margin glowing
Bright with resplendent sheen.

"But no smoke rose from any old abode,
From the green summer shealings came no song,
No face of man looked on us where we trod
From dawn to gloamin' long."

His poem on the Moor of Rannoch breathes the very soul of the great waste that stretches from Ben Doran to Schihallion.

"Yes! a desert wide and wasted,
Washed by rain-floods to the bones;
League on league of heather blasted,
Storm-gashed moss, grey boulder stones;

"And along these dreary levels,
As by some stern destiny placed,
Yon sad lochs of black moss water,
Grimly gleaming on the waste."

• • • • •

"And the Atlantic sends his pipers
Up yon thunder-throated glen,
O'er the moor at midnight sounding
Pibrochs never heard by men.

"Clouds, and mists, and rains before them
Crowding to the wild wind tune,
Here to wage their all-night battle,
Unbeheld by star and moon."

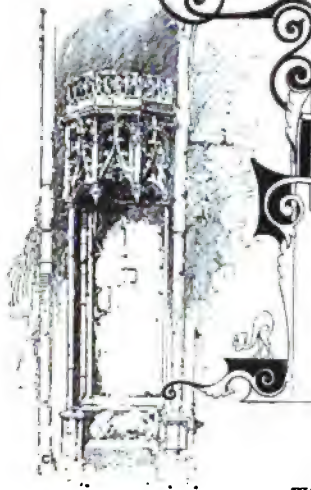
We have no space to give an estimate of his essays, all of them marked by the highest culture and ever leading up to that holy faith which inspired his life.

In the hurry and exacting outside activities of modern life Shairp took but a small part. That was not his function; but surely such as he, who, dwelling apart from crowds, bring down to others from the heights where they have been alone with nature and with God, the calm, and beauty, and eternal peace they have themselves enjoyed, are doing a work not the least valuable for men. A purer and more saintly spirit than was in John Campbell Shairp many of us never knew.

Although not an old man, he survived most of the friends of his youth and middle age. These losses lay with a constant presence of sadness on his spirit, loosening earthly ties and drawing him gently nearer and nearer the eternal home. "To-day," he wrote to a dear friend, in 1879, "I fulfil the threescore years! And you must soon follow suit. We are, I think, each to each, the oldest friend we have out of our immediate families. It is a long retrospect, and it makes me feel how very graciously I have been dealt with, encompassed by mercies all along my way. Often fears and clouds come over me as I look forward; but that, I feel, is faithless. I can but throw myself, would it were more entirely and unreservedly than ever—trusting that He who has led me hitherto so gently will lead me to the end, and meet me on the other side in mercy and peace."

The close of his life was in perfect keeping with its former character. Amid the glory of the Highlands he loved so well, tended by those who were his dearest on earth, and, catching ere he fell asleep the words of prayer he wished to hear, he turned as if to rest, and he was at rest for ever.

The Birthday of our Gothic Minsters.



A Sequel to "Dreamland in History."

By H. D. MACLEOD SPENCE, D.D.,

DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.

OUR glorious Minster Church at Gloucester registers, if I may use the term, an eventful epoch in the civil and religious history of England. I speak of England, because it has for us a more immediate interest, but what we have to remark here of England is common in a greater or less degree to Germany, France, and the Low Countries.

In our great Gloucester Church,

we pass from the stern and solemn

grandeur of the Norman nave, with its

massive columns, its unadorned roof, its comparatively small windows—we pass through a little iron gateway into a perfectly new and strange building. It would seem as though we were entering into the work of another age altogether; other ideas have evidently been at work here; the views, aspirations, thoughts on the part of the builders of this portion of the grey time-worn Minster had evidently undergone a mighty change. There are no massy fortress-like pillars here, the roofs soar to a height never attempted in the older Norman nave, a perfect lace-work of tracery in stone veils the lofty walls and covers the soaring roof. The comparatively little windows give place to vast openings generally filled with the richest jewelled glass, one of them positively claiming to be the largest in Europe.

The student wonderingly asks whether centuries elapsed between the period which produced the Norman nave, with its grave and solemn grandeur, its fortress-like massive forms, its grey and sombre character, and the period which gave birth to the builders who changed the great eastern limb of our cathedral into those new forms of beautiful decorative richness, which rejoiced in the delicate lace-work—the soaring roof, with

its rich and elaborate work—the mighty windows, which are the characteristic features of the choir of Gloucester Cathedral.

He is surprised at learning that scarcely two centuries elapsed between the age which produced the Norman nave as the favourite form of a Christian church, and the age which devised the choir of Gloucester as the truest model of the more sacred part of a great house of God.

What happened in this century and a-half to bring about so great a change of thought?

Our answer will supply some of the causes which were at work which produced Gothic architecture, one if not the earliest form of which was the Gloucester Perpendicular.

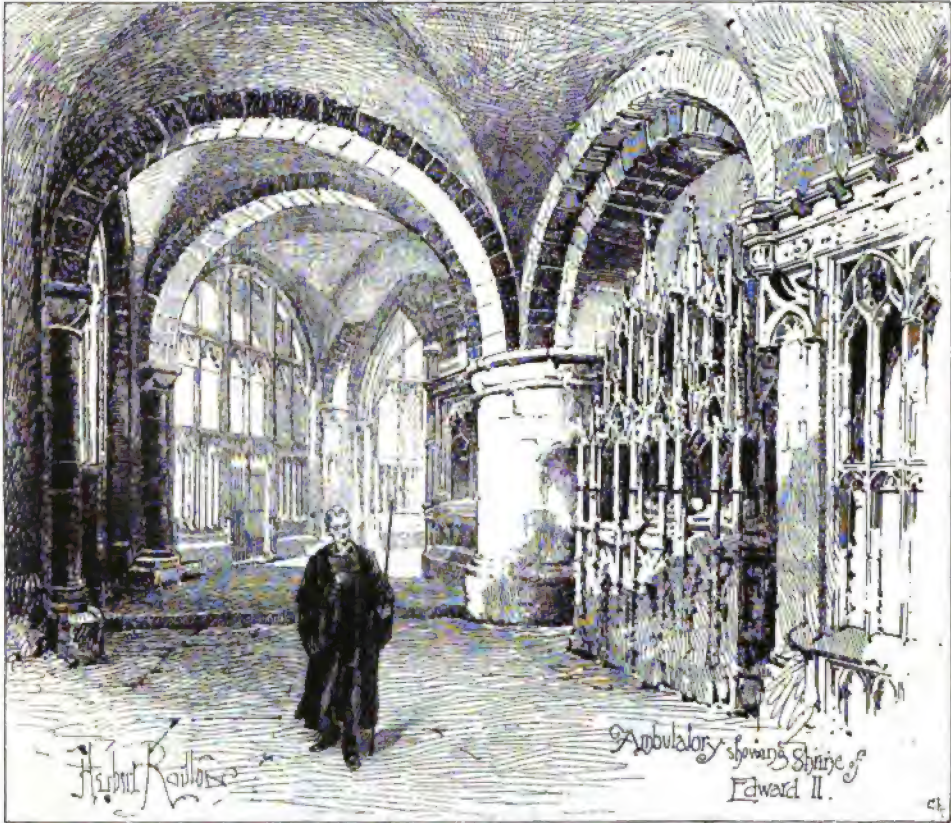
In a former chapter, we sketched out something of the spirit which dwelt in the Norman master builders. In the time of the Conqueror, his father and his sons—roughly speaking the eleventh century—a feeling of insecurity, of perpetual danger to life and property, was, perhaps, the dominant feeling in all men's minds.

No one was secure; perpetual wars harassed Saxon England, as well as Carolingian (I use the term for want of a better) France and the Low Countries. England as well as France dreaded the constant terrorism of the sea pirates from Denmark and the northern countries. In both kingdoms the sovereign was dominated by an ever-changing succession of professedly subject, but really independent chieftains, who were at per-

petual warfare with their liege lord and with one another. Germany was in an equally unsettled, miserable condition.

What wonder was it that the churches built in those stormy days may have resembled fortresses! The dominant idea in every architect and builder's mind was that the pile they were designing and erecting must be capable of defence. The first thought, when a palace or a great house was planned, was that the palace or house must be in

some sense a fortress. Thus when the Conqueror erected his London residence, his architect built him the "Tower of London." The keep of William's London palace still throws its shadow as the well-known White Tower over the busy waters of the Thames. So when an abbey or minster was planned, the same thought coloured the builder's design; not that a great abbey or a minster church was meant to stand a siege or receive a garrison of men at-arms, but the fortress



idea could never be dismissed from the mind of the architect; hence in Norman churches the enormously thick walls, the massive pillars, the small apertures for light. The ponderous battlemented tower, faithful copy of the keep or donjon of a Norman castle—we see the last feature still in the low square tower in the mighty abbey which stands in the green water meadows of Tewkesbury by the Severn waters, only a few miles away, and built probably by the same hand, certainly the fruit of the same inspira-

tion as its grander sister—the Minster Church of Gloucester.

From the day of Hastings onward a new state of things began for England; gradually under the strong rule of the Conqueror and his sons, the general feeling of insecurity ceased. Before the middle of the twelfth century, there was no real fear of serious disturbance at home, no dread of invasion from abroad. The raids of the Vikings were a terrible story of the past, while the strong hand of the Angevin kings crushed

down independent action and perpetual civil war among the powerful chieftains at home. The idea of the stronghold and of the fortress became less and less a dominant thought. The architect and the builder had greater scope to exercise ingenuity and skill. In the reigns of the Angevin kings, Henry II., Richard Cœur de Lion and John, A.D. 1154—1216, no monk builder, for instance, would have planned a new minster church on the lines of Serlo's Church of Gloucester.

The new spirit in architecture which had been *felt* for more than a century, and which showed itself in the work known technically as "Early English" and "Decorated," appeared very markedly in Gloucester in Edward II.'s reign, when Abbot Thoky substituted in the south aisle, for the plain and comparatively small windows of Serlo, the splendid and elaborate decorated windows we now see. This new spirit in architecture was in a measure owing to the general feeling of security, which allowed greater latitude and scope for the imagination.

The time, however, for the full development of the new ideas in church architecture was when the third Edward's reign was close at hand. But though the influence of quieter times, the result of Norman influence and Norman conquest, may be looked upon as one of the causes which led to the "invention" of Gothic architecture—a far more powerful cause existed.

A mighty revival in Church life had taken place, especially in northern Europe. The new life which was breathed among ecclesiastics of all degrees, which gave new and nobler aims to well-nigh every religious house and foundation, influenced powerfully all sorts and conditions of men. The

Crusades, those strange, sad wars, undertaken, at first certainly, with a noble purpose, were one of the outcomes of this universal religious movement.

The universal practice of simony—in many an individual case a deplorable licentiousness of manners—had long enfeebled the influence while it poisoned the life of the clergy. High aims and lofty purposes were well-nigh unknown, not only to the great bulk of the clergy and the dwellers in the countless religious houses, but even to the ecclesiastics occupying the prominent places in the hierarchy. A lamentable ignorance of all letters was another characteristic feature of the day. In England it was said that between the Trent and the Thames scarcely a priest could be found acquainted with the Latin tongue, although all the services of the Church were written in that language! The performance of religious rites by such ignorant men must have been utterly empty and devoid of all real meaning. The monks, with few exceptions, were destitute of discipline;

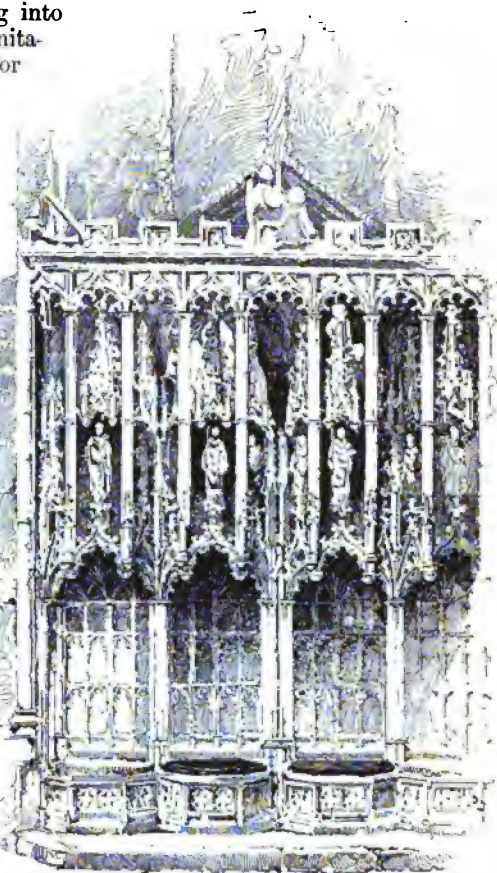


North Transept with
Early English screen.
J. B. R. R. R.

the regular canons worse, constantly lapsing into drunkenness and disorder. The highest dignities in the Church were equally guilty. For instance, we know that Hugh, Archbishop of Rouen, who died in 994, having held the great Norman arch-see for fifty-two years, surrendered himself wholly to gross sensuality. Another occupant of the same archbishopric, Mauger, a relation of William the Conqueror, was, even in an age distinguished for ecclesiastical corruption, conspicuous for his depravity. "Courtier, soldier, warrior, prelate, the mitre decked his head, and his mailed hand clutched the crosier, but he was so wild and ill-conditioned that we can scarcely think of him in his clerical character." "He lived the life of a magnificent noble given much more to hunting and cock-fighting than to episcopal duties."* So vile and evil was the conduct of this Archbishop Mauger that the common folk believed he was aided in his acts of wild mischief by a household demon. This wicked prelate was at last, owing to the influence of Duke William, formally deposed for gross licentiousness. This was in A.D. 1062.

Children were even intruded, for State reasons, into great sees. In A.D. 992, Hugh, brother of a Count of Vermandois, was made coadjutor archbishop of Rheims, with right of succession to the archbishopric. When the little Prince Hugh was raised to this great office in the French hierarchy he was about two years old!

Simony publicly practised in the highest quarters had hopelessly corrupted the clergy. Very many of the bishops and abbots had obtained these high dignities by openly purchasing them. The bishop who bought his bishopric would not scruple to sell any ecclesiastical post in his gift. "Give you a nomination to a prebend!" Philip of France is reported to have said to an applicant. "I have sold them all already." "Learning," writes Sir Francis Palgrave, "had altogether decayed. He who could read Latin was talked of as a prodigy. With the decline of ecclesiastical discipline morals had declined also. Never can the one subsist without the other. The dusty rule of St. Benedict



*The Sedilia.
H. J. R. R. R.*

slumbered on the shelf, whilst rich fur and fine linen clothed the monk, and the savoury dishes smoked on the long table of the refectory. Scarcely could the priest at the altar, reeking from the debauch, stammer out the words of the Liturgy."

* * * *

The eleventh century witnessed one of those great religious reactions which from time to time have so powerfully influenced the course of this world's history. It was time, for the Church, through its own weakness and folly, not to say open sin, was fast losing its hold upon men. The revival in religion was not confined to our land or race. From Rome to Canterbury, from the shores of the Adriatic to the coasts washed by the wild North Sea, a great change passed over the

* Palgrave, "Normandy and England," iii., book ii, chap. v. Dean Church, "Anselm," chap. vii.

ecclesiastical world. Monasteries were reformed, new life was breathed into the countless homes of the religious orders, great churchmen arose and infused something of their ardent devotion into the hearts of the humblest monk and parish priest whose work lay perhaps in remote and secluded districts. Nowhere was the religious revival more marked than in Norman England; nowhere had the Church been less active, less an influence for good, than in the later period of the Saxon kings.

But in the eleventh century a new and nobler spirit arose in the Church—the recorder of merely earthly events is tempted to ask, whence came this strange, beautiful revival, this longing after higher and better things, this passionate desire to lead nobler and less selfish lives? In England, after the Conquest, the prelates and abbots were, strangely enough, assisted by a deep feeling of remorse, which took possession of the Conqueror and many of his knightly comrades, remorse for the deeds of blood and violence which accompanied the Norman conquest, remorse for the broad-spread misery which their strong-handed work brought on England. "This feeling," writes Palgrave,* "was probably the cause of the bounteous donations made by the Normans or their immediate descendants for pious and charitable purposes, more religious foundations having been established under the kings of the Anglo-Norman dynasty than during the whole preceding or subsequent period of English history. Very many men also sought rest and consolation in the places of refuge from this world afforded by the Church." Besides the mighty reforms carried out under the two first Norman archbishops in such great religious houses as Gloucester, during the nineteen years of Stephen's reign one hundred and fifteen monasteries were built, and one hundred and thirteen more religious houses were added to these in the days of Henry II. It has been computed that in half a century sixty-four of these houses of religion were built in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire alone. "Multitudes of men were busied in raising the vast pile of buildings which made up a religious house—cloister, dormitories, chapel, hospital, granaries, barns, storehouses."†

In this mighty revival two men were conspicuous, Lanfranc and Anselm, the first two Norman Archbishops of Canterbury. To these, in England and Normandy, as far

as human agency is concerned, was the great revival of Church life and work in the eleventh and twelfth centuries especially due. Great scholars, earnest and devoted churchmen, statesmen of no mean ability, full of noble and unselfish enthusiasm, they were both, though different in character, admirably and specially fitted for the great work of reformation and reconstruction of the Church which lay before them.

The first of the Norman Archbishops of Canterbury, Lanfranc, possessed in himself many rare and singular gifts. It was the good fortune of the Conqueror to attach him to his cause in England. He became the great king's innermost counsellor; and for long years, during that stormy and eventful period when Norman rule was being slowly and painfully established in Saxon England, Lanfranc was the trusted Minister and adviser of William. It was through Lanfranc's work more than by any other human agency* that the Church of the Anglo-Saxon was redeemed from the sloth and impotency into which she had sunk. He was at once statesman and churchman, teacher and reformer, restorer of a scholarship fast perishing, an accurate theologian, an ardent reviver of zeal for a nobler and more useful life among the professed ministers of the Church. He occupied a middle position between men like the saintly Anselm who succeeded him and the more worldly bishops of his day—able and devoted men often, but statesmen rather than churchmen. Had Anselm stood at William's right hand during that troubled age, he would never have won William's heart as did Lanfranc, the wise and prudent. Had a worldly prelate like Ralph Flambard, Bishop of Durham, the Minister of Rufus, or like A'Beckett, the Counsellor of Henry II., been the king's choice, men would never have seen the great Reformation in Church life which so powerfully affected the course of events in the latter part of the eleventh and the whole of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The wise and saintly Lanfranc was exactly fitted to influence the conquerors for good.

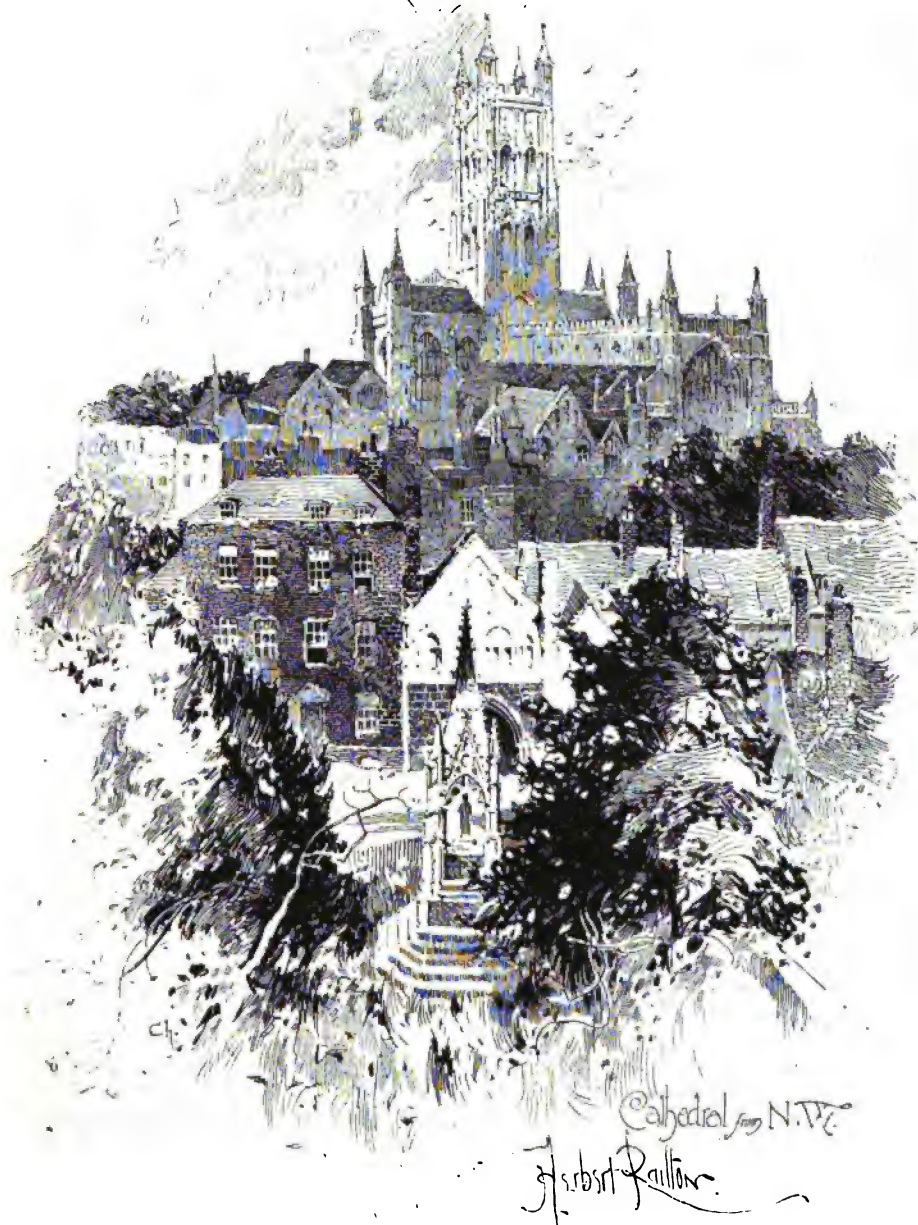
The first Archbishop after the Norman Conquest was a foreigner, but he was the truest of friends to England. Without him no Magna Charta would have been possible † some hundred and twenty-six years later. When he died, A.D. 1089, his death was

* "Normandy and England," vol. iii., book iii. chap. x.

† "Henry II.," by Mrs. J. R. Green, chap. j.

* Compare Palgrave, "Normandy and England," vol. iii., book ii. chap. v.

† Palgrave, "Normandy and England," vol. iii., book iii. chap. xv.



mourned as the heaviest loss which could befall his adopted country.

Anselm, the second of the Norman Archbishops, was "a monk throughout . . . but he

was much more than a monk, a great teacher, a great thinker, a great kindler of thought in others; he was also an example of gallant and unselfish public service. . . . Pene-

trated, too, as he was by the unflinching austerity of that hard, stern time, he was remembered among men less as the great sage who had opened new paths to thought, or as the great Archbishop who had not been afraid of the face of kings, or as the severe restorer of an uncompromising and high-aiming discipline, than as the loving and sympathising Christian brother, full of sweetness, full of affection, full of goodness, full of allowances and patience for others, whom men of all conditions liked to converse with, and whom neither high nor low ever found cold in his friendship." His influence was far-reaching, equally powerful in his own quiet cloister at Bec as in the stir and bustle of the royal court of Rouen or Westminster; loved by high and low, by the proudest scholar as by the most illiterate man-at-arms.* "We have no man among us," said a great noble once at the court of Rufus at Gloucester, "so holy as Anselm, living only to the Lord. There is no earthly object that he desires." "He was ever talking of heaven and of Christ, but in words all could understand and sympathise in."†

On the roll of great Englishmen none have won a right to a higher place than her adopted sons, the first two Norman Archbishops. Lanfranc, the friend and counsellor of the Conqueror, perhaps occupies the higher and more prominent place in history, because he was William's friend and counsellor, but he was ever conquered England's friend rather than her conqueror's.

Anselm, the loved and saintly monk-bishop, took up and developed Lanfranc's work. Whatever was true and real, and whatever was lovely and spiritual in that great Anglo-Norman Church which played so mighty and beneficent a part in mediæval England, was owing in large measure to the great-hearted Anselm, whom Dante, in his sublime "Vision of Paradise," couples with the glorified spirit of Nathan the Prophet, Minister of David; and John of the golden mouth, the fearless preacher of Antioch and Constantinople; and Donatus the grammarian, the once famous teacher of S. Jerome. "It is his right place," eloquently writes his biographer,‡ "in the noble company of the strong and the meek, who have not been afraid of the mightiest, and have not disdained to work for and with the lowliest, capable of the highest things, content, as living before Him with whom there is neither high nor low, to minister to the humblest."

The two—Lanfranc and Anselm—have left behind them many a fair monument of their brave earnest lives and far-reaching holy influence, some in stone, some writ in the deathless memoirs of our great church and nation; none of the former, though, more lovely than in the grey towers and solemn time-worn cloisters of our Abbey of Gloucester, where, under other forms, the self-same work they initiated still goes on, and where the spirit which they woke from its death-like slumber still lives and breathes, a mighty power for good in this our own strange and restless age.

* * * *

The Abbey of Gloucester, one of the oldest Saxon foundations, is a good example of the work done in religious houses by Lanfranc and Anselm, and their trusted disciples. Serlo, the abbot appointed under Lanfranc's authority, found a ruined house and an empty society. Some half-dozen monks and a few boys represented the once-famous foundation of Gloucester. Serlo left a stately Norman Minster, a spacious monastery, and a flourishing society of a hundred professed Benedictine monks, with, no doubt, great schools attached.

Serlo's architect and workmen built his noble abbey in the true Norman fashion. These craftsmen, brought up in the school of those rough stormy days, ever had the fortress idea in their minds, and their proud minster-church bore, as might have been expected, the signs of a great Norman castle. The little windows, the squat and ponderous battlemented tower, resembling a keep or donjon, like what Tewkesbury Abbey still retains. The dark and gloomy interior, like the great hall of a baronial stronghold. The very pillars in their massive bulk telling their story of mighty strength. Whatever a Norman craftsman built seemed intended to defy the strongest missiles which the engines of war then in use could hurl.

But a new spirit was then being called into existence in Serlo's church, and in a thousand other like religious houses of Europe. Earnestness, devotion, industry, zeal to win souls, love of study—each and all of these were quickened into life by the great revival. Divine service was rendered with reverent care and patient love. The music grew more elaborate. The solemn procession in the stately minster became more studied and picturesque. The incense rose in greater clouds; the prayers were more fervent; the sermons preached were more eloquent and touching; and all these in a different degree in the

* Palgrave, "Normandy and England," vol. iv. book iv.

† Dean Church, "Life of S. Anselm," chap. i.

‡ Dean Church.

thousand churches, after the Lanfrancs and the Anselms had quickened the dying religious life.

The plain unadorned, though massive Norman fortress-church of Serlo at Gloucester, became soon insufficient for the elaborate ritual and the stately processions of Serlo's immediate successors. The dark unornamented Norman buildings, with their stern disdain of rich and varied ornament, though breathing an awe and solemnity pe-

culiarly their own, were not in harmony with the splendid services loved by Anselm's immediate spiritual descendants. "The mediæval hierarchical services did not rise to their full majesty and impressiveness till celebrated under a Gothic cathedral." *

Very early in the story of the Church's new and better life had this desire for a more ornate and less severe and gloomy style of architecture been felt. Certainly before Anselm's firm but gentle loving hand had been



Noticed Note
H. Milman

removed from the helm of the English Church, the more elaborate and ornamented styles, technically known as the "Early English" and "Decorated" schools of architecture, were beginning to supplant the stern old Norman fortress-like work.

In our Gloucester Minster we have a few, but only a few, traces of these first efforts, which resulted in the finished Gothic cathedral with us here. Most of the early attempts have given place to a grander and more perfect conception, which in good truth did not tarry.

* * * *

To sum up, in the fourteenth century Gothic architecture, in all its splendour and variety, was firmly established in England, France, the Low Countries, and Germany. It was recognised universally as containing the most perfect and convenient, as well as the most beautiful forms for Christian churches. It appeared, as the great histo-

rian of Latin Christianity eloquently puts it, with strange, with almost startling suddenness, and with somewhat varied details, was generally adopted in Northern and Central Europe as the favourite type for ecclesiastical buildings.†

It appeared indeed suddenly, although experts will describe with learned accuracy the steps by which, through the Norman or Romanesque, through the schools entitled Early English and Decorated, the monk builders in England (for with England this little study especially concerns itself) reached that lovely form of Gothic peculiar to England—the Perpendicular. The Gloucester

* Milman, "Latin Christianity," vol. vi., book xiv. chap. viii.
† "Latin Christianity," book xiv. chap. viii.



Minster contains the earliest known work* of this great school of Gothic architecture in its southern chancel, finished before A.D. 1337. In its choir, completed only a few years later, it possesses one of the noblest examples of this peculiar architecture so loved in England; A.D. 1350—60 witnessed the completion of this part of the building, still with us in all its perfect

beauty. Neither in Gloucester nor elsewhere has the early fourteenth-century Perpendicular ever been surpassed, very rarely equalled. With startling suddenness, indeed, as Dean Milman accurately observes, did Gothic architecture appear among us; with equally startling rapidity it reached its highest perfection.

A great change had passed over Northern and Central Europe; comparative peace and security succeeded to a long and weary period of general disorder and universal in-

* "Hist. et Cart. S. Petri Monast." See too Professor Willis and Professor E. A. Freeman, referred to in earlier papers.

security. A still greater change had come over the Church. When the eleventh century dawned Christ's Church on earth seemed to be worn out and dying, with little influence or power for God; the watching angel seemed to be speaking sadly to the Master, as he pointed to the tree of the Western Church, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the earth?" Before the eleventh century had run its course a new and nobler life in all parts of Central and Northern Europe had been breathed into the seemingly dying and worn-out Christian community. In an inconceivably short space of time bishops and abbots, the denizens of lordly monasteries, the incumbents of humble parish churches, had awaked from their long and well-nigh fatal slumber, had been aroused from their death-like torpor. The Church was again a mighty power for good.

When men were released from the perpetual terrorism of always standing on the defensive, their builders were at once freed from the burden of obligation to build either for defence or attack. Thus the architect of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries found himself free to plan and to devise forms at once more graceful and more ornamental. Very early in the twelfth century the Norman builder began to weave into his work those beautiful forms known as the Early English. These forms grew in richness and in variety in those comparatively secure years, lived under the rule of the great Angevin sovereigns, Henry II. and Cœur de Lion. These richer and more ornamented forms are generally known under the technical term "Decorated."

While the Church, with its new life, its fervour, and its earnestness, kept calling for vaster buildings, for cloisters more spacious, for loftier and more soaring roofs, for larger and ever larger windows, windows which should serve the double purpose of admitting more of the light of heaven and of displaying the rich and varied tints of the beautiful glass with which men were beginning to illuminate their stately homes of prayer; the symbolism in church architecture grew more and ever more elaborate, the constant services of prayer and praise became grander, the music more impressive; and in those rough times, when learning was scant and education too often neglected, the Church, in its new wisdom, sought with a splendid and patient industry to teach men's hearts and to win their souls, by studiously charming the ear, and delighting the eye. Hence the care

and pains given to sacred music; hence the stately procession, the ornate ritual, the clouds of incense, the solemn, sweet-voiced choir. The Gothic cathedral, with its mystery of symbol, its vast size, its jewelled windows, its wealth of colour, its loftiness, its exceeding beauty of rich and varied detail, was exactly designed to supply a want.

* * * *

This serves to explain the sudden appearance of this new, this inimitable school of Gothic architecture. This is the true, simple story of its rapid progress to what humanly may be deemed perfection in all the lands where the revival of religion was especially felt. In no country was this revival more conspicuous than in England, in no land are the monuments of this splendid development in art or of the results of the revival more beautiful or perhaps so numerous.

* * * *

Some five centuries have elapsed since the glorious choir of Gloucester * left the hands of its monk architects and builders. Since that marvellous creative century scarcely any further progress in church architecture has been chronicled among us. For many a long year in England, men planned and built on the principles of the great Gothic schools, which generally came to perfection in Central and Northern Europe in the course of the fourteenth century, but they planned and built with ever less and less skill and taste.

As the centuries rolled on in their storied course, our English builders still planned, devised, altered, with varying success or ill success. The Tudor or Elizabethan school certainly possesses its own quaint prettiness. Wren, a great genius, without doubt, following Italian masters, gave us, with his pupils, not a few noble and beautiful churches and one stately cathedral; but no true art critic would venture to affirm that these Italian piles are in harmony with our rugged northern atmosphere, our pale skies, our comparatively few days of golden sunshine. St. Paul's Cathedral, the fair masterpiece of Wren, with all its stately beauty, is utterly incapable of inspiring the lofty devotion or the reverential awe which we feel when we gaze on the graceful tower of a time-worn Gothic minster such as Canterbury or Gloucester, or kneel with silent adoration in the soaring choir of Westminster or York.

* I speak of Gloucester as my example, for the same stately work went on in the same creative age in countless other centres in England and in Northern and Central Europe.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DOVONAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

"WE were beginning to think some accident had happened to you," said Sigrid, who stood waiting at the door of the hotel.

"And so it did," said Blanche laughing. "I think I should have broken my neck if it hadn't been for your brother. It was all the fault of this treacherous alpenstock which played me false."

And then with a sympathetic little group of listeners, Blanche gave a full account of her narrow escape.

"And you are really not hurt at all? Not too much shaken to care to dance to-night?"

"Not a bit," said Blanche merrily. "And you promised to put on your peasant costume and show us the *spring dans*, you know."

"So I did. I must make haste and dress, then," and Sigrid ran up-stairs, appearing again before long in a simply made dark skirt, white sleeves and chemisette, and red bodice, richly embroidered in gold. Her beautiful hair was worn in two long plaits down her back, and the costume suited her to perfection. There followed a merry supper in the *dépendance* where all meals were served, then everyone adjourned to the hotel *salon*, the tables and chairs were hastily pushed aside, and dancing began.

Herr Falck's eyes rested contentedly on the slim little figure in the maize-coloured dress who so often danced with his son; and, indeed, Blanche looked more lovely than ever that evening, for happiness and excitement had brightened her dark eyes, and deepened the glow of colour in her cheeks. The father felt proud, too, of his children, when, in response to the general entreaty, Frithiof and Sigrid danced the *spring dans* together with its graceful evolutions and quaint gestures. Then nothing would do but Frithiof must play to them on the violin, after which Blanche volunteered to teach every one Sir Roger de Coverley, and old and young joined merrily in the country dance, and so the evening passed on all too rapidly to its close. It was a scene which somehow lived on in Cecil's memory; the merry dancers, the kindly landlord, Ole Kvikne sitting near the door and watching

them, the expression of content visible in Herr Falck's face as he sat beside him, the pretty faces and picturesque attire of Sigrid and Swanhild, the radiant beauty of Blanche Morgan, the unclouded happiness of Frithiof.

The evening had done her good, its informality, its hearty unaffected happiness and merriment made it a strange contrast to any other dance she could recollect; yet even here there was a slight shadow. She could not forget those words which she had overheard on board the steamer, could not get rid of the feeling that some trouble hung over the Falck family, and that hidden away, even in this Norwegian paradise, there lurked somewhere the inevitable serpent. Even as she mused over it, Frithiof crossed the room and made his bow before her, and in another minute had whirled her off. Happiness shone in his eyes, lurked in the tones of his voice, added fresh spirit to his dancing, she thought she had never before seen such an incarnation of perfect content. They talked of Norwegian books, and her interest in his country seemed to please him.

"You can easily get English translations of our best novelists," he said. "You should read Alexander Kielland's books, and Bjørnsen's. I have had a poem of Bjørnsen's ringing all day in my head, we will make Sigrid say it to us, for I only know the chorus."

Then as the waltz came to an end he led her towards his sister, who was standing with Roy near the piano.

"We want you to say us Bjørnsen's poem, Sigrid, in which the refrain is, 'To-day is just a day to my mind.' I can't remember anything but the chorus."

"But it is rather a horrid little poem," said Sigrid hesitating.

"Oh, let us have it, please let us have it," said Blanche, joining them. "You have made me curious now."

So Sigrid, not liking to refuse, repeated first the poem itself and then the English translation.

"The fox lay under the birch tree's root
Beside the heather;
And the hare bounded with lightsome foot
Over the heather;
'To-day is just a day to my mind,
All sunny before and sunny behind
Over the heather!'

"And the fox laughed under the birch-tree's root
Beside the heather;
And the hare frolicked with heedless foot
Over the heather;
'I am so glad about everything!'
So that is the way you dance and spring
Over the heather!"

"And the fox lay in wait by the birch-tree's root
Beside the heather;
And the hare soon tumbled close to his foot
Over the heather;
'Why, bless me! is that you, my dear!
However did you come dancing here
Over the heather!'"

"I had forgotten that it ended so tragically," said Frithiof, with a slight shrug of the shoulders. "Well, never mind, it is only a poem; let us leave melancholy to poets and novelists, and enjoy real life."

Just then a polka was struck up and he hastily made his bow to Blanche.

"And yet one needs a touch of tragedy in real life," she observed, "or it becomes so dreadfully prosaic."

"Oh," said Frithiof laughing, as he bore her off; "then for Heaven's sake let us be prosaic to the end of the chapter."

Cecil heard the words, they seemed to her to fit in uncannily with the words of the poem; she could not have explained, and she did not try to analyse, the little thrill of pain that shot through her heart at the idea. Neither could she have justified to herself the shuddering repulsion she felt when Cyril Morgan drew near, intercepting her view of Frithiof and Blanche.

"May I have the pleasure of this dance?" he said in his condescending tone.

"Thank you, but I am so tired," she replied. "Too tired for any more to-night."

"Yes," said Sigrid, glancing at her. "You look worn out. Munkeggen is a tiring climb. Let us come up-stairs, it is high time that naughty little sister of mine was in bed."

"The reward of virtue," said Cyril Morgan, rejoining his cousin Florence. "I have been polite to the little *bourgeoise* and it has cost me nothing. It is always best in a place like this to be on good terms with every one. We shall never be likely to come across these people again, the acquaintance is not likely to bore us."

His words were perfectly true. That curiously assorted gathering of different nationalities would never again meet, and yet those days of close intimacy were destined to influence for ever, either for good or for evil, the lives of each one.

All through the Sunday Blanche had kept in bed, for though the excitement had kept her up on the previous night, she inevitably

suffered from the effects of her fall. It was not till the Monday morning, just before the arrival of the steamer, that Frithiof could find the opportunity for which he had impatiently waited. They walked through the little garden, ostensibly to watch for the steamer from the mound by the flagstaff, but they only lingered there for a minute, glancing anxiously down the fjord where in the distance could be seen the unwelcome black speck. On the farther side of the mound, down among the trees and bushes, was a little sheltered seat. It was there that they spent their last moments, there that Blanche listened to his eager words of love, there that she again bade him wait till October, at the same time giving him such hope and encouragement as must surely have satisfied the most *exigeant* lover.

All too soon the bustle of departure reached them, and the steam-whistle—most hateful and discordant of sounds—rang and resounded among the mountains.

"I must go," she exclaimed, "or they will be coming to look for me. This is our real good-bye. On the steamer it will be just a handshake, but now——"

And she lifted a lovely, glowing face to his.

Then, presently, as they walked down to the little pier, she talked fast and gaily of all they would do when he came to England; she talked because, for once, he was absolutely silent, and because she was afraid that her uncle would guess their secret; perhaps it was a relief to her that Frithiof volunteered to run back to the hotel for Mr. Morgan's opera-glass which had been left by mistake in the *salon*, so that, literally, there was only time for the briefest of farewells on the steamer. He went through it all in a business-like fashion, smiling mechanically in response to the good wishes, then, with a heavy heart stepping on shore. Herr Falck, who was returning to Bergen by the same boat which took the other travellers only as far as Vadheim, was not ill-pleased to see his son's evident dejection, he stood by the bulwarks watching him, and saying a word or two now and then to Blanche who was close by him.

"Why, see!" he exclaimed, "the fellow is actually coming on board again. We shall be carrying him away with us if he doesn't take care."

"A thousand pardons!" Frithiof had exclaimed, shaking hands with Cecil and Roy Boniface. "I did not see you before. A pleasant journey to you. You must come

again to Norway some day, and let us all meet once more."

"*Vær saa god!*" exclaimed one of the sailors; and Frithiof had to spring down the gangway.

"To our next merry meeting!" said Roy, lifting his hat; and then there was a general waving of handkerchiefs from the kindly little crowd on the pier and from the parting guests, and, in all the babel and confusion, Frithiof was conscious only of Blanche's clear "*Auf wiedersehn!*" and saw nothing but the sweet, dark eyes, which to the very last dwelt on him.

"Well, that is over!" he said to Sigrid, pulling himself together, and stifling a sigh.

"Perhaps they will come here next year," suggested Sigrid consolingly.

"Perhaps I shall go to England next autumn," said Frithiof with a smile.

"So soon!" she exclaimed involuntarily.

He laughed, for the words were such a curious contradiction to the ones which lurked in his own mind.

"Oh! you call two months a short time!" he exclaimed; "and to me it seems an eternity. You will have to be very forbearing, for I warn you such a waiting time is very little to my taste."

"Then why did you not speak now, before she went away?"

"You wisest of advisers!" he said with a smile, "I did speak yesterday."

"Yesterday!" she cried eagerly. "Yesterday, on Munkeggen?"

"Yes; and all that now remains is to get Mr. Morgan's consent to our betrothal."

"Oh, Frithiof, I am so glad! so very glad! How pleased father will be! I think you must write and let him know."

"If he will keep it quite secret," said Frithiof; "but of course not a word must be breathed until her father has consented. There is no engagement as yet, only we know that we love each other."

"That ought to be enough to satisfy you till the autumn. And it was so nice of you to tell me, Frithiof. Oh, I don't think I could have borne it if you had chosen to marry some girl I didn't like. As for Blanche, there never was any one more sweet and lovely."

It seemed that Frithiof's happiness was to bring happiness to the whole family. Even little Swanhild guessed the true state of things, and began to frame visions of the happy future when the beautiful English girl should become her own sister; while as to Herr Falck, the news seemed to banish

entirely the heavy depression which for some time had preyed upon him. And so, in spite of the waiting, the time slipped by quickly to Frithiof, the mere thought of Blanche's love kept him rapturously happy, and at the pretty villa in Kalvedalen there was much laughter and mirth, and music and singing,—much eager expectation and hope, and much planning of a future life which should be even more full and happy.

At length, when the afternoons closed in early, and the long winter was beginning to give signs of its approach, Frithiof took leave of his home, and, on one October Saturday, started on his voyage to England. It was, in a sense, the great event of his life, and they all instinctively knew that it was a crisis, so that Sigrid drew aside little Swanhild at the last, and left the father and son to have their parting words alone.

"I look to you, Frithiof," the father said eagerly, "I look to you to carry out the aims in which I myself have failed—to live the life I could wish to have lived. May God grant you the wife who will best help you in the struggle! I sometimes think, Frithiof, that things might have gone very differently with me had your mother been spared."

"Do you not let this depression influence you too much, father?" said Frithiof. "Why take such a dark view of your own life? I shall only be too happy if I make as much of the world as you have done. I wish you could have come to England too. I think you want change and rest."

"Ah!" said Herr Falck, laughing, "once over there you will not echo that wish. No, no, you are best by yourself when you go a-wooing, my son. Besides, I could not possibly leave home just now, we shall have the herring-fleet back from Iceland before many days."

Then, as the signal was given that all friends of the passengers must leave the steamer, he took Frithiof's hand and held it fast in his.

"God bless you, my boy—I think you will bring honour to our name, sooner or later. Now, Sigrid, wish him well, and let us be off."

He called little Swanhild to him, and walked briskly down the gangway, then stood on the quay, talking very cheerfully, his momentary depression quite past. Before long the steamer began to glide off, and Frithiof, even in the midst of his bright expectations, felt a pang as he waved a farewell to those he left behind him.

"A happy return to *Gammle Norge!*" shouted Herr Falck.

And Sigrid and Swanhild stood waving their handkerchiefs till the steamer could no longer be seen.

"I am a fool to mind going away!" reflected Frithiof. "In three weeks' time I shall be at home again. And the next time I leave Bergen, why, who knows, perhaps it will be to attend my own wedding!"

And with that he began to pace the deck, whistling, as he walked, "The Bridal Song of the Hardanger."

CHAPTER V.

THE event to which we have long eagerly looked forward is seldom all that we have expected, and Frithiof, who for the last two months had been almost hourly rehearsing his arrival in England, felt somewhat depressed and disillusioned when, one chilly Monday morning, he first set foot on English soil. The Southerner, arriving at Folkestone or Dover, with their white cliffs and sunny aspect, gains a cheerful impression as he steps ashore; but the Norwegian, leaving behind him his mountains and fjords, and coming straight to that most dingy and unattractive town, Hull, is at a great disadvantage.

A fine drizzling rain was falling; in the early morning the shabby, dirty houses looked their very worst. Swarms of grimy little children had been turned out of their homes, and were making their way to morning school, and hundreds of busy men and women were hurrying through the streets, all with worn, anxious-looking faces. As he walked to the railway station Frithiof felt almost overpowered by the desolateness of the place. To be a mere unit in this unthinking, unheeding crowd, to be pushed and jostled by the hurrying passengers, who all walked as if their very lives depended on their speed, to hear around him the rapidly-spoken foreign language, with its strange north country accent, all made him feel very keenly that he was indeed a foreigner in a strange land. He was glad to be once more in a familiar-looking train, and actually on his way to London; and soon all these outer impressions faded away in the absorbing consciousness that he was actually on his way to Blanche—that on the very next day he might hope to see her again.

Fortunately the Tuesday proved to be a lovely, still, autumn day. He did not like to call upon Mr. Morgan till the afternoon, and,

indeed, thought that he should scarcely find him at home earlier, so he roamed about London, and looked at his watch about four times an hour, till at length the time came when he could call a hansom and drive to Lancaster Gate.

There are some houses which the moment you enter them suggest to you the idea of money. The Morgans' house was one of these; everything was faultlessly arranged, your feet sank into the softest of carpets, you were served by the most obsequious of servants, all that was cheap or common or ordinary was banished from view, and you felt that the chair you sat on was a very superior chair, that all the pictures and ornaments were the very best that could be bought, and that ordinary people who could not boast of a very large income were only admitted into this aggressively superior dwelling on sufferance. With all its grandeur, it was not a house which tempted you to break the tenth commandment; it inspired you with a kind of wonder, and if the guests had truly spoken the thought which most frequently occurred to them, it would have been: "I wonder now what he gave for this? It must have cost a perfect fortune!"

As to Frithiof, when he was shown into the great empty drawing-room with its luxurious couches and divans and its wonderful collection of the very best upholstery and the most telling works of art, he felt, as strongly as he had felt in the dirty streets of Hull, that he was a stranger and a foreigner. In the whole room there was nothing which suggested to him the presence of Blanche; on the contrary, there was everything which combated the vision of those days at Balholm and of their sweet freedom. He felt stifled and involuntarily crossed the room and looked from the window at the green grass in Kensington Gardens, and the tall elms with their varying autumn tints.

Before many minutes had passed, however, his host came into the room, greeting him politely but somewhat stiffly. "Glad to make your acquaintance," he said, scanning him a little curiously as he spoke. "I heard of you, of course, from my brother. I am sure they were all very much indebted to you for planning their Norwegian tour for them so well."

Had he also heard of him from Blanche? Had she indeed prepared the way for him? Or would his request come as a surprise? These were the thoughts which rushed through Frithiof's mind as he sat opposite the Englishman and noted his regular fea-

tures, short, neat-looking, grey beard, closely cropped hair, and rather cold eyes.

Any one watching the two could scarcely have conceived a greater contrast; the young Norwegian, eager, hopeful, bearing in his face the look of one who has all the world before him; the middle-aged Englishman who had bought his experience, and in whose heart enthusiasm, and eager enjoyment of life, and confident belief in those he encountered, had long ceased to exist. Nevertheless, though Mr. Morgan was a hard-headed and a somewhat cold-blooded man, he felt a little sorry for his guest, and reflected to himself that such a fine-looking fellow was far more fit for the post at Stavanger than his own son Cyril.

"It is curious that you should have come to-day," he remarked, after they had exchanged the usual platitudes about the weather and the voyage, and the first impressions of England. "Only to-day the final decision was arrived at about this long mooted idea of the new branch of our firm at Stavanger. Perhaps you have heard rumours of it?"

"I have heard nothing at all," said Frithiof. "My father did not even mention it."

"It is scarcely possible that he has heard nothing of the idea," said Mr. Morgan. "When I saw you I half thought he had sent you over on that very account. However, you have not as yet gone into the business, I understand?"

"I am to be taken into partnership this autumn," said Frithiof. "I was of age the other day, and have only waited for that."

"Strange," said Mr. Morgan, "that only this very morning the telegram should have been sent to your father. Had I known you were in England, I would have waited. One can say things better face to face. And yet I don't know how that could have been either, for there was a sudden chance of getting good premises at Stavanger, and delay was impossible. I shall, of course, write fully to your father by the next mail, and you will tell him that it is with great regret we sever our connection with him."

Frithiof was so staggered by this unexpected piece of news, that for a minute all else was driven from his mind.

"He will be very sorry to be no longer your agent," he said.

"And I shall be sorry to lose him. Herr Falck has always been most honourable. I have the greatest respect for him. Still, business is business; one can't afford to sentimentalise in life over old connections. It

is certainly best in the interests of our firm to set up a branch of our own with its headquarters at Stavanger. My son will go out there very shortly."

"The telegram is only just sent, you say?" asked Frithiof.

"The first thing this morning," replied Mr. Morgan. "It was decided on last night. By this time your father knows all about it; indeed, I almost wonder we have had no reply from him. You must not let the affair make any breach between us; it is, after all, a mere business necessity. I must find out from Mrs. Morgan what free nights we have, and you must come and dine with us. I will write and let you know. Have you any particular business in London? or have you only come for the sake of travelling?"

"I came to see you, sir," said Frithiof, his heart beating quickly, though he spoke with his usual directness. "I came to ask your consent to my betrothal with your daughter?"

"With my daughter!" exclaimed Mr. Morgan. "Betrothal! What, in heaven's name, can you be thinking of?"

"I do not, of course, mean that there was a definite engagement between us," said Frithiof, speaking all the more steadily because of this repulse. "Of course we could not have thought of that until we had asked your consent. We agreed that I should come over this autumn and speak to you about it; nothing passed at Balholm but just the assurance that we loved each other."

"Loved each other!" ejaculated Mr. Morgan, beginning to pace the room with a look of perplexity and annoyance. "What folly will the girl commit next?"

At this Frithiof also rose to his feet, the angry colour rising to his face. "I should never have spoken of my love to your daughter had I not been in a position to support her," he said hotly. "By your English standards I may not, perhaps, be very rich, but our firm is one of the leading firms in Bergen. We come of a good old Norwegian family. Why should it be a folly for your daughter to love me?"

"You misunderstand me," said Mr. Morgan. "I don't wish to say one word against yourself. However, as you have alluded to the matter I must tell you plainly that I expect my daughter to make a very different marriage. Money I can provide her with. Her husband will supply her with a title."

"What!" cried Frithiof furiously, "you will force her to marry some wretched aristocrat whom she can't possibly love? For

the sake of a mere title you will ruin her happiness."

"I shall certainly do nothing of the kind," said the Englishman with a touch of dignity.

"Sit down, Herr Falck, and listen to me. I would have spared you this had it been possible. You are very young, and you have taken things for granted too much. You believed that the first pretty girl that flirted with you was your future wife. I can quite fancy that Blanche was well pleased to have you dancing attendance on her in Norway, but it was on her part nothing but a flirtation; she does not care for you in the least."

"I do not believe it," said Frithiof hotly.

"Don't think that I wish to excuse her," said Mr. Morgan. "She is very much to be blamed. But she is pretty and winsome, she knows her own power, and it pleases her to use it; women are all of them vain and selfish. What do they care for the suffering they cause?"

"You shall not say such things of her," cried Frithiof desperately. "It is not true. It can't be true!"

His face had grown deathly pale, and he was trembling with excitement. Mr. Morgan felt sorry for him.

"My poor fellow," he said kindly, "don't take it so hard. You are not the first man who has been deceived. I am heartily sorry that my child's foolish thoughtlessness should have given you this to bear. But after all, it's a lesson every one has to learn; you were inexperienced and young."

"It is not possible!" repeated Frithiof in terrible agitation, remembering vividly her promises, her words of love, her kisses, the expression of her eyes, as she had yielded to his eager declaration of love. "I will never believe it possible till I hear it from her own lips."

With a gesture of annoyance Mr. Morgan crossed the room and rang the bell. "Well, let it be so, then," he said coldly. "Blanche has treated you ill; I don't doubt it for a moment, and you have every right to hear the explanation from herself." Then, as the servant appeared, "Tell Miss Morgan that I want her in the drawing-room. Desire her to come at once."

The minutes of waiting which followed were the worst Frithiof had ever lived through. Doubt, fear, indignation, and passionate love strove together in his heart, while mingled with all was the oppressive consciousness of his host's presence, and of the aggressive superiority of the room and its contents.

Perhaps the waiting was not altogether pleasant to Mr. Morgan; he poked the fire and moved about restlessly. When, at last, light footsteps were heard on the stairs, and Blanche entered the room, he turned towards her with evident displeasure in his face.

She wore a dress of reddish brown with a great deal of plush about it, and something in the way it was made suggested the greatest possible contrast to the little simple travelling dress she had worn in Norway. Her eyes were bright and eager, her loveliness as great as ever.

"You wanted me, papa?" she began; then, as she came forward and recognised Frithiof, she gave a little start of dismay and the colour burned in her cheeks.

"Yes, I wanted you," said Mr. Morgan gravely. "Herr Falck's son has just arrived."

She struggled hard to recover herself.

"I am very glad to see you again," she said, forcing up a little artificial laugh and holding out her hand.

But Frithiof had seen her first expression of dismay and it had turned him into ice; he would not take her proffered hand, but only bowed formally. There was a painful silence.

"This is not the first time, Blanche, that you have learnt what comes of playing with edged tools," said Mr. Morgan sternly. "I heard from others that you had flirted with Herr Falck's son in Norway; I now learn that it was by your own suggestion that he came to England to ask my consent to an engagement, and that you allowed him to believe that you loved him. What have you to say for yourself?"

While her father spoke, Blanche had stood by with bent head and downcast eyes; at this direct question she looked up for a moment.

"I thought I did care for him just at the time," she faltered. "It—it was a mistake."

"Why, then, did you not write and tell him so? It was the least you could have done," said her father.

"It was such a difficult letter to write," she faltered. "I kept on putting it off, and hoping that he, too, would find out his mistake. And then sometimes I thought I could explain it all better to him if he came."

Frithiof made a step or two forward; his face was pale and rigid; the blue seemed to have died out of his eyes—they looked like steel. "I wait for your explanation," he said, in a voice which, in spite of its firmness, betrayed intense agitation.

Mr. Morgan without a word quitted the room, and the two were left alone. Again there was a long oppressive silence. Then, with a sob, Blanche turned away, sinking down on an ottoman and covering her face with her hands. Her tears instantly melted Frithiof; his indignation and wounded pride gave place to love and tenderness; a sort of wild hope rose in his mind.

"Blanche! Blanche!" he cried. "It isn't true! It can't be all over! Others have been urging you to make some grand marriage—to be the wife perhaps of some rich nobleman. But he cannot love you as I love you. Oh! have you forgotten how you told me I might trust to you? There is not a moment since then that you have not been in my thoughts."

"I hoped so you would forget," she sobbed.

"How could I forget? What man could help remembering you day and night? Oh! Blanche, don't you understand that I love you? I love you?"

"I understand only too well," she said, glancing at him, her dark eyes brimming over with tears.

He drew nearer.

"And you will love me once more," he said passionately. "You will not choose rank and wealth; you will——"

"Oh, hush! hush!" she cried. "It has all been a dreadful mistake. I never really loved you. Oh, don't look like that! I was very dull in Norway—there was no one else but you. I am sorry; very sorry."

He started back from her as if she had dealt him some mortal blow, but Blanche went on, speaking quickly and incoherently, never looking in his face.

"After we went away I began to see all the difficulties so plainly—our belonging to different countries, and being accustomed to different things; but still I did really think I liked you till we got to Christiania. There, on the steamer coming home, I found that it had all been a mistake."

She paused. All this time she had carefully kept the fingers of her left hand out of view; the position was too constrained not to attract Frithiof's notice.

He remembered that, in the wearing of betrothal or wedding rings, English custom reversed the Norwegian, and turned upon her almost fiercely.

"Why do you try to hide that from me?" he cried. "Are you already betrothed to this other man?"

"It was only last Sunday," she sobbed.

"And I meant to write to you; I did indeed."

Once more she covered her face with her hands, this time not attempting to hide from Frithiof the beautiful circlet of brilliants on her third finger.

It seemed to him that giant hands seized on him then, and crushed out of him his very life. Yet the pain of living went on remorselessly, and as if from a very great distance he heard Blanche's voice.

"I am engaged to Lord Romiaux," she said. "He had been in Norway on a fishing tour, but it was on the steamer that we first met. And then almost directly I knew that at Munkeggen it had all been quite a mistake, and that I had never really loved you. We met again at one of the watering-places in September, but it was only settled the day before yesterday. I wish—oh, how I wish—that I had written to tell you!"

She stood up impulsively and drew nearer to him.

"Is there nothing I can do to make up for my mistake?" she said, lifting pathetic eyes to his.

"Nothing," he said bitterly.

"Oh, don't think badly of me for it," she pleaded. "Don't hate me."

"Hate you!" he exclaimed. "It will be the curse of my life that I love you—that you have made me love you."

He turned as though to go away.

"Don't go without saying good-bye," she exclaimed; and her eyes said more plainly than words, "I do not mind if you kiss me just once more."

He paused, ice one minute, fire the next, yet through it all aware that his conscience was urging him to go without delay.

Blanche watched him tremulously; she drew yet nearer.

"Could we not still be friends?" she said, with a pathetic little quiver in her voice.

"No," he cried vehemently, yet with a certain dignity in his manner; "no, we could not."

Then, before Blanche could recover enough from her sense of humiliation at this rebuff to speak, he bowed to her and left the room.

She threw herself down on the sofa and buried her face in the cushions. "Oh, what must he think of me? what must he think of me?" she sobbed. "How I wish I had written to him at once and saved myself this dreadful scene! How could I have been so silly! so dreadfully silly! To be afraid of writing a few words in a letter! My poor Viking! he looked so grand as he turned

away. I wish we could have been friends still; it used to be so pleasant in Norway; he was so unlike other people; he interested me. And now it is all over, and I shall never be able to meet him again. Oh, I have managed very badly. If I had not been so imprudent on Munkeggen he might have been my cavalier all his life, and I should have liked to show him over here to people. I should have liked to initiate him in everything."

The clock on the mantelpiece struck five. She started up and ran across to one of the mirrors, looking anxiously at her eyes. "Oh, dear! oh, dear! what shall I do?" she thought. "Algernon will be here directly, and I have made a perfect object of myself with crying." Then, as the door-bell rang, she caught up a couvrette, sank down on the sofa, and covered herself up picturesquely. "There is nothing for it but a bad headache," she said to herself.

CHAPTER VI.

ON the stairs Frithiof was waylaid by Mr. Morgan; it was with a sort of surprise that he heard his own calm replies to the Englishman's polite speeches, and regrets, and inquiries as to when he returned to Norway, for all the time his head was swimming, and it was astonishing that he could frame a correct English phrase. The thought occurred to him that Mr. Morgan would be glad enough to get rid of him and to put an end to so uncomfortable a visit; he could well imagine the shrug of relief with which the Englishman would return to his fireside, with its aggressively grand fender and fire-irons, and would say to himself, "Well, poor devil, I am glad he is gone! A most provoking business from first to last." For to the Morgans the affair would probably end as soon as the door had closed behind him, but for himself it would drag on and on indefinitely. He walked on mechanically past the great houses which, to his unaccustomed eyes, looked so palatial; every little trivial thing seemed to obtrude itself upon him: he noticed the wan, haggard-looking crossing-sweeper, who tried his best to find something to sweep on that dry, still day when even autumn leaves seldom fell; he noticed the pretty spire of the church, and heard the clock strike five, reflecting that one brief half hour had been enough to change his whole life—to bring him from the highest point of hope and eager anticipation to this lowest depth of wretchedness. The endless succession of great, monotonous houses grew

intolerable to him; he crossed the road and turned into Kensington Gardens, aware, as the first wild excitement died down in his heart, of a cold, desolate blankness the misery of which appalled him. What was the meaning of it all? How could it possibly be borne? Only by degrees did it dawn upon his overwrought brain that Blanche's faithlessness had robbed him of much more than her love. It had left him stripped and wounded on the highway of life; it had taken from him all belief in woman; it had made for ever impossible for him his old creed of the joy of mere existence; it had killed his youth. Was he now to get up, and crawl on, and drag through the rest of his life as best might be? Why, what was life worth to him now? He had been a fool ever to believe in it; it was as she herself had once told him, he had believed that it was all sufficient merely because he had never known unhappiness—never known the agony that follows when, for—

"The first time Nature says plain 'No'
To some 'Yes' in you, and walks over you
In gorgeous sweeps of scorn."

His heart was so utterly dead that he could not even think of his home; neither his father nor Sigrid rose before him as he looked down that long, dreary vista of life that lay beyond. He could see only that Blanche was no longer his; that the Blanche he had loved and believed in had never really existed; that he had been utterly deceived, cheated, defrauded; and that something had been taken from him which could never return.

"I will not live a day longer," he said to himself; "not an hour longer." And in the relief of having some attainable thing to desire ardently, were it only death and annihilation, he quickened his pace and felt a sort of renewal of energy and life within him, urging him on, holding before him the one aim which he thought was worth pursuing. He would end it all quickly, he would not linger on weakly bemoaning his fate, or railing at life for having failed him, and disappointed his hopes; he would just put an end to everything without more ado. As to arguing with himself about the right or wrong of the matter, such a notion never occurred to him, he just walked blindly on, certain that some opportunity would present itself, buoyed up by an unreasoning hope that death would bring him relief.

By this time he had reached Hyde Park, and a vague memory came back to him; he remembered that, as he drove to Lancaster

Gate that afternoon, he had crossed a bridge. There was water over there. It should be that way. And he walked on more rapidly than before, still with an almost dazzling perception of all the trifling little details, the colour of the dry, dusty road, the green of the turf, the dresses of those who passed by him, the sound of their voices, the strange incongruity of their perfectly unconcerned, contented faces. He would get away from all this—would wait till it was dusk, when he could steal down unnoticed to the water. Buoyed up by this last hope of relief, he walked along the north shore of the Serpentine, passed the Receiving House of the Royal Humane Society, with an unconcerned thought that his lifeless body would probably be taken there, passed the boat-house with a fervent hope that no one there would try a rescue, and at length, finding a seat under a tree close to the water's edge, sat down to wait for the darkness. It need not be for long, for already the sun was setting, and over towards the west he could see that behind the glowing orange and russet of the autumn trees was a background of crimson sky. The pretty little wooded island and the round green boat-house on the shore stood out in strong relief; swans and ducks swam about contentedly; on the farther bank was a dark fringe of trees; away to the left the three arches of a grey stone bridge. In the evening light it made a fair picture, but the beauty of it seemed only to harden him, for it reminded him of past happiness; he turned with sore-hearted relief to the nearer view of the Serpentine gleaming coldly as its waters washed the shore, and to the dull monotony of the path in front of him with its heaps of brown leaves. A bird sat singing in the beech-tree above him, its song jarred on him just as much as the beauty of the sunset, it seemed to urge him to leave the place where he was not needed, to take himself out of a world which was meant for beauty and brightness and success, a world which had no sympathy for failure or misery. He longed for the song to cease, and he longed for the sunset glory to fade, he was impatient for the end; the mere waiting for that brief interval became to him almost intolerable; only the dread of being rescued held him back.

Presently footsteps on the path made him look up; a shabbily dressed girl walked slowly by, she was absorbed in a newspaper story and did not notice him; neither did she notice her charge, a pale-faced, dark-eyed little girl of about six years old who

followed her at some distance, chanting a pretty, monotonous, little tune as she dragged a toy-cart along the gravel. Frithiof, with the preternatural powers of observation which seemed his that day, noticed in an instant every tiniest detail of the child's face and dress and bearing, the curious anatomy of the wooden horse, the heap of golden leaves in the little cart. As the child drew nearer, the words of the song became perfectly audible to him. She sang very slowly, and in a sort of unconscious way, as if she couldn't help it.

"Comfort every sufferer,
Watching late in pain—"

She paused to put another handful of leaves into the cart, arranged them with great care, patted the wooden steed, and resumed her song as if there had been no interruption—

"Those who plan some evil,
From their sin restrain."

Frithiof felt as if a knife had been suddenly plunged into him; he tried to hear more, but the words died away, he could only follow the monotonous little tune in the clear voice, and the rattling of the toy-cart on the pathway. And so the child passed on out of sight, and he saw her no more.

He was alone again, and the twilight for which he had longed was fast closing in upon him; a sort of blue haze seemed gathering over the park; night was coming on. What was this horrible new struggle which was beginning within him? "Evil," "sin," could he not at least do what he would with his own life? Where was the harm in ending that which was hopelessly spoilt and ruined? Was not suicide a perfectly legitimate ending to a life?

A voice within him answered his question plainly.

"To the man with a diseased brain—the man who doesn't know what he is about—it is no worse an end than to die in bed of a fever. But to you—you who are afraid of the suffering of life, you who know quite well what you are doing—to you it is sin."

Fight against it as he would he could not stifle this new consciousness which had arisen within him. What had led him, he angrily wondered, to choose that particular place to wait in? What had made that child walk past? What had induced her to sing those particular words? Did that vague First Cause, in whom after a fashion he believed, take any heed of trifles such as those? He would never believe that. Only women or children could hold such a creed; only

those who led sheltered, innocent, ignorant lives. But a man—a man who had just learnt what the world really was, who saw that the weakest went to the wall, and might triumphed over right—a man who had once believed in the beauty of life and had been bitterly disillusioned—could never believe in a God who ordered all things for good. It was a chance, a mere unlucky chance, yet the child's words had made it impossible for him to die in peace.

As a matter of fact the sunset sky and fading light had suggested to the little one's untroubled mind the familiar evening hymn with its graphic description of scenery, its beautiful word-painting, its wide human sympathies; and that great mystery of life which links us together whether we know it or not, gave to the child the power to counteract the influence of Blanche Morgan's faithlessness, and to appeal to one to whom the sight of that same sunset had suggested only thoughts of despair.

A wild confusion of memories seemed to rush through his mind, and blended with them always were the unwelcome words and the quiet little chant. He was back at home again talking with the old pastor who had prepared him for confirmation; he was a mere boy once more, unhesitatingly accepting all that he was taught; he was standing up in the great crowded Bergen church and declaring his belief in Christ, and his entire willingness to give up everything wrong; he was climbing a mountain with Blanche and arguing with her that life—mere existence—was beautiful and desirable.

Looking back afterwards on the frightful struggle, it seemed to him that for ages he had tossed to and fro in that horrible hesitation. In reality all must have been over within a quarter of an hour. There rose before him the recollection of his father as he had last seen him standing on the deck of the steamer, and he remembered the tone of his voice as he had said,

"I look to you, Frithiof, to carry out the aims in which I myself have failed, to live the life that I could wish to have lived."

He saw once again the wistful look in his father's eyes, the mingled love, pride, and anxiety with which he had turned to him, loath to let him go, and yet eager to speed him on his way. Should he now disappoint all his hopes? Should he, deliberately and in the full possession of all his faculties, take a step which must bring terrible suffering to his home people? And then he remembered for the first time that already trouble

and vexation and loss had overtaken his father; he knew well how greatly he would regret the connection with the English firm, and he pictured to himself the familiar house in Kalvedalen with a new and unfamiliar cloud upon it, till instead of the longing for death there came to him a nobler longing—a longing to go back and help, a longing to make up to his father for the loss and vexation and the slight which had been put upon him. He began to feel ashamed of the other wish, he began to realise that there was still something to be lived for, though indeed life looked to him as dim and uninviting as the twilight park with its wreaths of grey mist, and its unpeopled solitude.

Yet still he would live; the other thought no longer allured him, his strength and manliness were returning; with bitter resolution he tore himself from the vision of Blanche which rose mockingly before him, and getting up, made his way out of the park.

Emerging once more into the busy world of traffic at Hyde Park corner, the perception of his forlorn desolateness came to him with far more force than in the quiet path by the Serpentine. For the first time he felt keenly that he was in an unknown city, and there came over him a sick longing for Norway, for dear old Bergen, for the familiar mountains, the familiar faces, the friendly greetings of passers-by. For a few minutes he stood still, uncertain which road to take, wondering how in the world he should get through the weary hours of his solitary evening. Close by him a young man stood talking to the occupants of a brougham which had drawn up by the pavement; he heard a word or two of their talk, dimly, almost unconsciously.

"Is the result of the trial known yet?"

"Yes, five years' penal servitude, and no more than he deserves."

"The poor children! what will become of them?"

"Shall you be home by ten? we won't hinder you, then."

"Quite by ten. Tell father that Sardoni is free for the night he wanted him; I met him just now. Good bye." Then to the coachman "Home!"

The word startled Frithiof back to the recollection of his own affairs; he had utterly lost his bearings and must ask for direction. He would accost this man who seemed a little less in a hurry than the rest of the world.

"Will you kindly tell me the way to the Arundel Hotel?" he asked.

The young man turned at the sound of his voice, looked keenly at him for an instant, then held out his hand in cordial welcome.

"How are you?" he exclaimed. "What a lucky chance that we should have run across each other in the dark like this! Have you been long in England?"

Frithiof, at the first word of hearty greeting, looked up with startled eyes, and in the dim gaslight he saw the honest English face and kindly eyes of Roy Boniface.

CHAPTER VII.

MEANTIME the brougham had bowled swiftly away and its two occupants had settled themselves down comfortably as though they were preparing for a long drive.

"Are you warm enough, my child? Better let me have this window down, and you put yours up," said Mrs. Boniface, glancing with motherly anxiety at the fair face beside her.

"You spoil me, mother dear," said Cecil. "And indeed I do want you not to worry about me. I am quite strong, if you would only believe it."

"Well, well, I hope you are," said Mrs. Boniface with a sigh. "But anyway it's more than you look, child."

And the mother thought wistfully of two graves in a distant cemetery where Cecil's sisters lay; and she remembered with a cruel pang that only a few days ago some friend had remarked to her, with the thoughtless frankness of a rapid talker, "Cecil is looking so pretty just now, but she's got the consumptive look in her face, don't you think?" And these words lay rankling in the poor mother's heart, even though she had been assured by the doctors that there was no disease, no great delicacy even, no cause whatever for anxiety.

"I am glad we have seen Dr. Royston," said Cecil, "because now we shall feel quite comfortable, and you won't be anxious any more, mother. It would be dreadful, I think, to have to be a sort of semi-invalid all one's life, though I suppose some people must enjoy it, since Dr. Royston said that half the girls in London were invalided just for want of sensible work. I rather believe, mother, that is what has been the matter with me," and she laughed.

"You, my dear!" said Mrs. Boniface; "I am sure you are not at all idle at home. No one could say such a thing of you."

"But I am always having to invent things to do to keep myself busy," said Cecil.

"Mother, I have got a plan in my head now

that would settle my work for five whole years, and I do so want you to say 'yes' to it."

"It isn't that you want to go into some sisterhood?" asked Mrs. Boniface, her gentle grey eyes filling with tears.

"Oh, no, no," said Cecil emphatically. "Why, how could I ever go away from home and leave you, darling, just as I am getting old enough to be of use to you? It's nothing of that kind, and the worst of it is that it would mean a good deal of expense to father, which seems hardly fair."

"He won't grudge that," said Mrs. Boniface. "Your father would do anything to please you, dear. What is this plan? Let me hear about it."

"Well, the other night when I was hearing all about those poor Grantleys opposite to us—how the mother had left her husband and children and gone off no one knows where, and then how the father had forged that cheque and would certainly be imprisoned, I began to wonder what sort of a chance the children had in the world. And no one seemed to know or to care what would become of them, except father, and he said we must try to get them into some asylum or school."

"It isn't many asylums that would care to take them, I expect," said Mrs. Boniface. "Poor little things, there's a hard fight before them! But what was your plan?"

"Why, mother, it was just to persuade father to let them come to us for the five years. Of course it would be an expense to him, but I would teach them, and help to take care of them; and oh, it would be so nice to have children about the house! One can never be dull where there are children."

"I knew she was dull at home," thought the mother to herself. "It was too much of a change for her to come back from school, from so many educated people and young friends, to an ignorant old woman like me and a silent house. Not that the child would ever allow it."

"But of course, darling," said Cecil, "I won't say a word more about it if you think it would trouble you or make the house too noisy."

"There is plenty of room for them, poor little mites," said Mrs. Boniface. "And the plan is just like you, dear. There's only one objection I have to it. I don't like your binding yourself to work for so many years—not just now while you are so young. I should have liked you to marry, dear."

"But I don't think that is likely," said

Cecil. "And it does seem so stupid to let the time pass on and do nothing for years and years just because there is a chance that some man whom you could accept may propose to you. The chances are quite equal that it may not be so, and then you have wasted a great part of your life."

"I wish you could have fancied Herbert White," said Mrs. Boniface wistfully. "He would have made such a good husband."

"I hope he will to some one else. But that would have been impossible, mother, quite, quite impossible."

"Cecil, dearie, is there—is there any one else?"

"No one, mother," said Cecil quietly, and the colour in her cheeks did not deepen, and Mrs. Boniface felt satisfied. Yet, nevertheless, at that very moment there flashed into Cecil's mind the perception of the real reason which had made it impossible for her to accept the offer of marriage that a week or two ago she had refused. She saw that Frithiof Falck would always be to her a sort of standard by which to measure the rest of mankind, and she faced the thought quietly, for there never had been any question of love between them; he would probably marry the pretty Miss Morgan, and it was very unlikely that she should ever meet him again.

"The man whom I could accept must be that sort of man," she thought to herself. "And there is something degrading in the idea of standing and waiting for the doubtful chance that such an one may some day appear. Surely we girls were not born into the world just to stand in rows waiting to get married?"

"And I'm sure I don't know what I should do without you if you did get married," said Mrs. Boniface, driving back the tears which had started to her eyes, "so I don't know why I am so anxious that it should come about, except that I should so like to see you happy."

"And so I am happy, perfectly happy," said Cecil, and as she spoke she suddenly bent forward and kissed her mother. "A girl would have to be very wicked not to be happy with you and father and Roy to live with."

"I wish you were not cut off from so much," said Mrs. Boniface. "You see, dear, if you were alone in the world people would take you up—I mean the style of people you would care to be friends with—but as long as there's the shop, and as long as you have a mother who can't talk well about recent

books, and who is not always sure how to pronounce things——"

"Mother! mother!" cried Cecil, "how can you say such things! As long as I have you what do I want with any one else?"

Mrs. Boniface patted the girl's hand tenderly.

"I like to talk of the books with you, dearie," she said; "you understand that. There's nothing pleases me better than to hear you read of an evening, and I'm very much interested in that poor Mrs. Carlyle, though it does seem to me it's a comfort to be in private life, where no biographers can come raking up all your foolish words and bits of quarrels after you are dead and buried. Why, here we are at home. How quick we have got down this evening. As to your plan, dearie, I'll just talk it over with father the very first chance I have."

"Thank you, mother. I do so hope he will let us have them." And Cecil sprang out of the carriage with more animation in her face than Mrs. Boniface had seen there for a long time.

Mrs. Boniface was a Devonshire woman, and, notwithstanding her five-and-twenty years of London life, she still preserved something of her Western accent and intonation; she had also the gentle manner and the quiet consideration and courtesy which seem innate in most West-country people. As to education, she had received the best that was to be had for tradesmen's daughters in the days of her youth, but she was well aware that it did not come up to modern requirements, and had taken good care that Cecil should be brought up very differently. There was something very attractive in her homely simplicity; and though she could not help regretting that Cecil, owing to her position, was cut off from much that other girls enjoyed, nothing would have induced her to try to push her way in the world, she was too true a lady for that, and, moreover, beneath all her gentleness had too much dignity and independence of character. So it had come to pass that they lived a very quiet life, with few intimate friends and not too many acquaintances; but perhaps they were none the less happy for that. Certainly there was about the home a sense of peace and rest not too often to be met with in this bustling nineteenth century.

The opportunity for suggesting Cecil's plan to Mr. Boniface came soon after they reached home. In that house things were wont to be quickly settled; they were not great at discussions, and perhaps this ac-

counted in a great measure for the peace of the domestic atmosphere. Certainly there is nothing so productive of family quarrels as the habit of perpetually talking over the various arrangements, household or personal, and many a good digestion must have been ruined, and many a temper soured, by the baneful habit of arguing the pros and cons of some vexed question during breakfast or dinner.

Cecil was in the drawing-room, playing one of Chopin's Ballades, when her father came into the room. He stood by the fire till she had finished, watching her thoughtfully. He was an elderly man, tall and spare, with a small, shapely head, white hair and trim, white beard. His grey eyes were honest and kindly, like his son's, and the face was a good as well as a refined face. He was one of the deacons of a Congregational chapel, and came of an old Nonconformist family, which for many generations had pleaded and suffered for religious liberty. Robert Boniface was true to his principles, and when his children grew up, and, becoming old enough to go thoroughly into the question, declared their wish to join the Church of England, he made not the slightest objection. What was more, he would not even allow them to see that it was a grief to him.

"It is not to be supposed that every one should see from one point of view," he had said to his wife. "We are all of us looking to the same sun, and that is the great thing."

Such divisions must always be a little sad, but mutual love and mutual respect made them in this case a positive gain. There were no arguments, but each learnt to see and admire what was good in the other's view, to hold staunchly to what was deemed right, and to live in that love which practically nullifies all petty divisions and differences.

"And so I hear that you want to be mothering those little children over the way," said Mr. Boniface when the piece was ended.

Cecil crossed the room and stood beside him.

"What do you think about it, father?" she asked.

"I think that before you decide you must realise that it will be a great responsibility."

"I have thought of that," she said. "And of course there is the expense to be thought of."

"Never mind about the expense; I will undertake that part of the matter if you will undertake the responsibility. Do you quite

realise that even pretty little children are sometimes cross and naughty and ill?"

She laughed.

"Yes, yes; I have seen those children in all aspects, and they are rather spoilt. But I can't bear to think that they will be sent to some great institution, with no one to care for them properly."

"Then you are willing to undertake your share of the bargain?"

"Quite."

"Very well, then that is settled. Let us come across and see if any one has stepped in before us."

Cecil, in great excitement, flew up-stairs to tell her mother, and reappeared in a minute or two in her hat and jacket. Then the father and daughter crossed the quiet suburban road to the opposite house, where such a different life-story had been lived. The door was opened to them by the nurse; she had evidently been crying, and even as they entered the passage they seemed conscious of the desolation of the whole atmosphere.

"Oh, miss, have you heard the verdict?" said the servant, who knew Cecil slightly, and was eager for sympathy. "And what's to become of my little ones no one seems to know."

"That is just what we came to inquire about," said Mr. Boniface. "We heard there were no relations to take charge of them. Is that true?"

"There's not a creature in the world to care for them, sir," said the nurse. "There's the lawyer looking through master's papers now sir, and he says we must be out of this by next week, and that he must look up some sort of school where they'll take them cheap. A school for them little bits of things, sir, isn't it enough to break one's heart? And little Miss Gwen so delicate, and only a lawyer to choose it, one as knows nothing but about parchments and red tape, sir, and hasn't so much as handled a child in his life, I'll be bound."

"If Mr. Grantley's solicitor is here I should like to speak to him for a minute," said Mr. Boniface. "I'll be with you again before long, Cecil, perhaps you could see the children."

He was shown into the study which had belonged to the master of the house, and unfolded Cecil's suggestion to the lawyer, who proved to be a much more fatherly sort of man than the nurse had represented. He was quite certain that his client would be only too grateful for so friendly an act.

"Things have gone hardly with poor

Grantley," he remarked. "And such an offer will be the greatest possible surprise to him. The poor fellow has not had a fair chance; handicapped with such a wife, one can almost forgive him for going to the bad. I shall be seeing him once more to-morrow, and will let you know what he says. But of course there can be but one answer—he will thankfully accept your help."

Meanwhile Cecil had been taken up-stairs to the nursery; it looked a trifle less desolate than the rest of the house, yet lying on the table among the children's toys she saw an evening paper with the account of the verdict and sentence on John Grantley.

The nurse had gone into the adjoining room, but she quickly returned.

"They are asleep, miss, but you'll come in and see them, won't you?"

Cecil had wished for this, and followed her guide into the dimly-lighted night-nursery, where in two little cribs lay her future charges. They were beautiful children, and as she watched them in their untroubled sleep and thought of the mother who had deserted them and disgraced her name, and the father who was at that moment beginning his five years of penal servitude, her heart ached for the little ones, and more and more she longed to help them.

Lancelot, the elder of the two, was just four years old; he had a sweet, rosy, determined little face with a slightly Jewish look about it, his curly brown hair was long enough to fall back over the pillow, and in his fat little hand he grasped a toy horse, which was his inseparable companion night and day. The little girl was much smaller and much more fragile-looking, though in some respects the two were alike. Her baby face looked exquisite now in its perfect peace, and Cecil did not wonder that the nurse's tears broke forth again as she spoke of the little two-year-old Gwen being sent to school. They were still talking about the matter when Mr. Boniface rejoined them, the lawyer also came in, and, to the nurse's surprise, even looked at the sleeping children, "Quite human-like," as she remarked afterwards to the cook.

"Don't you distress yourself about the children," he said kindly. "It will be all right for them. Probably they will only have to move across the road. We shall know definitely about it to-morrow; but this gentleman has very generously offered to take care of them."

The nurse's tearful gratitude was interrupted by a sound from one of the cribs.

Lance, disturbed perhaps by the voices, was talking in his sleep.

"Gee-up!" he shouted in exact imitation of a carter, as he waved the toy horse in the air.

Every one laughed, and took the hint; the lawyer went back to his work, and Mr. Boniface and Cecil, after a few parting words with the happy servant, re-crossed the road to Rowan Tree House.

"Oh, father, it is so very good of you," said Cecil, slipping her arm into his; "I haven't been so happy for an age!"

"And I am happy," he replied, "that it is such a thing as this which pleases my daughter."

After that there followed a delightful evening of anticipation, and Mrs. Boniface entered into the plan with her whole heart and talked of nursery furniture put away in the loft, and arranged the new nursery in imagination fifty times over—always with improvements. And this made them talk of the past, and she began to tell amusing stories of Roy and Cecil when they were children, and even went back to remembrances of her own nursery life, in which a stern nurse who administered medicine with a forcing spoon figured largely.

"I believe," said the gentle old lady laughing, "that it was due to that old nurse of mine that I never could bear theological arguments. She began them when we were so young that we took a fatal dislike to them. I can well remember, as a little thing of four years old, sitting on the punishment chair in the nursery when all the others were out at play, and wishing that Adam and Eve hadn't sinned."

"You all sound very merry," said Roy, opening the door before the laugh which greeted this story had died away.

"Why, how nice and early you are, Roy!" exclaimed Cecil. "Oh! mother has been telling us no end of stories, you ought to have been here to listen to them. And Roy, we are most likely going to have those little children over the way to live with us till their father is out of prison again."

Roy seemed grave and preoccupied, but Cecil was too happy to notice that, and chattered on contentedly. He scarcely heard her, yet a sense of strong contrast made the homelikeness of the scene specially emphasized to him. He looked at his father leaning back in the great arm-chair, with reading-lamp and papers close by him, but with his eyes fixed on Cecil as she sat on the rug at his feet, the firelight brightening her

fair hair; he looked at his mother on the opposite side of the hearth, in the familiar dress which she almost always wore—black silk with soft white lace about the neck and bodice, and a pretty white lace cap. She was busy with her netting, but every now and then glanced up at him.

"You are tired to-night, Roy," she said, when Cecil's story had come to an end.

"Just a little," he owned. "Such a curious thing happened to me. It was a good thing you caught sight of me at Hyde Park Corner and stopped to ask about the trial, Cecil, for otherwise it would never have come about. Who do you think I met just as you drove on?"

"I can't guess," said Cecil, rising from her place on the hearth-rug as the gong sounded for supper.

"One of our Norwegian friends," said Roy, "Frithiof Falck."

"What! is he actually in England," said Cecil, taking up the reading-lamp to carry it into the next room.

"Yes, poor fellow," said Roy.

Something in his tone made Cecil's heart beat quickly; she could not have accounted for the strength of the feeling which suddenly overwhelmed her; she hardly knew what it was she feared so much, or why such a sudden panic had seized upon her; she trembled from head to foot, and was glad as they crossed the hall to hand the lamp to Roy, glancing up at him as she did so apprehensively.

"Why do you say poor fellow?" she asked.

"Oh, Roy! what is the matter?—what—what has happened to him?"

A WINTER NIGHT WITH THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

By "NETHER LOCHABER."

II.



A Crofter Fisherman.

OUR friends of the Highland *cèilidh*, seated round Donald Bane's hospitable hearth, are gaily singing a chorus to a song that is being sung by Donald's second daughter, a tall girl with a wealth of raven-black hair, and dark lustrous eyes such as captivated Byron in the "Maid of Cadiz."

She has a magnificent voice besides, rich and round, and full as are the mellifluous pipings of the song-thrush in the early springtide.

Her song is of local origin, as are indeed most of the songs sung on this occasion—the composition some fifty years ago of a maiden in a neighbouring township, whose sweetheart, a sailor, having gone on a long voyage, is lovingly remembered, his manly bearing described with pride, and all his good qualities enumerated through something like a score and a half of stanzas, of the first half-dozen of which the following is a fairly literal line-for-line rendering into English:—

"Twas on a bright morning in summer-tide,
When the sun was cloudless and the wind was in the east,
That my true love sailed for a far foreign shore—
And if he took my heart away with him, he left his heart
with me."

Chorus—"My love has gone a-sailing,
A-sailing on the sea,
But western winds will find him,
And waft him back to me."

"Secret for a time was our love,
But why should I hide it now that he is far away?
A gay-coloured ribbon he brought me from a big town of
many shops,
And side-combs, which many a girl might envy, for my
hair. Chorus—"My love has gone a-sailing," &c.

"He is gone over the sea of many waves,
But my love will make him bold to fight with adverse
storms;
My love follows him, constant as his shadow,
Whithersoever he sails, hither and thither the wide world
over!" Chorus—"My love has gone a-sailing," &c.

"And he left his love with me,
Love steadfast and true, that I cherish more than all the
possessions of the world;
Though I sleep, his love still brightens and makes glad my
dreams,
And when awake my thoughts are of my brown-eyed sailor
lad!" Chorus—"My love has gone a-sailing," &c.



Not his first Sermon.

"I allow other maidens, each her own true love ;
 (May plighted troth ever blossom into happy marriage !)
 But no other maiden need braid her locks in hopes to catch
 my sailor—
 He is entirely, and with all his heart, my own !"

Chorus—" My love has gone a-sailing," &c.

"He will return in spring with the song-birds, and bring me
 many presents from foreign lands ;
 But his kiss in secret will outweigh them all :
 His gifts of love I value, but his love itself is the treasure
 That I value more than all the riches of the farthest Indies !"

The five-and-twenty or thirty quatrains of what is deservedly a very popular song, the dark-eyed damsel sang them all, and sang them admirably ; greatly too, there could be no doubt about it, to the delight and edification of everybody present, as was evidenced by the heartiness with which they took up the chorus. One very noticeable and admirable characteristic of Gaelic singing wherever heard is the distinct enunciation of every word of the song that is being sung. English songs as too often sung might almost as well be in a foreign language, or without words at all, so imperfect is the enunciation, so persistently inarticulate the mumbling, as if the melody was everything and the words were nought. The Gaelic singer, on the contrary, never forgets that a song is in truth a twofold affair, a double-barrelled business, a combination of words with a meaning for the intel-

lect and heart, and an appropriate melody that shall be pleasing to the ear. These Gaelic songs, of which the people are so fond, and which they sing so admirably, are no less remarkable for their freedom from the slightest taint of impurity or indelicacy than for their native vigour and simplicity, whatever the theme. When we assert that they are always well sung, the reader will probably wonder how this should be possible when we have at the same time to make the admission that even the most delightful singers are as a rule utterly destitute of any scientific knowledge of music. Of musical rules and musical terms they know nothing. Song is with them as with the wild birds of their native woods and wilds, an instinct, an inspiration ; and it is simply the fact, strange as it may seem, that the native singer who knows not a note of music from the scientific standpoint, will render a Gaelic air more musically, and better in every way, than the most accomplished musician you can persuade to attempt it. The philosophy and *motif* of a Gaelic song, grave or gay, are so closely intertwined, so intimately blended with the melody, that only a native singer can give them full musical utterance ; and better, paradoxical as it may seem, when he is

totally ignorant of music as written and taught than when he has had any amount you please of "scientific" training.

The song having gone round, Ewen Brocair tells about the death, in his very prime of life, of the shepherd of Glenforsan, and how Dugald Roy, the joiner of a neighbouring township, knew of the coming death several days before anybody else could say that there was the slightest likelihood of any such event occurring in the district just at that particular time. So far as was known there was nobody sick unto death, or even slightly ailing in all the wide district round, for which Dugald Roy acted as wheelwright and joiner. Dugald, indeed, did not know that it was the Glenforsan shepherd that was about to die; of all the people of the surrounding townships, he could not say who it was that was about to die; all he knew was that somebody within his district must die very soon—within a week at most—and that the coffin for the person whose death was thus imminent was to be made by himself. How, it was asked, could Donald Roy possibly know? Was it a case of second sight, or was it a revelation by dream? Ewen makes reply, with all the solemnity befitting the matter in hand, that Dugald Roy's prediction of the sad event had nothing to do with the second sight, nor with a dream at all. He then proceeds to explain how Dugald's workshop is attached to his dwelling-house, and how on a certain night he was awakened out of sleep by sounds as of hammering and the sawing of wood in the workshop, a place that he had duly locked up on the preceding evening, and which in that mirk midnight hour ought to have been as dark and silent as the grave. When he entered his workshop in the early morning, he found several planks removed from the place in which he had put them on the previous day, whilst the saw, which ought to have been hanging on its nail in the wall, and the hammer, which ought to have been in the tool-box, were now lying on the bench just as if somebody had been using them during the night. When Dugald Roy went into the house for breakfast, he asked his wife and some neighbours, who happened to be present, if they had heard of anybody being sick unto death in the district, to which the reply was that, so far as they knew, there was nobody ailing just at that time either in the neighbouring glens or in the townships by the sea. A little before mid-day, as Dugald was working at the bench, a messenger came in haste from Glenforsan to say that on the previous evening the shepherd

there, on reaching home after a long round on the hills, had suddenly dropped down in a fit, and was dead before anything could be done to relieve him. The messenger had come with instructions to Dugald to make the coffin; and the meaning of the sounds of hammering and sawing in the locked-up workshop throughout the dark midnight hours was now clear enough. Ewen goes on to say that he had himself spoken to Dugald Roy upon the subject, who assured him that similar sounds of midnight hammering and sawing were not at all uncommon, and that on such occasions an order for a coffin for some one dead in the district invariably followed. Stories of this kind, the gruesomer the better, go round; and it is amusing to observe that under the awe and terror they inspire, the young lads and lasses take the opportunity of edging nearer and nearer, and sitting closer to each other than was at first thought necessary or proper. And while this class of stories is on its round, it is with closely clasped hands, as if for mutual protection, under terror of the supernatural, that they sit and listen to the weird and wondrous tale.

It is our host, Donald Bane himself, who now proceeds to tell the story of the *Clachan Glas*, or Grey Stones, of Port-Ewen. It was some time in the latter half of the seventeenth century that the famous Sir Ewen Dubh of Lochiel, chief of the Clan Cameron, was one day crossing the hills from his own castle of Achnacarry to visit his friend, Stewart of Appin. He was unattended on the occasion even by a gillie, for until he reached the country of the Stewarts, who were his allies and friends, his way was over his own lands and amongst his own people, so that for so active and brave a man still in the prime of life, there was really no need of any attendant on such a journey. It was the summer season; and as he was crossing the Maam of Callart early in the afternoon, a tall female with grey dishevelled locks and wild fiery eyes suddenly appeared beside him, and taking up the pace, fast or slow as the chief chose to make it, commenced to accompany him step for step on his journey. She was a formidable and frightful-looking hag, taller than the Chief by a head, though he too was one of the tallest men of his name. Now, it fortunately so happened that Sir Ewen was not only a brave man but a wise man as well, versed in all the folklore of his time, and early initiated into all the mysteries of the Black Art by his own near neighbour and



Peats from the Moss.

dependant, the wife of Moy, and he guessed at once that his unwelcome companion could be none other than the *Glaisnig*, the great, grey she-

demon of Ben Vreek, "half-woman, half-devil, and all evil," as, in pithiest and purest Gaelic phrase, her character was summed up by the people whom she terrified and harassed for a hundred miles around. He knew that it was wisest not to speak to her at all, no matter what she should say to him; and thus it happened that when the hag spoke him fairly, and proposed an alliance with him, and made him many promises of victory over his enemies, and wealth to his heart's wish for himself and tribe, the Chief listened and heard indeed, but answered her never a word. Side by side, and step for step, the *Glaisnig* and Sir Ewen descended the grassy steeps of Maam Callart; and fast or slow as the Chief might move, the hag kept steady step with him still; so that all his attempts to outwalk her and be quit of her were unavailing. Closer to him than his shadow still stuck to him the *Glaisnig*. At last they reached a pretty little sandy bay on Loch Leven; and at high-water mark on the beach was a small boat which Sir Ewen straightway proceeded to launch in order to ferry himself across the narrows of Loch Leven to the country of the *Stewarts* beyond. As the boat was afloat, and Sir Ewen, oar in hand, standing up in its bow in order to push it out into the tide, the *Glaisnig* exclaimed, "There

is a strong wish in my heart regarding thee, Ewen; may it straightway befall thee!"

"Whatever the wish of thy heart to me, may it, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, befall thyself, O accursed hag, and servant of the evil one," instantly replied Sir Ewen; and (the grace of the Most High be around us!) the hag then and there burst with a loud explosion as if of thunder, into seven fragments of coarse grey granite that fell back upon the beach, and there they remain to this day as any one may see. From that day to this, the bay where this happened has been known as Port Ewen in memory of the Chief's victory over the *Glaisnig*; of whom of course there was from that moment evermore an end.

"Why," the shoemaker of the township queries, "why didn't the hag, who had hitherto stuck to him so closely, follow Sir Ewen into the boat?"

"Oh, that is easily accounted for," Donald Bane replies. "All the time the Chief was launching the boat, he was saying the *Paternoster* to himself under his breath; and before he stood up, oar in hand, to push the boat from the shore, he had placed the other oar lengthwise in the boat, so that it lay atop the thwart making across, and so it was that in the presence of a baptized Christian saying the *Paternoster* with all his heart, and of the sacred symbol of our redemption made by the oar and thwart, the foul hag—servant of the servants of the evil one—was completely foiled and dare not follow further."

It is now the turn of Allan Breac, the forester, to contribute his share to the entertainment of the evening; and, nothing loth, he straightway proceeds to tell the story of the *Valiant Tailor*.

There was a ruined chapel within whose crumbling walls were many tombs of the dead; and as was well known far and near, the chapel was haunted. Often at the mirk midnight hour was that chapel seen to be brightly ablaze with strangely lurid light; and often had the belated wayfarer to run, "his heart in his gullet," as the Gaelic phrase is, in mortal terror of his soul's salvation as of his life, because of the screams of eldritch laughter that reached his ear from within these ruined walls; laughter with which was always intermingled the sound of awful voices in loud and fierce contention. Now it so happened that there was a tailor in a neighbouring hamlet who professed to disbelieve these stories, who laughed at the chapel and its terrors, and who for a wager

offered to enter the chapel by himself alone on first darkest midnight, and being allowed a lantern, to sit on the biggest table-tombstone of the lot near the altar by the inner wall and then and there to sew a pair of breeches in defiance of all the ghosts that could assail him. The appointed night came round, and accompanied by three men, whose business it was to see that the wager was fairly lost or won, the doughty tailor, carrying a lantern in one hand, and the cloth for the breeches, already cut and shaped, in the other, boldly entered the chapel, and picking his way over the gravestones until he reached the ponderous slab that covered the tomb next the altar, lightly leapt atop that slab, and sitting down cross-legged, tailor-fashion, waved his hand to the men who stood trembling at the entrance, a sign that they might now go away, and leave him alone to sew his breeches in peace and win his wager.

Although the tailor was an unbeliever in ghosts, he had to confess to himself that the slab on which he sat was uncomfortably hard

and cold, and by the dim and fitful light of his lantern, the tomb-paved ruins eerie in the extreme. It is little wonder, therefore, that the tailor sewed away with all his might, the sooner to be done with his task, and out and away from such uncomfortable surroundings. As he proceeded with his work as fast as his fingers could ply the needle, he was startled by a rustling and a clatter as of bones beneath an enormous granite slab, that resting on four dumpy pillars of the same material, roofed in what was believed to be the oldest grave within the chapel walls. After a little time the rustling and rattling of bones ceased; and lo! a large hand was slowly thrust out by the opening under the slab, and a voice gruff and guttural said,

"Do you see that great, big hand, O tailor?"

"I see that, but I will sew this," responded the plucky tailor.

Farther and farther out was thrust the hand, until it was now the whole arm, sinewy, and long and strong, and mighty and massive beyond anything the tailor had ever seen before, that was exposed even to the shoulder; and again the voice said, "Do you see that great, big, strong arm, O tailor?"

"I see that, but I will sew this," quoth the undaunted tailor.

The next time it was a mighty leg and thigh that was exposed from beneath the slab, and the voice said,

"Do you see that great, big leg and thigh, O tailor?"

"I see that, but I will sew this," was for the third time the plucky little tailor's response, the whiles he sewed away like mad; and under the excitement of it all, the perspiration from brow and nose and chin went drippy-drop-drip upon the cloth, until he felt it getting moist and warm in his hands. Next time it was the awful ghost's head and face that appeared close by one of the supporting pillars of the slab.

"Do you see this head and face, O tailor?"

It was in truth an awful face, fiery-eyed and swollen with rage, and terrible to behold; but still the response, if slightly tremulous, was perfectly self-possessed and true.

"I see that, but I will sew this," quoth the tailor.



The Cas Chrom.

The tailor's sheet-anchor of hope was in the belief that the gigantic tenant of the tomb could not possibly get out through the comparatively narrow opening between the slab and the ground, and as the sewing of the breeches was now nearly finished he plied his needle as he never in his life plied it before or after, in order to win his wager as quickly as possible, and get away from the companionship of the huge and hideous being that had so cruelly annoyed him, and tried his courage so sorely. He was at the last stitch of the left leg of the breeches, and the wager was about won, when there was a terrible stir and commotion within the tomb, and to his horror the awful being of the gigantic arm and leg, and hideous head and face, threw aside from its supporting pillars the ton-weight slab that lay over him as lightly as if it were an eider-down quilt, and stepping from the black depths of the grave as easily as a man takes a single step of an ordinary stair, roared with a roar so loud that the ruined walls shook to their foundations. His height was as the height of two biggest men, one atop of t'other, and his aspect was beyond all description fierce and terrible. Looking about with great fiery eyes, he saw the tailor, and went for him with a single stride that took him easily over the dozen intervening yards between the two tombs. The tailor, however, was game throughout; and lithe as an eel and active as a cat, was not the man to be caught and torn

to pieces without making an effort to save himself. Sticking the needle, instinctively rather than of set purpose, into its proper place amongst half-a-score of others in the cuff of his coat, and taking up the lantern in one hand and the breeches in the other, he made a leap from off the slab down among the graves, and in the direction of the door, bounding along like a stag, and clearing graves and tombstones as if in a hurdle-race, and conscious all the time that his terrible enemy was in hot and close pursuit. Once he fell over the hollow of a shrunken grave, but with the speed at which he was moving it ended in a lightsome somersault; and on his legs again in a moment, he was out of the door at a single bound, and in another instant, panting for breath, and with his head in a swirl, had his arms tightly clasped around Saint Fillan's cross beyond. When the pursuing fiend saw that his intended victim was nearing the door, and was about to escape him, he made a stroke at him that, if it had reached him, would assuredly have squelched the tailor into a jelly. As it was, the blow intended for the tailor struck the wall at the spring of the beautiful old arch over the doorway, and there, in the hard and gritty sandstone, is the hollow mark of the fiend's hand and talon-armed fingers even unto this day. Needless to say that the tailor won his wager, and from that night forth became the hero of his native township and of the wide district around.

THE UNKNOWN CONTINENT.

By ARTHUR SILVA WHITE, F.R.S.E.,

SECRETARY TO THE ROYAL SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

WE are accustomed to pride ourselves on the supposition that, with a few well-known exceptions, there are no large tracts of land the general physical features of which are entirely unknown to us. Some of my readers may therefore, at first sight, presume, from the title given to this paper, that I have entered the lists with Mr. Rider Haggard and other modern writers of fiction, and that the unknown continent exists only in my imagination. Others, who take a closer interest in geographical subjects, will at once recognise the unknown continent to be that vast expanse of land situated at the South Pole, of which so little is really known beyond its existence and probable limits, that the term I have applied to it is as true now

as it was in the days when *terra australis incognita* figured on nearly every map.

As far as possible I shall endeavour to restrict my view of the physical and geographical conditions that are known to exist in the far south, to a broad outline of their outstanding features, but a certain amount of technical detail must necessarily be introduced in order to elucidate the subject. In a region where we have no familiar names to guide us, but have to rely chiefly on latitudes and longitudes (terms which to many have a repellent aspect), it is very difficult to avoid their use. The reader will, however, find the accompanying map (page 118) of great assistance.

The whole of the vast area included withir



THE GREAT ICY BARRIER.

(situated in $78\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ S. lat.), which extended eastward (E.S.E.) from Victoria Land for 450 miles. Ross sailed along this great Icy Barrier in the hope of finding a passage through which he might force his ships towards the Magnetic Pole, but to no avail; the perpendicular ice-cliffs, flat at the top, extended without a break for the whole distance, maintaining an average height of 180 feet above the sea-level, and at some points rising to nearly 300 feet.

We can imagine the conflicting feelings of this bold navigator when his further passage south was stopped by this impassable barrier, to sail through which would—to use his own phrase—be as impossible as to sail through the cliffs at Dover. It is more pleasing to dwell on the grand spectacle he and his crew enjoyed when in the neighbourhood of this land of wonders. In front of him rose the Great Icy Barrier; over its precipitous unbroken face he could not see what lay beyond, even from the mast-head. At one spot, however, a lofty range of mountains—the Parry Mountains—was observed to trend south; whether they afterwards take an easterly trend and serve as a nucleus upon which the ice-cliffs are formed, he was unable to determine; his opinion was, that if there be any more land to the south, it must be very remote. He did, indeed, get one glimpse of the icy plateau over the barrier, but what he saw I shall mention subsequently. The ice-bound coasts of Victoria Land presented a still grander appearance: the double range of mountains, with the intervening valleys filled with glaciers, rising in beautiful peaks, too numerous to count, and covered with the eternal snows stretching in one unbroken shroud of white to the edge of the land-ice; the shores interrupted by great cliffs of ice jutting several miles into the sea; the numerous outlying islands of volcanic rocks, encrusted with ice and snow, offered a scene of varied form and colouring almost unparalleled.

We can well imagine how our countrymen must have been impressed on witnessing, on these remote shores, the splendid exhibition of Mount Erebus in eruption. On the occasion of one display, which was carefully observed, the volcano emitted smoke and flame in unusual quantities. At each successive jet, between irregular intervals of half an hour or less, it ejected a column of smoke, some 200 or 300 feet in diameter, to a height of from 1,500 to 2,000 feet above the crater. The smoke, on condensing at its upper part, fell in clouds of mist or snow,

and gradually dispersed; and when it cleared away, the bright red flame that filled the mouth of the crater—or, rather, its reflection—was plainly observed.

Captain Weddell's high latitude was a very remarkable performance. He reached latitude $74^{\circ} 15'$ to the south and east of Cape Horn, and turned back in a comparatively open sea, which, in his chart, he described as "navigable." He saw at this spot no "field-ice" in sight, but many whales and innumerable birds. But, to show how little the navigation of these seas can be depended upon, I may mention that Ross, some years later, following the same course, was stopped ten degrees north of Weddell's furthest by an impenetrable ice-pack; nor was the French expedition under D'Urville (1837—40) any more successful.

Captain Cook, in 1774, reached 71° S. lat. on the meridian of 107° W., but discovered no land, although a few hundred miles to the east it undoubtedly exists.

Having thus, like some demoralized reader of romance, hastily glanced at the "last chapter," I shall return to the preface.

From the 70th parallel to the Antarctic Circle is a zone, girdling the earth, in which land has been discovered at several points, the most important masses having been reported on the Antarctic Circle between the longitudes of 100° and 160° E. From the Antarctic Circle to the 63rd degree of latitude we have a zone in which the temperature of both sea and air rarely, even in the summer months, rises above the freezing point of sea-water, and which is in consequence filled with ice all the year round. The area of the Antarctic Ocean is properly limited by the Antarctic Circle, from whence to the 40th parallel south extends a deep belt of ocean encircling the earth which is known among modern geographers as the Great Southern Ocean. Its northern boundary marks the limits of the South Atlantic, South Pacific, and South Indian Oceans. Interrupted only by the southern prolongation of South America, the Great Southern Ocean, with an average depth of two miles, washes the shores of no other continent, and its immense surface is broken only by a few scattered islands, the chief of which are New Zealand (South Island) and Tasmania. Except at one isolated spot, where Weddell attained his highest latitude, this great ocean gradually shoals towards the Antarctic continent; just as around any of the other continents, the depths decrease as the land is approached. The average limit of the drift



Aurora Australis.

ice may be said roughly to correspond with the latitude on which Cape Horn is situated. The Antarctic regions may, therefore, be considered as included within this area, or, perhaps more correctly, within the area bounded by the 60th parallel south, which represents the annual isotherm of 32° Fahr., or the zero of the Centigrade scale.

With the exception of the outlying islands, all the Antarctic lands are ice-bound. Where the shores are low a perpendicular cliff of ice, averaging in height 175 feet above the sea, raises an impassable barrier before the explorer. Here are generated those huge ice-islands and bergs so characteristic of the Antarctic. The barrier is further protected by the ice-pack, which, in the summer at least, is constantly being broken up by the tempestuous weather of these regions, and drifted away in a northerly direction. The pack has been known to extend for several hundred miles from the barrier. Ross, on his first voyage, pushed through it for 200 miles, and on his second voyage for 250 miles. The land, when it has been visible over the barrier, rarely exceeds 2,000 to

3,000 feet in height. The higher lands—which are protected by the land-ice, rising 5 to 6 feet above the surface of the sea, and by the pack beyond—are (1) Victoria Land, to which I have referred; and (2) the lands lying to the south of Cape Horn, between the 55th and 75th degrees of west longitude, discovered by Bellinghausen (1821), Biscoe (1832), and D'Urville (1838). The remaining lands that have been discovered nowhere rise to any great elevation. The various patches of land between the 65th and 70th parallels are comparatively well known, Victoria Land being the only portion of the continent south of latitude 70° of which we have any reliable information.

The higher lands which have been charted can more easily be proved to exist, and their limits more accurately defined, than the lower-lying lands. In the case of the latter we are frequently left in doubt as to whether the so-called lands reported to have been seen by explorers were solid land, or ice, or clouds; for there have been occasions when the "appearance of land" has dissolved into mist, or floated away on the ocean, before

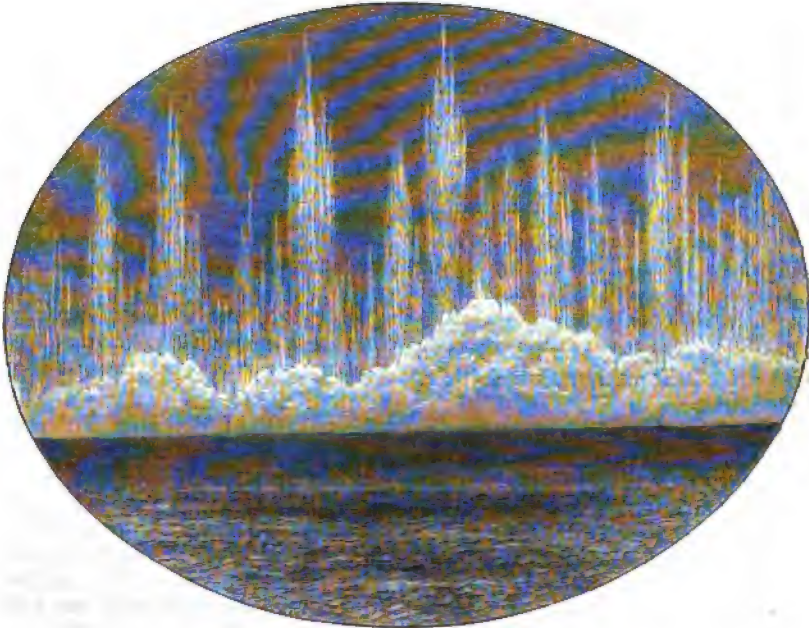
the eyes of the disappointed discoverers. Thus we are told by Sir Wyville Thomson that an animated discussion was once being held on board the *Challenger*, when a strong "appearance of land" was dispelled by a portion of it floating quietly away; and again, the eastern extremity of Wilkes' Land, "discovered" and charted by the United States Expedition, was sailed over by Captain Ross. Indeed, appearances are most deceptive, especially in the Antarctic regions. They are, however, mostly limited by the altitude to which vapour attains in these regions: the upper part of a cloud is frequently marked by a well-defined and irregular line, and the lower portions are filled in by vapour in every stage of condensation, resembling most closely a mountainous tract of country. The fact of these appearances being most deceptive near the margin of the pack, from whence the panorama of ice and snow stretches in one vast expanse of white, must account for a commander, in perfect good faith, chronicling an "appearance of land" where another may

subsequently find an open sea. Mistakes such as these have, however, been very rare. It is, also, sometimes very difficult to distinguish a distant spot, in the maze of ice, as the top of a mountain on an extensive land or as an island in a sea of ice. The higher islands and lands, too, rise steeply from the sea, and are clothed in their perennial garb of snow and ice; and only by their steep escarpments, on which the snow cannot lie, or by a protruding black rock here and there, do they show any evidence of their formation.

But with all these drawbacks to an accurate knowledge of the Antarctic regions, the existence there of a great mass of glaciated land cannot be doubted. The following established facts are offered in proof of this supposition.

1. The gradual shoaling of the sea-bottom towards and surrounding the South Pole.

2. The blue muds surrounding the Pole about the margin of the ice-pack, which constitute the *débris* of continental rocks.



Aurora Australis.

3. The absence of any well-defined local Antarctic return under-current.

4. The character of the Antarctic icebergs, which require for their formation a

nucleus of solid land of almost continental extent.

5. Continental rocks, boulders, and other evidence of land-formation found on icebergs.

6. The steady movement of the ice towards the north and east all round the Pole, as if spreading out, fan-like, from one centre.

The evidence of explorers since Cook's voyages has been in accordance with this supposition. The ice-bound character of these seas is due to the absence of any brisk surface currents. In the Arctic regions the Gulf Stream makes its genial influence felt far and wide, breaking up the ice and producing a constant circulation. It is true we have very scanty and imperfect data of the oceanic circulation in the Antarctic seas. Speaking in very general terms, and apart from theories, one thing is certain: there is a steady northerly and easterly drift-current proceeding from the Pole in the direction of New Zealand and Cape Horn, which is estimated to flow at the rate of from twenty to thirty-five miles a day; on striking the coast of South America this current bifurcates, the stronger arm proceeding north, and washing the shores of Chile and Peru (reducing the temperatures of these countries), the weaker continuing east and north past Cape Horn. The course taken by an iceberg is ultimately E. by N., and its rate of travel is about sixteen miles a day, except in the locality of Cape Horn, where icebergs take a more northerly course up to latitude 40° S., when they resume their easterly direction and reduce their rate of travel. The bergs, on being detached from the place of their formation, by a process I shall afterwards allude to, are floated away at a rate not exceeding three-quarters of a mile an hour. Carried first to the westward, and subsequently to the north and east, they are met with, the first season after their separation, about seventy miles north of the barrier. This fact seems to prove the existence of what is known as the Antarctic Drift current, which flows towards the north.

Closely approximating with the outer edge of the ice-fields, we find the deep-sea deposits to consist of very pure diatom ooze; but, as the Antarctic continent is approached the detritus from the continent dropped by the icebergs is mixed up with the diatoms, and combines to form a deposit of blue mud, which, on examination, shows all the mineral particles and rock fragments usually found in the neighbourhood of land. They resemble in many respects, as Mr. Murray has pointed out, the deposits found in similar depths off the Atlantic coast of British North America. Thus, taken in connection with the depths, the deep-sea deposits would enable the position and extent of the Antarctic continent to be mapped

out with a tolerable degree of certainty. And this method has been employed in the construction of the map accompanying this paper.

The permanently low atmospheric pressure (29·000 inches) in the Antarctic regions is a remarkable phenomenon in the meteorology of the globe; it seems to obtain between the parallels of 40° and 70° S., even in the summer months, giving rise to the most violent storms from the W. and N.W. The winds blow in cyclonically towards the South Pole. From the southern edge of the zone in which the South-east Trades exist, as far as the Antarctic Circle, westerly winds blow with more or less force and constancy at all seasons of the year. Our data as regards the winds within the Antarctic Circle are extremely scanty, but it is probable that in the summer months (January, February, and March, the only season in which this region has been visited) the winds blow east or west without any great constancy or regularity. Extremes of weather are experienced in rapid succession, and there is almost constant precipitation.

The beautiful displays of the *aurora australis* have been noted by all Antarctic voyagers. The exhibitions have been observed chiefly about or within the latitude of 68° S. They differ from the same phenomenon in the Arctic regions, in the length of the vertical beams being greater, their appearances and disappearances being more frequent and sudden—resembling flashes of light—and from their being often quite colourless. Lieutenant Wilkes, who witnessed one very beautiful display, thus describes it: "It exceeded anything of the kind I had heretofore witnessed; its activity was inconceivable, darting from the zenith to the horizon in all directions in the most brilliant coruscations; rays, proceeding as if from a point in the zenith, flashed in brilliant pencillings of light, like sparks of electric fluid *in vacuo*, and reappeared again to vanish, forming themselves into one body, like an umbrella or fan shut up: again emerging to flit across the sky with the rapidity of light, they showed all the prismatic colours at once or in quick succession. So remarkable were the phenomena that even our sailors were constantly exclaiming in admiration of its brilliancy. The best position in which to view it was by lying flat upon the deck and looking up."

The vegetable kingdom, under such unfavourable physical conditions, has no representatives in Antarctic lands. There are enormous quantities of diatoms, microscopic

plants, belonging to many genera and species, which afford the chief food supply for the marine animals. The diatoms are found in the surface waters, and their dead frustules collect on the sea-bottom about the latitude of 60° S., and outside the blue muds surrounding the Antarctic regions, a pure white diatomaceous ooze. The oceanic light blue colour of the sea is, near the pack edge, frequently found to be stained by a dirty brownish tint, from the organisms abounding there.

The marine animals prey one upon the other, according to their position in the scale of creation, all being eventually nourished by the minute infusorial organisms filling the ocean in such inconceivable numbers. On the ice and in the water are innumerable seals. Three species were observed by Ross, and they varied considerably in their size and colouring. Their colours ranged from a dark grey, beautifully marbled with spots and stripes of a much darker hue, to almost uniform white. The largest in size, which were much less numerous than the smaller species, were armed with formidable tusks, by which, and from the shape of their head, they resembled the polar bear; and they are equally dangerous animals to approach. The largest killed by the expedition under Ross weighed 850 lbs., and yielded 16 gallons of oil; it was nearly 12 feet long and 6 feet in circumference, and its stomach was found to contain 28 lbs. of fish. The middle-sized seal, call the sea-leopard, from the markings on its fur, as well as the white Antarctic seal, are so tame that they may be approached and killed with impunity. Then there are sea-lions and sea-elephants, which have been seen in great numbers south of the Horn. The sea-lions of the female sex fiercely protect their young, the males endeavouring to intimidate intruders by their roars of lusty defiance. The gashes seen on them bear evidence of savage encounters among themselves. Of the marine produce, however, the most important to our fisheries is the whale. Whales have been seen by all Antarctic voyagers, though their numbers have more recently been greatly diminished by the activity of the whaling vessels. They are almost exclusively of the fin-backed species, and chiefly haunt the pack-edge. Some of those seen by Ross, especially to the south of the Falklands, were of enormous size, and sometimes so tame that they did not even get out of the way of the ship's keel. Grampuses are also to be met with. Penguins abound on sea and land, their cry frequently being heard above the storm at places as remote as a

hundred miles from any known shore; they are very large birds, varying in weight from 60 to 75 lbs., and they feed chiefly off the crustaceous animals. On being opened, from 2 to 10 lbs. of pebbles have frequently been dislodged from the stomach. White petrels, which frequent the pack and thus give warning on the approach of any large body of ice, stormy petrels, and blue petrels are found in great numbers; and sooty albatrosses, Cape pigeons, skua gulls, and other oceanic birds are also met with in considerable numbers. In fact, sea and air are full of life.

The ice conditions naturally present the most interesting and characteristic features of the Antarctic regions. The voyager, on leaving the temperate zone to penetrate into the frozen waters of the Far South, would require to have a very considerable knowledge of navigation among ice as his chief equipment; and in order to make any length of stay there, he would need a vessel of more than ordinary strength, capable of withstanding an occasional "nip" from the battering-rams of the dangerous flocs.

What is the life-history of these floating ice-islands and icebergs? They are all shed from the parent ice-cap that surrounds the Pole. Extremes of frost and the gradual projection of the ice-cap into the sea are the causes of their disruption. Here, for centuries perhaps, the great ice-cap grows and moves like a living thing. Each season a fresh layer of snow is added to its thickness, which the rays of the sun convert into ice more or less solid. Slowly the huge cumbrous mass moves over the lower-lying lands and through the valleys towards the sea, grinding under its enormous weight rocks and boulders, which, from the cohesive nature of ice, it sometimes gathers up and conveys along with it; and this *débris* is eventually deposited on the sea bottom.

The colouring of the bergs is magnificent. The general mass closely resembles loaf sugar; the caves and crevices are of the deepest and purest azure blue; at night they emit a luminous glow, and there are reasons to believe that many are to some extent phosphorescent. Like the bergs of the Arctic seas, they are bounded by perpendicular cliffs on all sides. Some of them are more than two miles and some as many as four miles in circumference, while bergs four miles in diameter have also been seen. They have a uniform height of about 175 feet, 90 per cent. of their volume being submerged; but higher bergs are frequently met with, the highest seen by Cook having been esti-

mated at from 300 to 400 feet. As they float northwards they become tilted and gradually lose their tabular appearance, until the warm waters dissolve them.

The bergs met with, especially in the lower latitudes, assume every conceivable form. The *Challenger*, for instance, saw one that was "gable-shaped, with a glorious open Gothic arch in the centre, and a separate spire over 200 feet high. It was like a gorgeous floating cathedral built of sapphires, set in frosted silver." Both Wilkes and Ross, among other voyagers, describe the exceeding beauty of these palaces, cathedrals, islands, which are carved out of solid ice and sprinkled with snow, and, that more reality may be given them, are sometimes populated by penguins. Towards the Pole, however, the icebergs, not being so disintegrated, are uniformly tabular.

The drift-ice is not usually to be met with at a lower latitude than 58° S., but in the severe seasons of 1832 and 1840, ice-islands were observed in latitude 42° , and they have sometimes been seen 600 or 700 miles from the barrier. There was one immense floating island, reported to have been passed by twenty-one ships in December, 1854, and January, February, and March, 1855. It was in the form of a hook, the longer shank of which was 60 miles and the shorter 40 miles, enclosing a bay of open water 40 miles in diameter; and its elevation in one case exceeded 300 feet. This stupendous ice-island, as it might be conceived, presented great dangers to navigation. One ship, which sailed into the bay, was fortunate enough to secure a safe retreat, but an emigrant ship, *The Guiding Star*, was embayed and lost with all hands.

The pack-edge is of a deep blue colour, and is always characteristic; it consists for the most part of heavy floe ice, much worn by the sea, broken up and pressed and heaped together so as to present the most irregular shaped masses. The pack of the Antarctic seas is far more broken up, in consequence of the violent storms, than in the Arctic regions, where the sea is usually more tranquil. The vicinity of the pack is indicated to the navigator by a beautiful meteorological phenomenon called the "ice-blink," which is seen above it, and may be described as presenting a clear band of white reflection, sometimes bounded above by a dark cloud.

Ross contended for six weeks, trying to penetrate the pack to the south of Cape Horn; but his ships were so constantly beset and carried backward by the current flowing north, that eventually, after experiencing many

perils, he abandoned the attempt. We may gather some idea of the dangers he must have encountered when we remember that the huge Antarctic icebergs are constantly colliding and disintegrating. The drift-ice, too, is tossed about by the waves like so many floating timbers, contact with any large body of which might prove fatal to any unfortified ship. The sudden, fierce gales peculiar to these regions, alternating with the still more dangerous calms—when the ship floats helpless amongst the ice—present fresh dangers to be faced by the navigator, and the frequent thick weather and heavy, blinding falls of snow, add to his embarrassment. The free movement of his ship is further impeded by the rapidity with which the young ice forms to obstruct his passage, rendering frequent short "tacks" necessary in the small open spaces of water, and the free handling of the icy ropes is almost impossible when the waves congeal as they fall on the decks and have to be cut away with hatchets. A storm in the pack, in fact, or an ensuing dead calm, are the most dangerous positions in which an Antarctic voyager can be placed.

From the fact that these high southern lands, unlike those in the antipodal regions, can be approached from all sides at every season of the year, we might reasonably have supposed that they would not have been for so long unexplored had any commensurate advantage to trade or shipping been anticipated. Our considerable knowledge of the Arctic regions is due, not to any special claims for their scientific exploration, but chiefly to the fact that whilst there was a North-East and a North-West Passage to explore, or a short-cut across the Pole to China and Japan to discover, commerce persistently endeavoured to break through the barriers of the Frozen North. In the Antarctic, on the other hand, commerce has concerned itself only with the sealing and whaling produce.

To the natural sciences it offers an area of almost virgin ground, and until it has been systematically explored, and some knowledge of it obtained by synchronous observations, none of these sciences can be properly equipped for a thorough investigation into the cosmogony of the globe. It may be a long time yet before the nations recognise how much their progress is regulated by, and dependent on, the advance of science; but we are sure there will always be found men who will impress on the public the paramount importance of investigating the unknown continent of the Far South.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER V.—POISON AND ANTIDOTE.

"NOW, sir, have the goodness to tell me what you mean to do."

Harry Vine looked at his father, thrust his hands low down into his pockets, leaned back against the mantelpiece, and was silent.

Vine senior leaned over a shallow glass jar, with a thin splinter of wood in his hand, upon which he had just impaled a small fragment of raw, minced periwinkle, and this he thrust down to where a gorgeous sea-anemone sat spread open upon a piece of rock—chipped from out of one of the caverns on the coast.

The anemone's tentacles bristled all around, giving the creature the aspect of a great flower; and down among these the scrap of food was thrust till it touched them, when the tentacles began to curve over, and draw the scrap of shell-fish down toward the large central mouth, in which it soon began to disappear.

Vine senior looked up.

"I have done everything I could for you in the way of education. I have, I am sure, been a most kind and indulgent father. You have had a liberal supply of money, and by the exercise of my own and the personal interest of friends, I have obtained for you posts among our people, any one of which was the beginning of prosperity and position, such as a youth should have been proud to win."

"But they were so unsuitable, father. All connected with trade."

"Shame, Harry! As if there was anything undignified in trade. No matter whether it be trade or profession by which a man honestly earns his subsistence, it is an honourable career. And yet five times over you have been thrown back on my hands in disgrace."

"Well, I can't help it, father; I've done my best."

"Your best!" cried Vine senior, taking up a glass rod, and stirring the water in another glass jar. "It is not true."

"But it's so absurd. You're a rich man."

"If I were ten times as well off, I would not have you waste your life in idleness. You are not twenty-four, and I am determined that you shall take some post. I have seen too much of what follows when a rest-

less, idle young man sits down to wait for his father's money. There, I am busy now. Go and think over what I have said. You must and shall do something. It is now a month since I received that letter. What is Mr. Pradelle doing down here again?"

"Come for a change, as any other gentleman would."

"Gentleman?"

"Well, he has a little income of his own, I suppose. If I've been unlucky that's no reason why I should throw over my friends."

The father looked at the son in a perplexed way, and then fed another sea-anemone, Harry looking on contemptuously.

"Well, sir, you have heard what I said. Go and think it over."

"Yes, father."

The young man left the business-like study, and encountered his sister in the hall.

"Well, Harry?"

"Well, Lou."

"What does papa say?"

"The old story. I'm to go back to drudgery. I think I shall enlist."

"For shame! and you professing to care as you do for Madeline."

"So I do. I worship her."

"Then prove it by exerting yourself in the way papa wishes. I wonder you have not more spirit."

"And I wonder you have not more decency towards my friends."

Louise coloured slightly.

"Here you profess to believe in my going into trade and drudging behind a counter."

"I did not know that a counter had ever been in question, Harry," said his sister sarcastically.

"Well, a clerk's desk; it's all the same. I believe you would like to see me selling tea and sugar."

"I don't think I should mind."

"No: that's it. I'm to be disgraced while you are so much of the fine lady that you look down on, and quite insult, my friend Pradelle."

"Aunt Margaret wishes to speak to you, dear," said Louise gravely. "I promised to tell you as soon as you left the study."

"Then hang it all! why didn't you tell me? Couldn't resist a chance for a lecture. There's only one body here who understands

me, and that's aunt. Why even Madelaine's turning against me now, and I believe it is all your doing."

"I have done nothing but what is for your good, Harry."

"Then you own to it? You have been talking to Maddy."

"She came and confided in me, and I believe I spoke the truth."

"Yes, I knew it!" cried Harry warmly. "Then look here, my lady, I'm not blind. I've petted you and been the best of brothers, but if you turn against me I shall turn against you."

"Harry dear!"

"Ah, that startles you, does it? Then I shall tell the truth, and I'll back up Aunt Margaret through thick and thin."

"What do you mean?"

"What Aunt Margaret says. That long Scotch copper-miner is no match for you."

"Harry!"

"And I shall tell him this, if he comes hanging about here where he sees he is not wanted, and stands in the way of a gentleman of good French Huguenot descent, I'll horsewhip him. There!"

He turned on his heel, and bounded up the old staircase three steps at a time.

"Oh!" ejaculated Louise, as she stood till she heard a sharp tap at her aunt's door and her brother enter and close it after him. "Mr. Pradelle, too, of all people in the world!"

"Ah, my darling," cried Aunt Margaret, looking up from the tambour-frame and smoothing out the folds of her antique flowered peignoir. "Bring that stool, and come and sit down here."

Harry bent down and kissed her rather sulkily. Then in a half-contemptuous way he fetched the said stool, embroidered by the lady herself, and placed it at her feet.

"Sit down, my dear."

Harry lowered himself into a very uncomfortable position, while Aunt Margaret placed one arm about his neck, struck a graceful pose, and began to smooth over the young man's already too smooth hair.

"I want to have another very serious talk with you, my boy," she said. "Ah, yes," she continued, raising his chin and looking down in his disgusted face: "how every lineament shows your descent!"

"I say, aunt, I've just brushed my hair."

"Yes, dear, but you should not hide your forehead. It is the brow of the Des Vignes."

"Oh, all right, auntie, have it your own

way. But, I say, have you got any money?"

"Alas! no, my boy."

"I don't mean now. I mean haven't you really got any to leave me in your will?"

There was a far-off look in Aunt Margaret's eyes as she slowly shook her head.

"You will leave me what you have, aunt?"

"If I had hundreds of thousands, you should have all, Henri; but, alas, I have none. I had property once."

"What became of it?"

"Well, my dear, it is a long story and a sad one. I could not tell it to you even in brief, but you are a man now, and must know the meaning of the word love."

"Oh, yes, I know what that means; but I say, don't fidget my hair about so."

"I could not tell you all, Henri. It was thirty years ago. He was a French gentleman of noble descent. His estates had been confiscated, and I was only too glad to place my little fortune at his disposal to recover them."

"And did he?"

"No, my dear. Those were terrible times. He lost all; and with true nobility, he wrote to me that he loved me too well to drag me down to poverty—to share his lot as an exile. I have never seen him since. But I would have shared his lot."

"Humph! Lost it? Then if I had money and tried for our family estates, I might lose it too."

"No, no, my boy; you would be certain to win. Did you do what I told you?"

"Yes, aunt; but I can't use them down here."

"Let me look, my dear; and I do not see why not. You must be bold; and proud of your descent."

"But they'd laugh."

"Let them," said Aunt Margaret grandly.

"By-and-by they will bow down. Let me see."

The young man took a card-case from his pocket, on which was stamped in gold a French count's coronet.

"Ah! yes; that is right," said the old lady, snatching the case with trembling fingers, opening it, and taking out a card on which was also printed a coronet. "*Comte Henri des Vignes*," she read, in an excited manner, and with tears in her eyes. "My darling boy!"

"Cost a precious lot, aunt; made a regular hole in your diamond ring."

"Did you sell it?"

"No: Vic Pradelle pawned it for me."

"Ah! he is a friend of whom you may be proud, Henri."

"Not a bad sort of fellow, aunt. He got precious little on the ring, though, and I spent it nearly all."

"Never mind the ring, my boy, and I'm very glad you have the cards. Now for a little serious talk about the future."

"Wish to goodness there was no future," said Harry glumly.

"Would you like to talk about the past, then?" said the old lady playfully.

"Wish there was no past neither," grumbled Harry.

"Then we will talk about the present, my dear, and about—let me whisper to you—love!"

She placed her thin lips close to her nephew's ear, and then held him at arm's length and smiled upon him proudly.

"Love! Too expensive a luxury for me, auntie. I say, you are ruffling my hair so."

"Too expensive, Henri? No, my darling boy; follow my advice, and the richest and fairest of the daughters of France shall sue for your hand."

"I say, auntie," he said laughingly, "aren't you laying on the colour rather thick?"

"Not a bit, my darling; and that's why I want to talk to you about your sister's friend."

"What, Maddy?" he said eagerly; "then you approve of it."

"Approve! Pah! you are jesting, my dear. I approve of your making an alliance with a fat Dutch fraulein!"

"Oh, come, aunt!" said Harry, looking nettles; "Madeline is not Dutch, nor yet fat."

"I know better, my boy. Dutch! Dutch! Dutch! Look at her father and her mother! No, my boy, you could not make an alliance with a girl like that. She might do for a kitchen-maid."

"Auntie!"

"Silly boy!"

"And she'll be rich some day."

"If she were heiress to millions she could not marry you. As some writer says, eagles do not mate with plump Dutch ducklings. No, Henri, my boy, you must wait."

Harry frowned.

"That is a boyish piece of nonsense, unworthy the Comte des Vignes, my dear boy. But tell me—you have been with your father—what does he say now?"

"The old story. I must go to work."

"Poor George!" sighed Aunt Margaret; "always so sordid in his ideas in early life: now that he is wealthy so utterly wanting in aspirations! Always dallying over some miserable shrimp. He has no more ambition than one of those silly fish over which he sits and dreams. Oh, Henri, my boy, when I look back at what our family has been—right back into the distant ages of French history—valorous knights and noble ladies; and later on, how they graced the court at banquet and at ball, I weep the salt tears of misery to see my brother sink so low."

"Ah! well, it's of no use, aunt. I must go and turn somebody's grindstone again."

"No, Henri, it shall not be," cried the old lady, with flashing eyes. "We must think; we must plot and plan."

"If you please, ma'am, I've brought your lunch," said a voice; and Liza, the maid, who bore a strong resemblance to the fish-woman who had accosted Uncle Luke at the mouth of the harbour, set down a delicately-cooked cutlet and bit of fish, all spread on a snowy napkin, with the accompaniments of plate, glass, and a decanter of sherry.

"Ah! yes, my lunch," said Aunt Margaret, with a sigh. "Go, and think over what I have said, my dear, and we will talk again another time."

"All right, auntie," said the young man, rising slowly; "but it seems to me as if the best thing I could do would be to jump into the sea."

"No, no, Henri," said Aunt Margaret, taking up a silver spoon and shaking it slowly at her nephew, "a Des Vignes was ready with his sword in defence of his honour, and to advance his master's cause; but he never dreamed of taking his own life. That, my dear, would be the act of one of the low-born *canaille*. Remember who you are, and wait. I am working for you, and you shall triumph yet. Consult your friend."

"Sometimes I think it's all gammon," said Harry, as he went slowly down-stairs, and out into the garden, "and sometimes it seems as if it would be very jolly. I dare say the old woman is right, and——"

"What are you talking about—muttering aside like the wicked man on the stage?"

"Hullo, Vic! You there?"

"Yes, dear boy. I'm here for want of somewhere better."

"Consult your friend!" Aunt Margaret's last words.

"Been having a cigar?"

"I've been hanging about here this last

hour. How is it she hasn't been for a walk?"

"Louie? Don't know. Here, let's go down under the cliff, and have a talk over a pipe."

"The latter, if you like; never mind the former. Yes, I will: for I want a few words of a sort."

"What about?" said Harry, as they strolled away.

"Everything. Look here, old fellow; we've been the best of chums ever since you shared my desk."

"Yes, and you shared my allowance."

"Well, chums always do. Then I came down with you, and it was all as jolly as could be, and I was making way fast, in spite of that confounded red-headed porridge-eating fellow. Then came that upset, and I went away. Then you wrote to me in answer to my letter about having a good thing on, and said 'Come down.'"

"And you came," said Harry thoughtfully, "and the good thing turned out a bad thing, as every one does that I join in."

"Well, that was an accident; speculators must have some crust as well as crumb."

"But I get all crust."

"No, I seem to be getting all crust now from your people. Your aunt's right enough, but your father casts his cold shoulder and stale bread at me whenever we meet; and as for a certain lady, she regularly cut me yesterday."

"Well, I can't help that, Vic. You know what I said when you told me you were on that. I said that I couldn't do anything, and that I wouldn't do anything if I could: but that I wouldn't stand in your way if you liked to try."

"Yes, I know what you said," grumbled Pradelle, as they strolled down to the shore, went round the rocks, and then strolled on over and amongst the shingle and sand, till—a suitable spot presenting itself, about half a mile from the town—they sat down on the soft sand, tilted their hats over their eyes, leaned their backs against a huge stone, and then lit up and began to smoke.

"You see it's like this," said Pradelle; "I know I'm not much of a catch, but I like her, and that ought to make up for a great deal."

"Yes."

"She don't know her own mind, that's about it," continued Pradelle; "and a word from you might do a deal."

"Got any money, Vic?"

"Now there's a mean sort of a question to ask a friend! Have I got any money? As

if a man must be made of money before he may look at his old chum's sister."

"I wasn't thinking about her, but of something else," said Harry hastily.

"Ah, well, I wasn't; but look there!"

"What at?" said Harry, whose eyes were shut, and his thoughts far away.

"Them. They're going for a walk. Why, Hal, old chap, they saw us come down here."

Harry started into wakefulness, and realised the fact that his sister and Madelaine Van Heldre were passing before them, but down by the water's edge.

"Let's follow them," said Pradelle eagerly.

"Wait a moment."

Harry waited to think, and scraps of his aunt's remarks floated through his brain respecting the fair daughters of France, who would fall at the feet of the young count.

Harry cogitated. The daughters of France were no doubt very lovely, but they were imaginative; and though Madelaine Van Heldre might, as his aunt said, not be of the pure Huguenot blood, still that fact did not seem to matter to him. For that was not imagination before him, but the bright, natural, clever girl whom he had known from childhood, his old playfellow, who had always seemed to supply a something wanting in his mental organization, the girl who had led him and influenced his career.

"Bother Aunt Marguerite!" he said to himself, and then aloud, "Come along!"

CHAPTER VI.—HARRY VINE SPEAKS PLAINLY; SO DOES HIS FRIEND.

LOUISE and Madelaine went on down by the water's edge, in profound ignorance of the fact that they were followed at a distance of about a couple of hundred yards.

The two friends female were then in profound ignorance of the fact that they were watched, so were the two friends male.

For some time past the owner of the mine high up on the cliff had been a thoroughly energetic man of business, but after the first introduction to the Vine family his business energy seemed to receive an impetus. He was working for her, everything might be for her.

Then came Pradelle upon the scene, and the young Scot was not long in seeing that the brother's London friend was also impressed, and that his advances found favour with Harry. Whether they did with the sister he could not tell.

The consequence was that there was a good

deal of indecision on Duncan Leslie's part, some neglect of his busy mine, and a good deal of use of a double glass, which was supposed to be kept in a room, half office, half study and laboratory, for the purpose of scanning the shipping coming into port.

On the day in question the glass was being applied to a purpose rather reprehensible, perhaps, but with some excuse of helping Duncan Leslie's affair of the heart. From his window he could see the old granite-built house, and with interruptions, due to rocks and doublings and jutting pieces of cliff, a great deal of the winding and zig-zag path, half steps, which led down to the shore.

As, then, was frequently the case, the glass was directed toward the residence of the Vines, and Duncan Leslie saw Louise and Madelaine go down to the sea, stand watching the receding tide, and then go off west.

After gazing through the glass for a time he laid it down, with his heart beating faster than usual, as he debated within himself whether he should go down to the shore and follow them.

It was a hard fight, and inclination was rapidly mastering etiquette when two figures, hitherto concealed, came into view from beneath the cliff and began to follow the ladies.

Duncan Leslie's eyes flashed as he caught up the glass again, and after looking through it for a few minutes he closed it and threw it down.

"I'm making a fool of myself," he said bitterly. "Better attend to my business and think about it no more."

The desire was upon him to focus the glass again and watch what took place, but he turned away with an angry ejaculation and put the glass in its case.

"I might have known better," he said, "and it would be like playing the spy."

He strode out and went to his engine-house, forcing himself to take an interest in what was going on, and wishing the while that he had not used that glass in so reprehensible a way.

Oddly enough, just at that moment Uncle Luke was seated outside the door of his little cottage in its niche of the cliff below the mine, and wishing for this very glass.

His was a cottage of the roughest construction, which he had bought some years before of an old fisherman; and his seat—he could not afford chairs, he said—was a rough block of granite, upon which he was

very fond of sunning himself when the weather was fine.

"I've a good mind to go and ask Leslie to lend me his glass," muttered the old man. "No. He'd only begin asking favours of me. But all that ought to be stopped. Wonder whether George knows. What's Van Heldre about? As for those two girls, I'll give them such a talking to—the gipsies! Bah! it's no business of mine! I'm not going to marry."

"Yes, let's sit down," said Madelaine, turning round. "Oh!"

"What is it? sprained your ankle?"

"No. Mr. Pradelle and Harry are close by."

"Let's walk on quickly then, and go round back by the fields."

"But it will be six miles."

"Never mind if it's sixteen," said Louise, increasing her pace.

"Hallo, girls," cried Harry, and they were obliged to face round.

There was no warm look of welcome from either, but Pradelle was too much of the London man of the world to be taken aback, and he stepped forward to Louise's side, smiling.

"You have chosen a delightful morning for your walk, Miss Vine."

"Yes, but we were just going back."

"No; don't go back yet," said Harry quickly, for he had strung himself up. "Vic, old fellow, walk on with my sister. I want to have a chat with Miss Van Heldre."

The girls exchanged glances, each seeming to ask the other for counsel.

Then, in a quiet, decisive way, Madelaine spoke.

"Yes, do, Louie dear; I wanted to speak to your brother, too."

There was another quick look passing between the friends, and then Louise bowed and walked on, Pradelle giving Harry a short nod which meant, according to his judgment, "It's all right."

Louise was for keeping close to her companion, but her brother evidently intended her to have a *little-à-little* encounter with his friend, and she realised directly that Madelaine did not second her efforts. In fact the latter yielded at once to Harry's manoeuvres, and hung back with him, while Pradelle pressed forward, so that before many minutes had elapsed, the couples, as they walked west, were separated by a space of quite a couple of hundred yards.

"Now I do call that good of you, Maddy," said Harry eagerly. "You are, and you always were, a dear good little thing."

"Do you think so?" she said directly, and her pleasant bright face was now very grave.

"Do I think so! You know I do. There, I want a good talk with you, dear. It's time I spoke plainly, and that we fully understood one another."

"I thought we did, Harry."

"Well, yes, of course, but I want to be more plain. We're no boy and girl now."

"No, Harry, we have grown up to be man and woman."

"Yes, and ever since we were boy and girl, Maddy, I've loved you very dearly."

Madeline turned her clear searching eyes upon him in the most calm and untroubled way.

"Yes, Harry, you have always seemed to."

"And you have always cared for me very much?"

"Yes, Harry. Always."

"Well, don't say it in such a cold, serious way, dear."

"But it is a matter upon which one is bound to be cool and very serious."

"Well, yes, of course. I don't know that people are any the better for showing a lot of gush."

"No, Harry, it is not so deep as the liking which is calm and cool and enduring."

"I s'pose not," said the young man very disconcertedly. "But don't be quite so cool. I know you too well to think you would play with me."

"I hope I shall always be very sincere, Harry."

"Of course you will. I know you will. We began by being playmates—almost like brother and sister."

"Yes, Harry."

"But I always felt as I grew older that I should some day ask you to be my darling little wife; and, come now, you always thought so too?"

"Yes, Harry, I always thought so too."

"Ah, that's right, dear," said the young man, flushing. "You always were the dearest and most honest and plain-spoken girl I ever met."

"I try to be."

"Of course; and look yonder, there's old Pradelle, the dearest and best friend a fellow ever had, talking to Louie as I'm talking to you."

"Yes, I'm afraid he is."

"Afraid? Oh, come now, don't be prejudiced. I want you to like Victor."

"That would be impossible."

"Impossible! What, the man who will most likely be Louie's husband?"

"Mr. Pradelle will never be Louie's husband."

"What! Why, how do you know?"

"Because I know your sister's heart too well."

"And you don't like Pradelle?"

"No, Harry; and I'm sorry you ever chose him for a companion."

"Oh, come, dear, that's prejudice and a bit of jealousy. Well, never mind about that now. I want to talk about ourselves."

"Yes, Harry."

"I want you to promise to be my little wife. I'm four-and-twenty, and you are nearly twenty, so it's quite time to talk about it."

Madeline shook her head.

"Oh, come!" he said merrily, "no girl's coyness: we are too old friends for that, and understand one another too well. Come, dear, when is it to be?"

She turned and looked in the handsome flushed face beside her, and then said in the most cool and matter-of-fact way:

"It is too soon to talk like that, Harry."

"Too soon? Not a bit of it. You have told me that you will be my wife."

"Some day; perhaps."

"Oh, nonsense, dear! I've been thinking this all over well. You see, Maddy, you've let my not sticking to business trouble you."

"Yes, Harry, very much."

"Well, I'm very sorry, dear; and I suppose I have been a bit to blame, but I've been doing distasteful work, and I've been like a boat swinging about without an anchor. I want you to be my anchor to hold me fast. I've wanted something to steady me—something to work for; and if I've got you for a wife I shall be a different man directly."

Madeline sighed.

"Aunt Marguerite won't like it, because she is not very fond of you."

"No," said Madeline, "she does not like fat Dutch frauleins—Dutch dolls."

"Get out! What stuff! She's a prejudiced old woman full of fads. She never did like you."

"Never, Harry."

"Well, that doesn't matter a bit."

"No. That does not matter a bit."

"You see I've had no end of thinks about all this, and it seems to me that if we're married at once, it will settle all the worries and bothers I've had lately. The governor wants me to go to business again; but

what's the use of that? He's rich, and so is your father, and they can easily supply us with all that we should want, and then we shall be as happy as can be. Of course I shall work at something. I don't believe in a fellow with nothing to do. You don't either?"

"No, Harry."

"Of course not, but all that toiling and moiling for the sake of money is a mistake. Never mind what Aunt Marguerite says. I'll soon work her round, and of course I can do what I like with the governor. He's so fond of you that he'll be delighted, and he knows it will do me good. So now there's nothing to do but for me to go and see your father and ask his consent. I did think of letting you coax him round: but that would be cowardly, wouldn't it?"

"Yes, Harry, very cowardly, and lower you very much in my eyes."

"Of course: but, I say, don't be so serious. Well, it's a bitter pill to swallow, for your governor will be down on me tremendously. I'll face him, though. I'll talk about our love and all that sort of thing, and it will be all right. I'll go to him to-day."

"No, Harry," said Madelaine, looking him full in the face, "don't do that."

"Why?"

"Because it would expose you to a very severe rebuff."

"Will you speak to him then? No: I'll do it."

"No. If you did my father would immediately speak to me, and I should have to tell him what I am going to tell you."

"Well? Out with it."

"Do you suppose," said Madelaine, once more turning her clear frank eyes upon the young man, and speaking with a quiet decision that startled him; "do you suppose I could be so wanting in duty to those at home, so wanting in love to you, Harry, that I could consent to a marriage which would only mean fixing you permanently in your present thoughtless ways?"

"Madelaine!"

"Let me finish, Harry, and tell you what has been on my lips for months past. I am younger by several years than you, but do you think I am so wanting in worldly experience that I am blind to your reckless folly, or the pain you are giving father and sister by your acts?"

"Why, Maddy," he cried, in a voice full of vexation, which belied the mocking laugh upon his lips, "I didn't think you could preach like that."

"It is time to preach, Harry, when I see you so lost to self-respect, and find that you are ready to place yourself and the girl you wish to call wife, in a dependent position, instead of proudly and manfully making yourself your own master."

"Well, this is pleasant! Am I to understand that you throw me over?"

"No, Harry," said Madelaine sadly, "you are to understand that I care for you too much to encourage you in a weak folly."

"A weak folly—to ask you what you have always expected I should ask!"

"Yes, to ask it at such a time when, after being placed in post after post by my father's help, and losing them one by one by your folly, you——"

"Oh, come, that will do," cried the young man angrily; "if it's to be like this it's a good job that we came to an explanation at once. So this is gentle, amiable, sweet-tempered Madelaine, eh! Hallo! You?"

He turned sharply. Louise and Pradelle had come over a stretch of sand with their footsteps inaudible.

"It is quite time we returned, Madelaine," said Louise gravely; and without another word the two girls walked away.

"Pon my word," cried Harry with a laugh, "things are improving. Well, Vic, how did you get on?"

"How did I get on indeed!" cried Pradelle angrily. "Look here, Harry Vine, are you playing square with me?"

"What do you mean?"

"What I say: are you honest, or have you been setting her against me?"

"Why you——no, I won't quarrel," cried Harry. "What did she say to you?"

"Say to me? I was never so snubbed in my life. Her ladyship doesn't know me if she thinks I'm going to give up like that."

"There, that'll do, Vic. No threats, please."

"Oh, no; I'm not going to threaten. I can wait."

"Yes," said Harry, thoughtfully; "we chose the wrong time. We mustn't give up, Vic; we shall have to wait."

And they went back to their old nook beneath the cliff to smoke their pipes, while as the thin blue vapour arose Harry's hot anger grew cool, and he began to think of his aunt's words, of Comte Henri des Vignes, and of the fair daughters of France—a reverie from which he was aroused by his companion, as he said suddenly—

"I say, Harry lad, I want you to lend me a little coin."

CHAPTER VII.—CHEZ VAN HELDRE.

THE two friends parted at the gate, Madelaine refusing to go in.

"No," she said; "they will be expecting me at home."

"Maddy dear, ought we not to confide in each other?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Madelaine, with a sigh of relief that the constraint was over. "Yes, dear. Did Mr. Pradelle propose to you?"

"Yes."

"And you told him it was impossible?"

"Yes. What did my brother want to say?"

"That we ought to be married now, and it would make him a better man."

"And you told him it was impossible?"

"Yes."

There was another sigh as if of relief on both sides, and the two girls kissed again and parted.

It was a brisk quarter of an hour's walk to the Van Heldre's, which lay at the end of the main street up the valley down which the little river ran; and on entering the door, with a longing upon her to go at once to her room and sit down and cry, Madelaine uttered a sigh full of misery, for she saw that it was impossible.

As she approached the great stone porch leading into the broad hall, which was one of the most attractive-looking places in the house, filled as it was with curiosities and other objects brought by the various captains from the Mediterranean, and embracing cabinets from Constantinople with rugs and pipes, little terra-cotta figures from Sardinia, and pictures and pieces of statuary from Rome, Naples, and Trieste—she was saluted with—

"Ah, my dear, I'm so glad you've come back. Where's papa?"

"I have not seen him, mamma."

"Busy, I suppose. How he does work!" Then suddenly, "By the way, that Mr. Pradelle. I don't like him, my dear."

"Neither do I, mamma."

"That's right, my dear; I'm very glad to hear you say so; but surely Louie Vine is not going to be beguiled by him?"

"Oh no."

"Ah, that's all very well; but Luke Vine came in as he went by, to say in his sneering fashion that Louie and Mr. Pradelle were down on the shore, and that you were walking some distance behind with Harry."

"Mr. Luke Vine seems to have plenty of time for watching his neighbours," said Madelaine contemptuously.

"Yes; he is always noticing things; but don't blame him, dear. I'm sure he means well, and I can forgive him anything for that. Here's your father."

"Ah! my dears," said Van Heldre cheerily. "Tired out."

"You must be," said Mrs. Van Heldre, bustling about him to take his hat and gloves.

"Here, do come and sit down."

The merchant went into the drawing-room very readily, and submitted to several little pleasant attentions from wife and daughter.

Evening came on with Van Heldre seated in his easy-chair, thoughtfully watching wife and daughter, both of whom had work in their laps; but Mrs. Van Heldre's was all a pretence, for, after a few stitches, her head began to nod forward, then back against the cushion, and then, as if by magic, she was fast asleep.

Madelaine's needle, however, flew fast, and she went on working, with her father watching her attentively, till she raised her eyes.

"You want to say something to me, Maddy," he said in a low voice.

"Yes, papa."

"About your walk down on the beach?"

Madelaine nodded.

"You know I went."

"Yes; I saw you, and Luke Vine came and told me as well."

"It was very kind of him," said Madelaine, with a touch of sarcasm in her voice.

"Kind and unkind, my dear. You see he has no business—nothing to do but to think of other people. But he means well, my dear, and he likes you."

"I have often thought so."

"Yes; and you were right. He warned me that I was not to let your intimacy grow closer with his nephew."

"Indeed, papa!"

"Yes, my dear. He said that I was a—well, I will not tell you what, for not stopping it directly, for that Harry was rapidly drifting into a bad course—that it was a hopeless case."

"That is not the way to redeem him, father."

"No, my dear, it is not. But you were going to say something to me?"

"Yes," said Madelaine, hesitating. Then putting down her work she rose and went to her father's side, knelt down, and resting her arms upon his knees, looked straight up in his face.

"Well, Maddy?"

"I wanted to speak to you about Harry."

There was a slight twitching about the merchant's brows, but his face was calm directly, and he said coolly—

"What about Harry Vine?"

Madelaine hesitated for a few moments, and then spoke out firmly and bravely.

"I have been thinking about his position, father, and of how sad it is for him to be wasting his days as he is down here."

"Very sad, Maddy. He is, as Luke Vine says, going wrong. Well?"

"I have been thinking, papa, that you might take him into your office and give him a chance of redeeming the past."

"Nice suggestion, my dear. What would old Crampton say?"

"Mr. Crampton could only say that you had done a very kind act for the son of your old friend."

"Humph! Well?"

"You could easily arrange to take him, papa, and with your firm hand over him it would do an immense deal of good."

"Not to me."

There was a pause, and Van Heldre gazed into his child's unblenching eyes.

"So we are coming at facts," he said at last. "Harry asked you to interfere on his behalf?"

Madelaine shook her head and smiled.

"Is this your own idea?"

"Entirely."

"Then what was the meaning of the walk on the beach to-day?"

"Harry sought for it, and said that we had been playfellows from children, that he loved me very dearly, and he asked me to be his wife."

"The——"

Van Heldre checked himself.

"And what did you say?"

"That it was impossible."

"Then you do not care for him?"

Madelaine was silent.

"Then you do not care for him?"

"I'm afraid I care for him very much indeed," said Madelaine firmly.

"Let me thoroughly understand you, my darling. You love George Vine's son—your old friend's brother?"

"Yes, father," said Madelaine, in a voice little above a whisper.

"And he has asked you to be his wife?"

"Yes."

"Tell me what answer you gave him."

"That I would never marry a man so wanting in self-respect."

"Hah!"

"He said that our parents were rich, that

there was no need for him to toil as he had done, but that if I consented it would give him an impetus to work."

"And you declined conditionally?"

"I declined absolutely, father."

"And yet you love him?"

"I'm afraid I love him very dearly."

"You are a strange girl, Madelaine."

"Yes, father."

"Do you know what it means for me to take this fellow into my office?"

"Much trouble and care."

"Yes. Then why should I?"

"Because, as you have so often taught me, we cannot live for ourselves alone. Because he is the son of your very old friend."

"Yes," said Van Heldre softly.

"Because it might save him from a downward course now that there is, I believe, a crisis in his life."

"And because you love him, Maddy?"

She answered with a look.

"And if I were so insane, so quixotic, as to do all this, what guarantee have I that he would not gradually lead you to think differently—to consent to be his wife before he had redeemed his character?"

"The trust you have in me."

"Hah!" ejaculated Van Heldre again. And there was another long silence.

"I feel that I must plead for him, father. You could influence him so much."

"I'm afraid not, my child. If he has not the manliness to do what is right for your sake, anything I could do or say would not be of much avail."

"You underrate your power, father," said Madelaine, with a look full of pride in him.

"And if I did this I might have absolute confidence that matters should go no farther until he had completely changed?"

"You know you might."

"Hah!" sighed Van Heldre.

"You will think this over, father?"

"There is no need, my dear."

"No need?"

"No, my child. I have for some days past been thinking over this very thing, just in the light in which you placed it."

"You have?"

"Yes, and I had a long talk with George Vine this afternoon respecting his son."

"Oh, father!"

"I told him I could see that the trouble was growing bigger and telling upon him, and proposed that I should take Harry here."

Madelaine had started to her feet.

"Presuming that he does not refuse after

his father has made my proposals known, Harry Vine comes here daily to work."

Madelaine's arms were round her father's neck.

"You have made me feel very happy and satisfied, my dear, and may heaven speed what is going to be a very arduous task."

Just then Mrs. Van Heldre raised her head and looked round.

"Bless my heart!" she exclaimed. "I do believe I have nearly been to sleep."

CHAPTER VIII.—UNCLE LUKE SPEAKS HIS MIND.

"HALLO, Scotchman!"

"Hallo, Eng—I mean, French—What am I to call you, Mr. Luke Vine?"

"Englishman, of course."

Uncle Luke was seated, in a very shabby-looking grey tweed Norfolk jacket made long, a garment which suited his tastes, from its being an easy comfortable article of attire. He had on an old Panama hat, a good deal stained, and had a thick stick armed with a strong iron point useful for walking among the rocks; and upon this staff he rested as he sat outside his cottage door watching the sea and pondering as to the probability of a shoal of fish being off the point.

His home with its tiny scrap of rough walled-in garden, which grew nothing but sea holly and tamarisk, was desolate-looking in the extreme, but the view therefrom of the half-natural pier sheltering the vessels in the harbour of the twin town was glorious.

He had had his breakfast and taken his seat out in the sunshine, when he became aware of the fact that Duncan Leslie was coming down from the mine buildings above, and he hailed him with a snarl and the above words.

"Glorious morning."

"Humph! Yes, but what's that got to do with you?"

"Everything. Do you suppose I don't like fine weather?"

"I thought you didn't care for anything but money grubbing."

"Then you were mistaken, because I do."

"Nonsense! You think of nothing but copper, spoiling the face of nature with the broken rubbish your men dig out of the bowels of the earth, poisoning the air with the fumes of those abominable furnaces. Look at that!"

The old man raised his stick and made a vicious dig with it in the direction of the mine.

"Look at what?"

"That shaft. Looks like some huge worm that your men disturbed down below, and sent it crawling along the hill slope till it could rear its abominable head in the air and look which way to go to be at rest."

"It was there when I took the mine, and it answers its purpose."

"Bah! What purpose? To make money?"

"Yes; to make money. Very useful thing, Mr. Luke."

"Rubbish! You're as bad as Van Heldre with his ships and his smelting works. Money! Money! Money! Always money, morning, noon, and night. One constant hunt for the accursed stuff. Look at me!"

"I was looking at you, old fellow; and studying you."

"Humph! Waste of time, unless you follow my example."

"Then it will be waste of time, sir, for I certainly shall not follow your example."

"Why not, boy? Look at me. I have no troubles. I pay no rent. My wants are few. I am nearly independent of tradespeople and tax men. I've no slatternly wife to worry me, no young children to be always tumbling down the rocks or catching the measles. I'm free of all these troubles and I'm a happy man."

"Well, then, your appearance belies you, sir, for you do not look it," said Leslie, laughing.

"Never you mind my appearance," said Uncle Luke sharply. "I am happy; at least, I should be, if you'd do away with that great smoky chimney and stop those rattling stamps."

"Then I'm afraid that I cannot oblige you, neighbour."

"Humph! Neighbour!"

"I fancy that an unbiassed person would blame you and not me."

"Of course he would."

"He'd say if a man chooses to turn himself into a sort of modern Diogenes—"

"Diogenes be hanged, sir! All a myth. I don't believe there ever was such a body. And look here, Leslie, I imitate no man—no myth. I prefer to live this way for my own satisfaction, and I shall."

"And welcome for me, old fellow; only don't scold me for living my way."

"Not going to. Here, stop! I want to talk to you. How's copper?"

"Up a good deal, but you don't want to know."

"Of course I don't. But look here. What do you think of my nephew?"

"Tall, good-looking young fellow."



"UNCLE LUKE SPEAKS HIS MIND."

"Humph! What's the good of that? You know all about him, of course?"

"I should prefer not to sit in judgment on the gentleman in question."

"So I suppose. Nice boy, though, isn't he?"

Leslie was silent.

"I say he's a nice boy; isn't he?" cried the old man, raising his voice.

"I heard what you said. He is your nephew."

"Worse luck! How is he getting on at Van Heldre's?"

"I have not the least idea, sir."

"More have I. They won't tell me. How about that friend of his? What do you think of him?"

"Really, Mr. Vine," said Leslie laughing, "I do not set up as a judge of young men's character. It is nothing to me."

"Yes, it is. Do you suppose I'm blind? Do you suppose I can't tell which way the wind blows? If I were young, do you know what I should do?"

"Do away with the chimney-shaft and the stamps," said Leslie laughing.

"No; I should just get hold of that fellow some night, and walk him to where the coach starts."

Leslie's face looked warm.

"And then I should say, 'Jump up, and when you get to the station, book for London; and if ever you show your face in Hakemouth again I'll break your neck.'"

"You must excuse me, Mr. Luke; I'm busy this morning," said Leslie; and he began to descend the steep path.

"Touched him on the tender place," said Uncle Luke, with a chuckle. "Humph! wonder whether Louie will come and see me to-day."

Duncan Leslie went on down the zig-zag cliff-path leading from the Wheal Germain's copper mine to the town. It was a picturesque way, with a fresh view at every turn west and east; and an advanced member of the town board had proposed and carried the suggestion of placing rough granite seats here and there in the best parts for resting those who climbed, and for giving others attractive places for sunning themselves and looking out to sea.

About half-way down Leslie passed an invalid, who had taken possession of a seat, and was gazing right away south, and dreaming of lands where the sun always shone—wondering whether the bright maiden Health could be found there.

Lower still Leslie was going on thoughtfully, pondering on Uncle Luke's hints, when the blood suddenly flushed into his cheeks, his heart began to beat rapidly, and he increased his pace. For there unmistakably were two ladies going down the zig-zag, and there were no two others in Hakemouth could be mistaken for them.

He hurried on to overtake them. Then he checked himself.

"Where had they been?"

His sinking heart suggested that they had been on their way to visit Uncle Luke, but that they had caught sight of him, and in consequence returned.

His brow grew gloomy, and he walked slowly on, when the blood flushed to his cheeks again, as if he had been surprised in some guilty act, for a sharp voice said—

"No, Mr. Leslie; you would not be able to overtake them now."

He stopped short, and turned to the warm sheltered nook among the rocks where Aunt Margaret was seated; her grey lavender dress was carefully spread about her, her white hair turned back beneath a black velvet satin-lined hood, and a lace fichu pinned across her breast.

"You here, Miss Vine?"

"Yes; and I thought I would save you a thankless effort. You could not overtake the girls unless you ran."

"I was not going to try and overtake them, Miss Vine," said Leslie coldly.

"Indeed! I beg your pardon; I thought you were. But would you mind, Mr. Leslie—it is a very trifling request, but I set store by these little relics of our early history—Miss *Marguerite* Vine, if you would be so kind?"

Leslie bowed. "Certainly, Miss *Marguerite*," he said quietly.

"Thank you," she said, detaining him. "It is very good of you. Of course you are surprised to see me up here?"

"Oh no," said Leslie quietly. "It is a delightful place to sit and rest and read."

"Ye—es; but I cannot say that I care much for the rough walking of this part of the world, and my brother seems somehow to have taken quite a dislike to the idea of having a carriage?"

"Yes?"

"So I am obliged to walk when I do come out. There are certain duties one is forced to attend to. For instance, there is my poor brother up yonder. I feel bound to see him from time to time. You see him frequently, of course?"

"Every day, necessarily. We are so near."

"Poor fellow! yes. Very eccentric and peculiar; but you need be under no apprehension, Mr. Leslie. He is quite harmless, I am sure."

"Oh, quite harmless, Miss Marguerite. Merely original."

"It is very good of you to call it originality; but as friends, Mr. Leslie, there is no harm in our alluding to his poor brain. Softening, a medical man told me."

"Hardening, I should say," thought Leslie.

"Very peculiar! very peculiar! Father and uncle both so different from my dear nephew. He is in very bad spirits. Ah! Mr. Leslie, I shall be very glad to see him once more as a Des Vignes should be. With him placed in the position that should be his, and that engagement carried out regarding my darling Louise's future, I could leave this world of sorrow without a sigh."

Leslie winced, but it was not perceptible to Aunt Marguerite, who, feeling dissatisfied with the result of her shot, fired again.

"Of course it would involve losing my darling; but at my time of life, Mr. Leslie, one has learned that it is one's duty always to study self-sacrifice. The Des Vignes were always a self-sacrificing family. When it was not for some one or other of their kindred it was for their king, and then for their faith. You know our old French motto, Mr. Leslie?"

"I? No. I beg pardon."

"Really? I should have thought that you could not fail to see that. It is almost the only trace of our former greatness that my misguided brother——"

"Were you alluding to Mr. Luke Vine?"

"No, no, no, no! To my brother, George Des Vignes. Surely, Mr. Leslie, you must have noted our arms upon the dining-room windows."

"Oh, yes, of course, of course; and the motto, *Roy et Foy*."

"Exactly," said Aunt Marguerite, smiling. "I thought it must have caught your eye."

Something else was catching Duncan Leslie's eye just then—the last flutter of the scarf Louise wore before it disappeared round the foot of the cliff.

"I shall bear it, I daresay, and with fortitude, Mr. Leslie, for it will be a grand position that she will take. The De Lignys are a family almost as old as our own; and fate might arrange for me to visit them and make a long stay. She's a sweet girl, is she not, Mr. Leslie?"

"Miss Vine? Yes; you must be very proud of her," said the young man, without moving a muscle.

"We are; we are indeed, Mr. Leslie; but I am afraid I am detaining you."

"It is curious," said Leslie, as he walked slowly down the cliff-path. "De Ligny, De Ligny? Who is De Ligny? Well," he added with a sigh, "I ought to thank Heaven that the name is not Pradelle."

CHAPTER IX.—IN OFFICE HOURS.

"Now, my dear Mr. Crampton, believe me, I am only actuated by a desire to do good."

"That's exactly what actuates me, sir, when I make bold, after forty years' service with you and your father, to tell you that you have made a great mistake."

"All men make mistakes, Crampton," said Van Heldre, to his plump, grey, stern-looking head clerk.

"Yes, sir, but if they are then worth their salt they see where they have made a mistake, and try and correct it. We did not want him."

"As far as actual work to be done, no; but I will tell you plainly why I took on the young man. I wish to help my old friend in a peculiarly troubled period of his life."

"That's you all over, Mr. Van Heldre," said the old clerk, pinching his very red nose, and then arranging his thin hair with a pen-holder, "but I can't feel that it's right. You see, the young man don't take to his work. He comes and goes in a supercilious manner, and treats me as if I were his servant."

"Oh, that will soon pass off, Crampton."

"I hope so, Mr. Van Heldre, sir, but his writing's as bad as a schoolboy's."

"That will improve."

"He's always late of a morning."

"I'll ask him to correct that."

"And he's always doing what I hate in a young man, seeing how short is life, sir, and how soon we're gone—he's always looking at the clock and yawning."

"Never mind, Crampton, he'll soon give up all that sort of thing. The young man is like an ill-trained tree. He has grown rather wild, but now he has been transplanted to an orderly office, to be under your constant supervision, he will gradually imbibe your habits and precision. It will be his making."

"Now, now, now," said the old clerk, shaking his head, "that's flattering, sir. My habits and precision. No, no, sir; I'm a very

bad clerk, and I'm growing old as fast as I can."

"You are the best clerk in the west of England, Crampton, and you are only growing old at the customary rate. And now to oblige me look over these little blemishes in the young man's character. There is a good deal of the spoiled boy in him, but I believe his heart's right; and for more reasons than one I want him to develop into a good man of business—such a one as we can make of him if we try."

"Don't say another word, Mr. Van Heldre. You know me, and if I say as long as the young man is honest and straightforward I'll do my best for him, I suppose that's sufficient."

"More than sufficient, Crampton."

"But you know, sir, he ought to have made some little advance in a month."

"No, no, Crampton," said Van Heldre, smiling, "he has not grown used to the new suit yet; have patience, and he'll come right."

"That's enough, sir," said Crampton, climbing on to a high stool in front of a well-polished desk, "now for business. The *St. Aubyn* has taken in all her cargo, and will sail to-morrow. We ought soon to have news of the *Madelaine*. By the way, I hope Miss Madelaine's quite well, sir. Haven't seen her for a day and a half."

"Quite well, Crampton."

"That's right, sir," said the old man, smiling and rubbing his hands. "Bless her! I've only one thing against her. Why wasn't she a boy?"

Van Heldre smiled at his old confidential man, who still rubbed his hands softly, and gazed over his silver-rimmed spectacles at a file of bills of lading hanging from the wall.

"What a boy she would have made, and what a man I could have made of him! Van Heldre and Son once more, as it ought to be. I'd have made just such a man of business of him as I made of you. Going, sir?"

"Yes, I'm going up to Tolzarn. By the way, send Mr. Henry Vine up to me about twelve."

"Yes, sir," said Crampton, beginning to write away very busily. "I suppose he'll come?"

"Of course, of course," said Van Heldre hastily, and leaving the office he went into the morning-room, where Madelaine was busy with her needle.

She looked at him in an inquiring way, to which he had become accustomed during the

past month, and in accordance with an unwritten contract.

"No, my dear, not come yet."

Madelaine's countenance changed as she saw her father glance at his watch, and she involuntarily darted a quick look at the clock on the chimney-piece.

"I'm going up to the works," continued Van Heldre. "Back before one. Morning."

Madelaine resumed her work for a few minutes, and then rose to stand where, unseen, she could watch the road. She saw her father go by up the valley, but her attention was turned toward the sea, from which direction Harry Vine would have to come.

She stood watching for nearly a quarter of an hour before she heard a familiar step, and then the young man passed smoking the end of a cigar, which he threw away before turning in at the way which led to Van Heldre's offices.

Directly after, as Madelaine sat looking very thoughtful over her work, there was the quick patter of Mrs. Van Heldre's feet.

"Madelaine, my dear," she said as she entered; "I thought you said that Mr. Pradelle had gone away a fortnight ago."

"I did, mamma."

"Well, then, he has come back again."

"Back again?"

"Yes, I was at the up-stairs window just now and I saw him pass as I was looking out for Harry Vine. He's very late this morning, and it does make papa so vexed."

It was late, for instead of being nine o'clock, the clock in the office was on the stroke of ten as Harry Vine hurriedly entered, and glanced at the yellowy-white faced dial.

"Morning, Mr. Crampton. I say that clock's fast, isn't it?"

"Eh? fast?" said the old man grimly. "No, Mr. Harry Vine; that's a steady old time-keeper, not a modern young man."

"Disagreeable old hunks," said Harry to himself, as he hung up his hat. "Bad headache this morning, Mr. Crampton, thought I shouldn't be able to come."

"Seidlitz powder," said the old man, scratching away with his pen.

"Eh?"

"Dissolve the blue in a tumbler of warm water."

"Bother!" muttered Harry, frowning.

"The white in a wineglassful of cold. Pour one into the other—and—drink—while effervescing."

The intervals between some of the words were filled up by scratches of the pen.

"Headache, eh? Bad things, sir, bad things."

He removed himself from his stool and went to the safe in the inner office, where Van Heldre generally sat, and Harry raised his head from his desk and listened, as he heard the rattling of keys and the clang of a small iron door.

"Yes, bad things headaches, Mr. Harry," said the old man returning. "Try early hours for 'em, and look here: Mr. Van Heldre says——"

"Has he been in the office this morning?"

"Yes, sir, he came in as soon as I'd come, nine to the minute, and he wants you to join him at the tin works about twelve."

"Wigging!" said guilty conscience.

"Do your head good, sir."

Old Crampton resumed his seat, and for an hour and three quarters, during which period Harry had several times looked at the clock and yawned, there was a constant scratching of pens.

Then Harry Vine descended from his stool.

"I'd better go now?"

"Yes, sir, you'd better go now. And might have gone before for all the good you've done," grumbled the old man, as Harry passed the window.

The old man had hardly spent another half-hour over his work when there was a sharp tapping at the door, such as might be given by the knob on a stick.

"Come in."

The door was opened, and Pradelle entered and gave a sharp look round.

"Morning," he said in a cavalier way. "Tell Mr. Vine I want to speak to him for a moment."

Old Crampton looked up from his writing, and fixed his eyes on the visitor's hat.

"Not at home," he said shortly.

"How long will he be?"

"Don't know."

"Where has he gone?"

"Tin works."

"Confounded old bear!" muttered Pradelle as he went out, after frowning severely at the old clerk, who did not see it.

"Idle young puppy!" grumbled Crampton, dotting an *i* so fiercely that he drove his pen through the paper. "I'd have knocked his hat off if I had had my ruler handy."

Van Heldre was busy at work with a shovel when Harry Vine reached the tin-smelting works, which the merchant had added to his other ventures. He was be-

side a heap of what rather resembled wet coarsely ground coffee.

"Ah, Harry," he said, "you may as well learn all these things. Be useful some day. Take hold of that shovel and turn that over."

A strong mind generally acts upon one that is weak, and it was so here.

Harry felt disposed, as he looked at his white hands, the shovel, and the heap, to thrust the said white hands into his pockets and walk away.

But he took the shovel and plunged it in the heap, lifted it full, and then with a look of disgust said—

"What am I to do with it?"

"Shovel it away and get more out of the centre."

Harry obeyed, and looked up.

"Now take a couple of handfuls and examine them. Don't be afraid, man, it's honest dirt."

Van Heldre set the example, took a handful and poured it from left to right and back.

"Now," he said, "take notice: that's badly washed."

"Not soap enough," said Harry, hiding his annoyance with an attempt at being facetious.

"Not exactly," said Van Heldre drily; "bad work. Now when that tin is passed through the furnace there'll be twice as much slag and refuse as there ought to be. That will do. Leave the shovel, I want you to take account of those slabs of tin. Mark them, number them, and enter them in this book. It will take you an hour. Then bring the account down to me at the office."

"I can have a man to move the slabs?"

"No: they are all busy. If I were doing it, I should work without a man."

"Hang it all! I'm about sick of this," said Harry. "How mad Aunt Marguerite would be if she could see me now!"

He looked round at the low dirty sheds on one side, at the row of furnaces on the other, two of which emitted a steady roar as the tin within gradually turned from a brown granulated powder to a golden fluid, whose stony scum was floating on the top.

"It's enough to make any man kick against his fate. Nice occupation for a gentleman, 'pon my word!"

A low whistle made him look up.

"Why, Vic," he cried; "I thought you were in town."

"How are you, my Trojan?" cried the visitor boisterously. "I was in town, but I've come back. I say, cheerful work this for Monsieur le Comte Henri des Vignes!"

"Don't chaff a fellow," said Harry angrily. "What brought you down?"

"Two things."

"Now, look here, Vic. Don't say any more about that. Perhaps after a time I may get her to think differently, but now——"

"I was not going to say anything about your sister, my dear boy. I can wait and bear anything. But I suppose I may say something about you?"

"About me?"

"Yes. I've got a splendid thing on. Safe to make money—heaps of it."

"Yes; but your schemes always want money first."

"Well, hang it all, lad! you can't expect a crop of potatoes without planting a few bits first. It wouldn't want much. Only about fifty pounds. A hundred would be better, but we could make fifty do."

Harry shook his head.

"Come, come; you haven't heard half yet. I've the genuine information. It would be worth a pile of money. It's our chance now—such a chance as may never occur again."

"No, no; don't tempt me, Vic," said Harry, after a long whispered conversation.

"Tempt? I feel disposed to force you, lad. It makes me half wild to see you degraded to such work as this. Why, if we do as I propose you will be in a position to follow out your aunt's instructions, engage lawyers to push on your case, and while you obtain your rights, I shall be in a position to ask your sister's hand without the chance of a refusal. I tell you the thing's safe."

"No, no," said Harry, shaking his head; "it's too risky. We should lose and be worse off than ever."

"With a horse like that, and me with safe private information about him!"

"No," said Harry, "I won't. I'm going to keep steadily on here, and, as the governor calls it, plod."

"That you're not, if I know it," cried Pradelle indignantly. "I won't stand it. It's disgraceful. You shan't throw yourself away."

"But I've got no money, old fellow."

"Nonsense! Get some of the old man."

"No; I've done it too often. He won't stand it now."

"Well, of your aunt."

"She hasn't a penny but what my father lets her have."

"Your sister. Come, she would let you have some."

Harry shook his head.

"No, I'm not going to ask her. It's no good, Vic; I won't."

"Well," said Pradelle, apostrophising an ingot of tin as it lay at his feet glistening with iridescent hues, "if any one had told me, I wouldn't have believed it. Why, Harry, lad, you've only been a month at this mill-horse life, and you're quite changed. What have they been doing to you, man?"

"Breaking my spirit, I suppose they'd call it," said the young man bitterly.

Harry shook his head.

"Get out! I won't have it. You want waking up," said Pradelle in a low earnest voice. "Think, lad, a few pounds placed as I could place 'em, and there's fortune for us both, without reckoning on what you could do in France. As your aunt says, there's money and a title waiting for you if you'll only stretch out your hand to take 'em. Come: rouse yourself. Harry Vine isn't the lad to settle down to this drudgery. Why I thought it was one of the workmen when I came up."

"It's of no use," said Harry gloomily as he seated himself on the ingots of tin. "A man must submit to his fate."

"Bah! a man's fate is what he makes it. Look here; fifty or a hundred borrowed for a few days, and then repaid."

"But suppose——"

"Suppose!" cried Pradelle mockingly; "a business man has no time to suppose. He strikes while the iron's hot. You're going to strike iron, not tin."

"How? Where's the money?"

"Where's the money?" said Pradelle mockingly. "You want fifty or a hundred for a few days, when you could return it fifty times over; and you say, where's the money?"

"Don't I tell you I have no one I could borrow from?" said Harry angrily.

"Yes, you have," said Pradelle, sinking his voice. "It's easy as easy. Only for a few days: A temporary loan. Look here."

He bent down, and whispered a few words in the young man's ear, words which turned him crimson, and then deadly pale.

"Pradelle!" he cried, in a hoarse whisper; "are you mad?"

"No. I was thinking of coming over to Auvergne to spend a month with my friend, the Count. By-and-by, dear lad—by-and-by."

"No, no; it is impossible," said Harry hoarsely, and he gave a hasty glance round. "I couldn't do that."

"You could," said Pradelle, and then to himself; "and, if I know you, Harry Vine, you shall."

THE PARTING HYMN.

Short Sunday Readings for February.

By HENRY ALLON, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Exodus xii. ; Matt. xxvi. 17—35.

"And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives."

THIS is but a passing record—a mere connecting link in the thrilling narrative of our Lord's Passion; and yet how full of significance it is. Every word, every act of the Divine Lord is in harmony with His lofty character, His solemn purpose; not a single false or incongruous note is struck. How much this transient glimpse reveals of the soul of the Redeemer under the solemn circumstances of that Passover night—the "night in which He was betrayed!" It is the solitary record of Christ's joining in an act of social worship. He could not kneel down to pray with His disciples; He could join them in praise. His quiet converse with them, passing into great spiritual discourse, and culminating in His great intercessory prayer, was fitly ended by the singing together of a hymn—that divinest and most inspiring of all our acts of devotion, in which more than in anything else we stand face to face with God in the brotherhood of spiritual life and sonship; and which alone will be perpetuated in the perfect life of heaven—where all cries of our poor sinful necessities shall be hushed, all the tears of our pleading sorrow shall be wiped away—and which shall evermore ascend to God, a great and rapturous song of praise—"The song of Moses and the Lamb."

Is it not strange that our modern congregational worship song should virtually date only from the Reformation? that little more than a century ago pious Protestants should refuse to sing hymns in their worship, and godly ministers like Keach, the author of the "Metaphors," should for twenty-eight years have endeavoured in vain to induce his congregation to sing; the controversy ending only by the non-singing part of the congregation retiring while the rest remained to sing a hymn?

Christ sang this hymn at the close of the Lord's Supper, which followed the Passover. He associated it, therefore, with the most solemn and affecting of Christian ordinances. When we "do this in remembrance of Him," we join in a pious hymn of Christian thankfulness and love. If we were to sing the great Hallel or Passover Psalms—say, the 113th, or any of the four following Psalms—

we should sing the very words that Christ sang before He arose to go to the Mount of Olives, and should associate the Passover thanksgiving with His death. Such an association is very suggestive and touching.

Before, however, we speak of the feelings and associations of this parting hymn, let us note our Lord's scrupulous conformity to the worship and ritual of the Jewish feasts; some of the most interesting lessons that we shall deduce come out of this.

If at your leisure you will read the appointments of the Jewish law for the celebration of the Passover, you will see how full of affecting references to His own great sacrifice they are; they would therefore very powerfully appeal to His consciousness.

It would appear from various allusions that our Lord celebrated the Passover, not merely according to, the Divine ritual prescribed in the 12th chapter of Exodus, but also according to the traditional usages which in the course of centuries had gathered round it. His was that true freedom and spiritualness of heart that both by addition and omission fulfilled the spirit rather than the letter of the law; as, for example, the prescription was that the Passover was to be "eaten in haste with the loins girded, with shoes on their feet and with staves in their hands." Our Lord confirmed the habit into which for centuries the Jews had fallen, of eating it reclining at a table.

It was a tradition which enjoined the singing of the Great Hallel, the 113th and four following Psalms; selected because they commemorated the great deliverances of the Exodus and the wilderness, and which of course were not in existence when the ritual of the Exodus was enjoined.

If we remember the character of these Psalms, it is affecting and suggestive that just at the close of the institution of the Lord's Supper, just after the conversation at the table, and just before the agony in the garden, our Lord joined his disciples in singing the Great Hallelujah. The last words of the hymn with which He anticipated His cross were—"Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar, Thou art my God and I will praise Thee; Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee. O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever."

They are Messianic Psalms, prophecies of

the great hour and sacrifice that had now come—words prepared for Him to utter; words not of deprecation and sorrow in this great hour of darkness, but of joy and triumph. It is indescribably interesting and affecting that our Lord should thus have concluded the supper and gone forth to His death with these words upon His lips.

This is the lesson of the record. Surely one would have thought this was no time for singing joyous Psalms. Our Lord was about to enter upon the most awful experience of human history—to encounter the prince of the world in a last and mortal conflict, to bear who shall say what burden of sorrow because of human guilt? to die in shame and agony. The disciples were sad and apprehensive—"sorrow had filled their hearts." What an unseasonable moment for the singing of joyous Psalms! "As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart;" and yet it is the heavy heart itself that sings songs, just as it had poured forth the great discourse of consolation—"Let not your heart be troubled."

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Psalm cxviii.; Matt. xxvi. 36—41.

What is the explanation? What is the philosophy of sacred song in hours of sadness?

1. Shall we say that it was the religious duty of the hour? No sorrow could ever cause the Master to swerve from the path of duty. He borrowed no excuse from circumstances. He sang the Passover Psalms beneath the shadow of His cross as obediently as when at twelve years of age He first kept the feast. He would not even dispense with the mere traditional custom. He did not say, "The singing of these Psalms is an optional thing; it is no part of the divinely-prescribed ritual; it is unsuited to the circumstances and the mood; we will dispense with it."

What a lesson for us, who think any sorrow a justification for the neglect of religious duty! I am not in a mood for public worship, my heart is too sad. I will commune with God in the solitude of my own closet. When death has visited a household, it is the very etiquette of our social religious life to shut ourselves up at home until the interment has taken place, and until the mourning is all duly provided, so that we can go to God's house in a kind of sombre state.

Well, we can all sympathise with the sorrowful and shrinking feeling that in the first throb of a great grief shuns observation. A little while after, in His greatest agony, Christ himself "sought to be, as it were, a stone's cast from his disciples," that He might be alone with His Father. And no one may prescribe a rubric for even public worship. Yet it is well to remember our Lord's feeling and conduct. If ever we need the solace and strength of God's house, it is in great sorrows; even its joyous songs will no more jar our sad hearts, than the great Hallelujah of the Passover would jar His. He did not permit His great grief to furnish an excuse for neglecting a service of praise.

2. Next. Is there really such incongruity between a sorrowful heart and hymns of praise? Would there have been more of fitness if our Lord had substituted some *Miserere*—Psalms such as the 55th, 56th, or 59th, the 86th, 88th, the 102nd or the 109th, Psalms of plaint and prayer rather than Psalms of praise? There are melancholy strains of song for melancholy souls—the *Miserere* for the penitent, the *de Profundis* for the desolate, the dirge for the funeral, as well as the carol for the birthday. Why were not such selected? Why should not our Lord and His disciples in that dark hour have poured out their souls in mournful rather than in joyous strains?

Do we not assume too readily that praise is impossible in hours of sorrow? No doubt there is a natural congruity between moods and their expression. James recognises it. "Is any amongst you afflicted? let him pray; is any merry? let him sing Psalms." But it is not so much an alternative as it is a regulation of feeling. We go into extremes. Is it not possible, would it not be good for us, if in our hours of sorrow we could consider reasons for checking its extremes, even for praise? When Luther was in especial straits or despondency, he would check his feelings by singing the 46th Psalm. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

Would not the very utterance of these grand words of confidence tend to beget the feeling that they express? Do we not mistake when we imagine that before we can sincerely sing a hymn or a Psalm we must so prepare our heart as that it shall be an exact expression of our feeling? Is it not enough

if we yearn for the feeling which it expresses, and seek by the singing of the Psalm to produce it? I am not to wait until I have no fear before I sing, "Therefore we will not fear." I am not to wait until my soul attains to the utmost ardour before I sing, "My soul thirsteth for God." It is enough if I take these Psalms into my lips with a sincere desire to feel what they avow. We attain the feeling in the utterance of it. I may not in my conscious coldness turn away from the Lord's table because I do not with adequate thankfulness remember His love. In trying to "do this in remembrance of Him" my love will be kindled. So in my bereavement or sorrow I may not turn away from the 103rd Psalm, as if there were nothing for which my soul had to bless the Lord. By summoning up all my causes for thankfulness, and by uttering my acknowledgments, I shall attain the heart of praise.

There can be no doubt that in this dark hour of His sorrow our Lord strengthened the heart of His confidence and that of His disciples by singing these Psalms of gratitude and hope. Surely praises are not out of place where mercies are experienced; and just because we are so prone to lose the sense of mercy in the selfishness of sorrow, we should force upon ourselves the recognition of our mercies by taking into our mouth their song—"In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we are to make known our requests unto God." The remembered mercies of the past are the best antidote to the sorrows of the present. It may seem strange when in the hour of bereavement or sorrow a minister or friend tries to comfort you by reading a Psalm of joy, when his prayer is a thanksgiving rather than a plaint. But this is the true philosophy of religious ministry—the effectual comfort of a man. Our first steps to our own Gethsemane will be firmer if we have strengthened ourselves by an acknowledgment of mercies—an avowal of confidence. Praise is a better antidote for trouble than even prayer. We do not deal best with our souls when we hang our harps upon the willows, and refuse to sing the Lord's song. The most sorrowful of our sorrows is when we can remember or recognise no mercies to sing about—when "God, our Maker, gives us no songs in the night." Christ goes to His cross, the disciples part from their Lord; and yet just before His agony, just before they forsake Him in terror, they join in singing the great Hallelujah.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Psalm cxv.; Heb. xii. 1-13.

The Psalms were sung, not read. Sometimes in great sorrows we take a hymn and read it. How much greater the inspiration were we to sing it—compel ourselves to utter it in music! How flat and uninspiring the hymn that we quietly read at home compared with the same hymn sung in the great congregation! Are we not conscious of the difference even between reading a hymn silently and reading it aloud? When we utter its words as well as see them they have a tenfold distinctness and emphasis. Imagine the worshipper before the throne, *saying*, not singing, "Worthy the Lamb!" It is a divine sanction of our worshipping praise. Worship is the supreme expression of religious feeling. It is the utterance to God of our reverence, adoration, gratitude, love, and joy. No other religious act, however holy or noble, expresses a religious feeling so elevated and rapturous as worship. Even prayer falls far below the religious nobleness and greatness of praise. Prayer is the beseeching of our indulgence and helplessness. Worship is the adoration of God's fulness and sufficiency. Prayer seeks the good that God gives, worship recognises the good that God is. Urged by my sorrows, my fears, my necessities, my prayer is the outpouring of my troubled helplessness, often but a cry of terror or of pain. I pray "with my face to the ground." But worship is the prompting of my admiration, my gratitude, my faith. I stand before God with uplifted face. It brings its eucharistic offering—it lifts not its open hands, but its full heart. It is the voice of our love, rather than of our need; blessing and praising, not beseeching. It is therefore the highest expression of religious life.

We make a great religious mistake when we deem lightly of the musical utterance of our hymns, and cover our culpable negligence by professing to care only for the sense. Music to clothe our praise is as much God's gift as the words which are the substance of it. The musical utterance of praise is as divine as the verbal utterance of prayer. If any traces of the old temple music exist they are to be found in the Gregorian tones; and it is an ancient and credible tradition that the Passover Psalms were sung to the ninth, or Peregrine tone. So that we probably sing the very music used by our Lord and His disciples on "the night in which He was betrayed."

If I would not draw near to God with petitions clothed in slovenly speech, so I would not draw near to Him with praise clothed in slovenly tune.

So Paul and Silas thrust into the inner prison, their feet made fast in the stocks, beguiled their imprisonment by their midnight praises, so that "the prisoners heard them." So persecuted saints in dens and caves of the earth and on mountain sides—Huguenots, Puritans, and Covenanters—sang their hymns, although their very lives depended upon their silence.

So upon dying beds the tremulous hymn breaks from quivering lips, and breathes out the parting soul to God. So mourners at the grave strengthen their faith and staunch their tears with some song of the immortal hope. In secluded villages one still sees the slow procession wending to the churchyard, and hears the processional hymn fitfully borne upon the air; only had we lived in the early centuries of Christianity we should have heard only joyous songs of faith and thanksgiving.

It is, I think, a great lesson—a profound religious philosophy. It is not enough to pray in our sorrows, we must praise as well; ay, by praise learn to pray. "He hath been mindful of us; He will bless us." And praise Him in song. In heaven they do not recite the new song, they sing it standing upon "the sea of glass mingled with fire;" they have harps in their hands, and they "sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

If we would feel all the deep significance of this parting hymn, and learn its lessons, let us read these Psalms of pious confidence, faith, and thanksgiving; ponder their thoughts and sentiments, and imagine the emotions they would excite in Christ and His disciples—the thrilling apprehension, the vivid realisation, the triumphant faith with which they would be sung. So dying men sing the 23rd Psalm. We all have our Gethsemanes and our Calvaries—our great soul sorrows—our baptism with Christ's baptism. Let us seek our strength in realisations of faith—in songs of praise. In this also He is our teacher and exemplar. "When He had sung a hymn with His disciples He went into the Mount of Olives."

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Isa. liii.; Hebrews ii.

May we not recognise some connection between the sentiment of worshipful praise with which our Lord anticipated His passion,

and the sentiment of pious submission with which he endured it. The acquiescence of His prayer in the very crisis of His agony, "O my father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done," is as marvellous in its piety as the singing of the hymn before going forth to the Mount of Olives. The passion of the Garden is the profoundest mystery of the Redeemer's Incarnation. It was distinctly anticipated from the very beginning of His ministry. "It behoved Him to suffer." Had He not so died His life would have been a failure. No theory of martyrdom can throw any light upon this strange necessity.

Then it was a purely inward and spiritual agony. No human hand had touched Him. He voluntarily goes forth to the scene of it, makes arrangements for the three chosen disciples to accompany Him, and there, according to all the indications of what took place given by the Evangelists, He endured the supreme agony of His experience—a fiercer conflict than the temptation in the wilderness; a greater anguish than His death upon the cross. It is the hour of a nameless and inscrutable woe. In its deeper causes and feelings a veil hangs over it; no human eye might even gaze upon it; for, greatly as He craved their poor, helpless sympathy, He, the "strong Son of God," "sought to be as it were a stone's cast from His disciples," that alone in prayer to His Father He might encounter the greatest woe of His soul. Only His Father might see Him prostrate on the ground; and, "being in an agony, praying the more earnestly," "He treads the winepress alone." When He was transfigured He ascended the mountain, with His three disciples, who witnessed the whole wondrous scene. "And there appeared Moses and Elias talking with Him." In the premonition of His passion He seeks the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the deep shade of the olive trees. The three stand at a distance, and watch the approaches to where He was, lest He should be disturbed. Into the holiest place of the passion the High Priest enters alone. The record is, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." He was full of a mysterious moral anguish; His soul was crucified before His body.

Do we not feel that His great Redemption has its essence, not in the physical death of the cross, but in the spiritual passion, of which it is only the symbol? Physical suffering can be no atonement for moral sin. This must be suffering of soul. Therefore the mystery of the Passion—the mystery of its

atoning causes and processes—which our poor thought cannot penetrate, but which in seeking to expound we too often profane. “Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; we cannot attain unto it.” All that we need to know is that He did so endure, that the Lord did “lay upon Him the iniquity of us all.”

We are sure that He was conscious of no feeling of personal guilt; that He could not endure the essential elements of the sinner's hell—the sense of personal sin, alienation from God, remorse, unspiritualness. There could be no unreality in His feeling, no fictitious substitution or imputation.

May we not conceive of it as the anguish of a proper and perfect man, a human brother, who realised what the sin was of which His brother men had been guilty; as a pure mother or sister might realise the crime of a son and brother, feeling a keener anguish because of it than the hardened criminal himself? Would not such anguish for sin—the sin of others—felt by the perfectly pure human soul of the Redeemer, be an atonement for sin? It was an endurance of the anguish caused by sin, the greatest endurance possible to a pure moral being! But we forbear; it is enough that “His soul was made an offering for sin.”

The human piety of His endurance is as notable as its spiritual character. Whatever the causes of His sorrow, the religious lesson taught by his manner of enduring it is palpable; and it brings Him very near to us in sympathy and help. We may not forget the preciousness of the human Christ in our marvelling at the divine Christ; we may not ponder the theological causes so as to neglect the religious lessons.

It is not necessary to trace the history step by step, as we might do. We see throughout the working of strong human feelings—His craving for the presence and sympathy of these three helpless disciples; His strange prayer that “if possible the cup might pass”—the very cup that he came to drink; His human nature, in its mysterious shrinking, and fear, and anguish, driven to this amazing suggestion. How near to us it brings Him! How our own hearts in great agonies work in this incoherent inconsequent way! I will not try to explain these things away. It comforts me to see the “strong Son of God” breaking down under His cross, praying that if possible His cup may pass. He craved human sympathy just as we do. He “prayed with his face to the ground;” and cried almost wildly to His father for what was impossible.

Had not Christ so felt he would have been more or less than human. Imagine Him calm and unmoved under human sorrows—seeing human misery and not being “moved with compassion;” standing by the grave of Lazarus and shedding no tear; looking upon the treachery of Judas and feeling no sadness; beholding his mother, and showing no solicitude; suffering in Gethsemane and lifting no prayer of anguish, evincing no physical distress, no “drops of blood falling to the ground,” no need of an angel to strengthen Him! He would not have been a proper man “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” The precious bonds of human sympathy with us would have been lacking. Is there not an infinite solace in all this; is not His proper and perfect humanity as precious as His proper and perfect divinity? The divinity indeed makes perfect the humanity. The piety was perfect. No other man had such broad and perfect human sympathies, such womanly tenderness combined with such manly strength—He was man and woman both. No other man exhibited such perfect human holiness, spiritual principle and feeling absolutely ruling all physical appetites and impulses, resisting with entireness of success every temptation of the devil; His whole human nature was in perfect harmony with the divine will. In Him, and Him only, men beheld all the possibilities of a pure soul, perfect spirituality, sanctity, and union with God.

And in Gethsemane we see this in its most perfect manifestations. We see the limits of the awful conflict, “O my Father.” His Father had mixed the terrible cup that was put into His hands. All things else fail Him, but God is still His Father; no shadow of distrust falls upon this clear vision of His faith. “If it be possible,” “Not my will, but thine be done,” the very prayer of His agony, does not rebel or resent; whatever is the clearly-expressed will of the Father let that be done. He does not blindly stumble, or break out in passionate remonstrance, He will acquiesce with whatever may be demanded of Him.

The cup may not pass; His victory is a victory of faith only; but how spiritually great it is! He came to do God's will and He did it, but he was “heard in that He feared.” Strength for His day was given to Him; He “endured His cross despising its shame.” And I think we may see the victory of His prayer in the sentiment of His praise. “And when they had sung a hymn He went out into the Mount of Olives.”

A SNOW IDYLL.

By WILLIAM BLACK, AUTHOR OF "A PRINCESS OF THULE," "MADCAP VIOLET," ETC.

CHAPTER III.—SEVERED.

THERE was a sharp frost that night, and next morning showed a hard, clear, steel-blue sky, with brilliant sunshine lighting up the snow-bound world, so that the birds took to chirping blithely among the leafless trees. It was altogether a cheerful morning, the very morning for a brisk, invigorating walk; and as Sydney Durham took his accustomed way to the loch, he made sure that the young lady left all by herself in the inn would come abroad during the day, and that he would be able to make out her figure in the wide, white landscape. As for her promise to make her appearance at the big rock at lunch-time, she was virtually absolved from that by the departure of her father. Friendly as her disposition seemed to be, he could hardly expect her to keep that appointment. So, when he got down to the boat, he set to work to get his lines in order without much hope of any pleasant companionship when the mid-day halt should be called.

But fortune had something else in store for him this morning. He had just got out the lines, and was settling down to a placid contemplation of the snow-clad hills and the blue loch when a sudden vibration of the rod and a loud scream of the reel startled him into attention. He snatched at the one rod with his right hand, and with his left took up the other and passed it on to Duncan so that he might reel up and have the way clear. But the transference had not been completed when away went the line of the second rod with an alarming shriek; and instantly the truth was flashed upon him that he had got a salmon on each of the lines. To say that there was joy in this discovery would be absolutely the reverse of the fact; there was bewilderment, agony, terror—anything but joy.

"Pull, Peter!" he yelled. "Pull into the shore! Look alive, man! Here, Duncan, you take this rod and jump out as soon as you can and get away from me as far as you can. My goodness, I hope they won't cross the lines!"

Peter was pulling as if he would break his back; and as they fortunately happened to be opposite a little bay in which there was no ice, a few seconds sufficed to get the boat ashore; instantly Duncan jumped into the water, rod in hand, and ran away along the

bank; then he suddenly stood stock still, staring in amazement and despair. The terrible discovery had been made by Sydney at the same moment—the fish had crossed the lines, and were tugging at each other: what mortal traces could bear this fearful strain?

The situation was appalling. Had Duncan been able to get the one rod taken away along the bank before the lines had crossed, the matter would have been simple enough; for each fish could have been played separately and in safety, the one from the boat, the other from the bank; but, now that the lines had crossed, the two salmon were hauling at each other; while neither Sydney nor Duncan dared put the least pressure on them, for in that case they would only be increasing this already most perilous strain. But what was to be done? A more hopeless predicament could not be imagined; indeed, if it had not been agonising to the chief actor in the scene, it would have been ludicrous enough. There were the two salmon almost on the surface of the water, and in their struggles to get away from this entanglement they rolled over each other like a couple of pigs; in the boat was Sydney, holding a rod in his hand, and looking on, at once distracted and helpless; on the shore was Duncan, also holding a rod, and quite as helpless as his master. Only one thing was absolutely certain: this tugging of the two salmon against each other could not last many seconds longer; the strongest tackle must give before such violent usage.

"Well, I must chance it, Peter," Sydney said; and therewith he sprang out of the boat and on to the bank. "Bring the gaff—if I can't land them both upon the shore, they'll be off directly."

He called on Duncan to come nearer; and this the gillie did, reeling in as he came, and keeping almost a slack line, for the two fish, hopelessly intermixed, were practically being played by the one rod. Being played?—they were being landed! Sydney kept stepping back and back on the snow, with a deliberate and steady strain, risking everything on the strength of the gut. How and why neither of the lines cut the other, he could not understand; but still they held, as he towed the two salmon into the shallows, by main force. And then followed a bit of quick and lively action on the part of Peter. He

sprang into the water, gaff in hand ; with a sudden swoop he got hold of the one fish and dragged him ashore, lines and all, and shook him off, then he jumped into the water again before the other fish floundering there could do any mischief, and him also he bore to bank on his victorious clip. It was a wild and most unscientific scrimmage ; no one could tell exactly how it all occurred ; but here, lying on the snow, were the two resplendent creatures—silvery, pale blue, and purple—and neither the one nor the other of the traces had even been frayed !

"Well, that is a stroke of luck, Peter!" Sydney exclaimed, with considerable fervour. "I've had two salmon on once before, but never with crossed lines. I'll send a testimonial to that tackle-maker, as sure as I'm alive ; and he can print it in the *Fishing Gazette* if he likes."

Well, now, fortune seemed to think she had shown him sufficient favour for one morning ; for all the forenoon he industriously explored those winding bays, to no purpose. Then he went ashore for lunch. But nowhere in the white, silent landscape could he see any solitary figure approaching ; of course not ; she would expect him to understand that her promise had been cancelled. And what of the sketch without the group of figures at the big rock ? He began to think he could make something out of such a day as this—a hard, clear, metallic sky ; bold white clouds that were mirrored in a dull silver-grey fashion on the ice ; the blue, ruffled water ; the snow of the moorlands quite of a warm hue in the sun ; the colder tone of the far slopes of Ben Loyal and Ben Hee and Ben Hope. He would have two boats at the point, however ; and a larger group of gillies ; but these were minor details ; he seemed to be getting hold of a subject, as he sate, and smoked, and stared.

The afternoon brought that difficult dinner-question to the front again ; and he began to ask himself, with an innumerable variety of doubts and hesitations and surmises, whether it was quite such an impossibility that Miss Anne should honour him with her company at the modest banquet which Mrs. Murray would send in. Surely a young lady could with perfect propriety enter the public-room of an inn and take her dinner there, no matter what the number of the other guests ? Supposing that he and she dined in separate rooms, would not each know the arrangement to be the result of an absurd conventionalism, and would not each know that the other knew, and was thinking of it ?

What happiness it would be to find Miss Anne his sole companion at the dinner-table ! For there would be no interruption to their talk ; he would try to entertain her as best he could ; and he would lead her on to speak of all her own experiences and opinions and plans which were of the greatest and deepest interest to him. Surely their dining separately would only be a stupid formalism ?

At the same time he had an uneasy consciousness that that room was not entirely a public-room ; and that a young lady could hardly be expected to come and dine in the private room of a comparative stranger, *sola cum solâ*. When her father was there, they had taken their other meals in their own room. Indeed, Sydney surmised that Mr. Murray, the landlord, had simply assumed that three people, finding themselves thrown together in so remote a place, would naturally prefer to dine together ; while no doubt Mrs. Murray had chosen his, Sydney's room, because it was nearer the kitchen. And here at last he began to see daylight. Would not the solution of this dark diplomatic difficulty finally rest with Mrs. Murray ? If she thought Miss Hague might find it embarrassing to go into the quasi public-room for dinner would not she tell the fair-haired Nelly that the young lady would dine in her own room ? So that not on Miss Anne would lie the onus of refusal. She would not have to appear unfriendly. Both she and he would simply bow to the dictates of the worthy Mrs. Murray.

Nevertheless, when he got home to the inn that evening, and when he had thawed himself before the comfortable fire he found in his bedroom, and changed his attire, it was with a considerable curiosity, perhaps with a little trepidation, that he went down-stairs. The first swift glance at the table put an end to all his doubts, hopes, or fears. He was to dine alone. Miss Hague was remaining in her own room. It would be hard to say whether disappointment or some little feeling of relief was uppermost in his mind ; at all events it was not his business to protest ; Mrs. Murray had settled that difficult question, and he was content.

Yet as he sat at his solitary meal and thought of the poor lone prisoner in the other room, his heart was melted with pity ; and he thought she could not be offended if he sent her a little message. So, when dinner was over, he said to the tall and fair-haired Highland lass who waited on him,

"Look here, Nelly, I wish you would take my compliments to Miss Hague, and say I

caught two salmon this morning, and that I hope she will accept one of them to send to one of her friends. If she gives me the name and address I will write the label, and see the fish sent off."

Nelly went away and speedily returned.

"Miss Hague's compliments to you, sir, and she is ferry mich obliged, but she could not think to tek the fish from you, when there's so few of them whatever."

"Oh, but I insist. You tell her that, Nelly. She may send it to her father, if she likes; for her father sent that one of yesterday to somebody else."

Eventually, Miss Anne sent him her father's address, and also a very pleasant message of thanks; so that matter was settled aright. Then in the course of the evening, he began to think that all the illustrated papers (the only kind of periodical literature artists ever read) which were lying about, were in a state of sad confusion; so he set to work to sort them out, and arrange them, and put them into ship-shape. And again he summoned Nelly, and bade her take this bundle into Miss Hague's room, so that she might look at the pictures if she cared to do so; and again came a grateful message from the poor lone prisoner. All this was very pleasant; and he was glad to have even this remote kind of companionship established, even if lath and plaster walls intervened between him and her; but, as it turned out, they were not always to remain so isolated.

Next morning was Sunday. There was no church in this little hamlet, nor yet within many a long mile of it; so, when he had read for a while after breakfast, he got his cap and walking-stick and wandered forth into the silent world of snow. The weather was still hard and bright and clear; but the sunlight was almost hot; indeed, when he had got out into the moorland the warmth was sufficient to sweeten all the air with odours from the withered grass and heather. He went down to the Mudal, crossed the bridge, and made his way along to the shores of the loch. What was this strange whispering—this continuous, soft buzzing in the universal silence? At last he made it out. The loch was only partially frozen over; and where the sheet of ice ceased there was a fringe of broken fragments that the lapping water kept in constant motion, producing this curious murmur, the while the various corners and angles of the broken ice flashed millions of diamonds in the sun. On and on he went, idly, at peace with all the world, wishing no harm to any living

creature. The curlews called their warning note as they wheeled and wheeled up to some higher slope; but they must have known he had no gun with him. He started a white hare out of the wood near Morten's Bay; but she did not go far before she stopped, sat up on her haunches, cocked her ears, and stared at him. It is true an old grouse cock came whirring down towards him with a long angry cry that ended in a fierce crow of defiance, its eye bright and bold, its red comb resplendent; but he soon discovered the cause of all this martial display; from another knoll not far off came the answering note of the hen, but a very quiet and ordinary note, as if she were saying, "Oh, it's all right; don't make such a mighty fuss; do you think I can't take care of myself?" and then, with hardly a glance at the passing stranger, she calmly resumed her pecking at the seeds of the withered heather.

He spent all the morning wandering here and there along the shores of the loch; and about mid-day he thought he would return to the inn for some food. He met no one on the way back, as he had met no one on the way out, until, while he was yet some little distance from the bridge, he beheld a solitary figure coming along the Mudal valley. He looked again and again; he became more and more convinced that this must be Miss Hague; and as the two roads converged at the bridge, at the bridge they were bound to meet. He arrived there first, it is true; but he made no scruple about waiting until she should come up; and, indeed, when she drew near, she greeted him with great frankness and without the slightest trace of embarrassment.

"What a beautiful day it is!" she said, as they walked on together to the inn. "It is so strange to feel the hot sunlight, and yet to find every pool frozen over. But I suppose there must be some melting, for you can hear the trickling of the water underneath. What a lonely place this is! I have been away up that glen for miles, and have not seen a living thing except a hare—at least I suppose it was a hare, though it looked much more like a white cat."

"And it must be particularly lonely for you," said he, "even in the inn, since your father left."

"Yes, it is a little," she made answer, cheerfully enough; "but I always carry plenty of books with me, wherever I go; and then it was very kind of you to lend me those illustrated papers. I found them ex-

tremely interesting in a place like this—they seemed to show you all that was going on in a world out of which you had come altogether."

"Well, you know, Miss Hague, you mustn't think that Inver-mudal is always like this in March," he was proceeding to say, by way of apologising for the weather, when she interrupted him.

"Oh, but I like it!" she said. "I like the solitariness, and the wildness, and the snow. It suits me perfectly. I don't know that papa quite bargained for it."

"Of course not," he said. "This is quite exceptional. The common fault of Inver-mudal in the spring is its summer-like weather—from the fisherman's point of view, that is; you go down to the loch every day only to find it getting lower and lower, the water a sheet of glass, and you with nothing to do but sit on the gunwale of the boat and kick your heels in the sand."

"I'm afraid salmon-fishing isn't a good thing for an artist," she said with a smile. "Doesn't it rather tend to idleness?"

"Meaning me?" he said contentedly. "Well, I start work to-morrow."

"Where?" she asked.

"I am going to take the subject you suggested—the bay at the big rock, with the boats and gillies."

"Oh, indeed," she said; and then she continued in the most frank and off-hand way: "Would you mind if I came down during the day to see how you were getting on?"

The very simplicity of this proposal somewhat took him aback; it was a far more friendly concession on her part than he could have dreamed of asking from her.

"I should be delighted," he said. "I shall be looking forward to your coming all the morning."

"You see," she explained, "I want to go and have a look at the Pictish fort I have heard so much about; and I suppose I must go along by that side of the loch. If I may, I will come down to the big rock in passing, just to make sure that you have not been tempted to go away after the salmon again."

He was just about to say, "Why not come at lunch-time?" but he dared not; surely it was enough that all of her own free will she was about to pay him a little visit! Indeed, he was very grateful to her for this mark of interest in him and his pursuits, though little did he dream of what was to come of that chance ramble to the Pictish fort.

CHAPTER IV.—A RESCUE.

ENVELOPED in a mighty ulster of Harris homespun, Sydney Durham was seated before his easel, down by the loch-side; and with a light, firm, and practised hand he was transferring to the upright block the chief features of this wide landscape—the silver-grey ice, the blue, lapping water beyond, the farther shores now showing something of russet and gold through the melting of the snow, and the far peaks of the northern mountains rising white into a steel-bright sky. This was but a sketch, a memento; perhaps at some future time he might take up the subject and make a serious picture of it; perhaps the sketch would remain a sketch—in the portfolio of a friend. Anyhow he was succeeding in getting a very fair and honest transcript of the scene before him when he discovered that Miss Hague, true to her promise, was coming along through the snow to pay him a visit; whereupon he rose and put aside his painting implements, and began to stamp his feet and clap his hands in order to get some blood into them.

"Yes," said Miss Anne, as she came along, her bright young face smiling from over that boa of thick white fur, "I should think you found it cold work."

"Not much colder than sitting in the boat," said he. "But if I get this thing finished in time, I mean to have a turn round the loch, to see if I can't pick up another salmon for you to send to one of your friends."

She went forward to see the "thing" of which he seemed to speak rather contemptuously; and in her modest way she said that to her at least it appeared just admirable. Nothing could be more vivid and life-like, she declared. Now praise from the lips of a very pretty and engaging young woman ought to have been sweet to the ears of a young man; but perhaps Sydney took a truer estimate of the value of this rough pictorial memorandum; at all events he drew her attention away from it by beginning to speak of the Pictish fort whither she was bound.

"There is one thing," said he—"if you want to explore the passages between the walls—you know there are double walls all the way round, whatever they were meant for—well, if you want to creep in and explore, you need have no fear of snakes at this time of year. It's a rare place for adders in the summer. But I dare say you

will find it too cold and wet to go in on hands and knees; I've never been in myself."

"Mr. Durham," said she, very prettily, "won't you please go on with your work? then I shouldn't think I was interrupting you."

She was not hurrying away, then? Out of her frank good-nature had she come down to the loch-side to cheer him with a few minutes' companionship and talk? He needed no second invitation. Instantly he took to his task again; and as he sat down he resumed the conversation, that she should have no excuse for going away at once.

"I have been trying curling this morning," said he, as he took up his palette and brushes, "to keep myself warm."

"Curling?" she said, doubtfully.

"It is a Scotch game," he explained—"played on the ice. Do you see the bottle away out yonder? I managed to send it so far, and I have been trying to reach it with stones."

"I suppose I couldn't reach it," she observed, with a glance at the bottle that lay far out on the frozen sheet of water.

"You might try—it is a capital exercise," he said, encouragingly, as he was working away. "But I don't know how it is that women never can throw a stone."

"Why, that is simple enough," said she; "it is merely because they never wished to learn. It is one of many accomplishments they prefer to leave to men. A woman sometimes grows a moustache; but she isn't proud of it."

Nevertheless, Miss Anne made several desperate efforts to reach the small target, and all in vain; she was as awkward at throwing a stone as any woman ever born; then, as she gave up, he sought to detain her by talking of something else, no matter what.

"Do you skate, Miss Hague?" he said, at a venture.

"No, I have never tried," she answered.

"It isn't often that Loch Naver is frozen over," he continued; "there are too many squalls about. But they say it has sometimes been frozen so hard that the deer have crossed from Clebrig to the other side. Have you seen any deer yet?"

"No, not one," she made answer, "though I have been watching everywhere when I have been out walking."

"In very cold weather," said he, most imprudently, "they sometimes come into the

wood beyond the Pictish fort"—imprudently, for at the mention of the Pictish fort, she seemed to remember her purpose in coming out.

"Perhaps I may be more fortunate to-day," said Miss Anne. "So I will bid you good-bye for the present. I am glad to see you have got on so well."

Whereupon she was gone; and he was left alone with his work, in which he seemed to take less interest now. Mechanically he went on with it, it is true; but his thoughts were wandering away along the shores of this solitary loch, to the old tower built out on the wooded promontory, its rude, uncemented walls rising high above the scattered birch and hazels. Would she have been grievously offended if he had offered to be her guide? This sketch, now, seemed to have in it all he would probably want. He had not proposed to carry it much further. It was a first impression, as it were; it dealt only with broad and general effects; he had had no intention of going into detail. When lunch-time came he had convinced himself that he had done enough; and that simple meal over, he put together his painting gear and placed it where he could pick it up on the way home; and then he and the gillies got into the boat, and the trolling for salmon began.

"But look here, Duncan," he said, as soon as the lines were out, "I think we make a great mistake in always keeping to the upper end of the loch; the consequence is it gets fished to death. We ought to try further down the sides. Nobody ever thought of going down to Morten's Bay until Mr. Morten found again and again that he could sneak a fish out of that bay when every other place was hopeless. Why shouldn't we go away down by the Pictish fort, and have a try there?"

"Oh, ferry well, sir; we will chist do that," Duncan said, readily enough; and presently the boat had altered its course and was making towards the east.

As they slowly rowed away down the loch, it was not the salmon-rods that chiefly claimed his attention, it was rather the lonely shores they were passing. There is no path along this side of Loch Naver; and he knew it would take Miss Anne some time ere she made her way across the rough moorland and through the birchwoods to the ruins of the ancient fort; anyhow, wherever she might be, she would surely see the boat, and she would know that he had finished work for the day. Did she want any information about

that curious hill of stones?—she had but to come down to the loch-side and call to him, and he would willingly go ashore. Was there a chance of her being tired by this rough walk over the drifted snow and heather? Well, she had but to summon the boat, and gladly would he have her rowed up to the head of the lake. Indeed, so preoccupied was Mr. Sydney Durham at this moment that he procured for himself a smartly cut finger, as it chanced; for a fish having bolted away with one of the minnows, the young man thoughtlessly snatched at the rod with his hand over the line; and the line, running out at an inconceivable speed, left a mark on his forefinger that remained there for many a day thereafter. However, he eventually got the salmon—a game little fish of eight or nine pounds, that quite exhausted himself with his first rushes and plunges, and allowed himself to be captured rather under a quarter of an hour.

And after all they had to pass Miss Anne without her observing them. The ancient and ruined stronghold stands on a promontory that becomes an island when the loch is high; and Sydney guessed that she would have some difficulty in getting across the connecting neck of land, what with the broken stones and the ice. In fact, she was carefully picking her steps as they went by at some distance from her; and she was too much occupied to notice them. The next he saw of her was when the boat had got some way past the tower; and then he perceived that she had climbed right to the top of the ruins, for the small mite of a figure was black against the clear sky. Then she disappeared; and he took it for granted that she was exploring the interior of this mysterious building, and that she would soon set out again on her return to the inn.

With the exception of the small fish they had got on the way down, these bays yielded them nothing; and Duncan and Peter were directed to put the boat round again and get back to the head of the loch; so that once again they would go by the ruined tower. It was not until they had passed it and were some distance off that Sydney noticed that Miss Hague—whose figure had been hidden by some birch-trees—was now down near the shore, and, as he fancied, was waving a handkerchief to him. Well, that was a very friendly greeting, and he returned it. Of course he did not take his eyes away from her; and he was considerably surprised to observe that she repeated the signal.

"Wait a minute, Duncan," said he. "I think Miss Hague wants us to go ashore."

He hesitated, it is true; for if he were to misinterpret a merely passing salute into an invitation from the young lady to join her, that would be a very awkward thing; on the other hand, did not the repeated signal mean something? What suddenly brought him to a decision was the recollection that soon his minnows would be aground; so instantly he gave one of the rods to Duncan to reel up, while he himself reeled up the other. They were going ashore.

The men ran the bow of the boat into a little creek, and he sprang out and made his way over the big blocks of stone that time and the weather had hurled down from the walls of the fort; and when he drew near to her, he said:

"I beg your pardon, Miss Hague, but did you want me?—I fancied you might want me, perhaps—"

"I am sorry to trouble you," she said, "but—but could you take me with you in your boat? I have hurt my foot. I am afraid I can't walk back to the inn."

"Oh, of course I will!" he said eagerly. "But it isn't anything serious, is it? I ought to have warned you about all those loose blocks of stone, and then the snow covering them——" Even as he spoke he noticed the odd, constrained look of her face: moreover, she was holding on by one hand to the branch of a tree. "Can you make your way down to the boat, do you think?"

"Give me your hand, please, and I will try."

He took her hand firmly in his, and kicked away the snow from the stone on which she was to step. She attempted to move forward, but at the same instant a swift expression of pain shot across her features, and she clutched at the branch of the tree again.

"No—I—I can't put my foot to the ground, and—I suppose I have twisted my ankle; but the pain may go away by-and-by. Don't let me detain you, Mr. Durham. I can't get down to the boat, and that's the fact."

"I am not going to leave you until I see you safely into the inn," said he warmly. "You have sprained your foot badly, that's about what it is; and do you think I am going to leave you here? Not likely! I'll tell you what we must do. It is no use rowing you up to the head of the loch, for then you would have a mile and a half between you and the inn; we will row you over to the other side, for there is a good road there,

and one of my gillies will go along to Mr. Murray and get some kind of vehicle sent for you at once."

"I am so sorry to give you so much trouble," she said.

"Do you know that a bad sprain is a very serious thing," said he, almost reproachfully, "and should be seen to without a moment's delay? I consider myself very lucky to have been within call of you when this happened. Well, now, if you can't put your foot to the ground—and I wouldn't try it if I were you; you may only be doing more damage—as you can't put your foot to the ground I must carry you down to the boat."

She started somewhat; but she said nothing; and somehow, at the same moment, there flashed upon him the fancy that he could get her conveyed to the boat in a fashion that would embarrass her less.

"Or I'll tell you what will be better," said he, "I'll get those two sturdy fellows to come up, and you'll put a hand on a shoulder of each of them, and they'll carry you down as if you were sitting in an easy-chair. Won't that be better?"

"Yes," said she, with averted eyes.

"For they're more used to the rocks than I am," he explained, "and we mustn't risk any further accident. Hi, Duncan, Peter!" he called to the two gillies, "come along here!"

The two men came quickly up; and very soon Miss Anne was being conveyed, with the greatest care, down to the boat, where she was as carefully deposited in the stern. Sydney was most attentive to her in every possible way, and she thanked him with mute and grateful glances. Then, as the gillies pulled away across the loch, Duncan was being instructed as to what he should do when they reached the other side. He was to make off for the inn at his best speed; Mr. Murray was to dispatch a trap without delay to carry the young lady home. If any one knew where Doctor Douglas—whose parochial duties carried him over a wide extent of country—was to be found, he was to be summoned forthwith. Mrs. Murray was to have bandages and liniments ready. A big fire was to be built up in Miss Hague's room. The most comfortable couch or sofa in the house was to be carried thither, and so forth.

"Really, Mr. Durham," Miss Anne said with a smile, "you are giving yourself far too much trouble. What is a sprain!"

"If you had lived as long as I have," said this ancient and experienced person, "and

knocked about as much, you would know what mischief may arise from a sprain. I consider myself responsible for this accident, and I shan't leave anything undone until I see you quite recovered from the effects of it."

"You responsible?" said she, with wide eyes.

"Yes, certainly," he said. "I should have warned you of those ankle-breaking stones. They're bad enough in summer, as I found when I went hobbling over them; but in winter, when they are half concealed by snow, they are a hundred times worse. And supposing I had not happened to come down that way in the boat—supposing I had not happened to notice your signal?"

"I had contemplated that possibility," said she, pleasantly enough; "and I knew quite well what was before me. I should simply have had to remain there, clinging on to that tree, until dusk fell; and then Mrs. Murray, getting alarmed, and knowing where I had gone, would have sent some one to look for me. But how fortunate it was that you happened to come fishing down that way."

"Yes, it was," he said; and then glancing at her with a little diffidence, he confessed the truth. "The fact is, it wasn't entirely the fishing that took me down there—not altogether. I went on the off-chance of your wanting to know something about the fort; or you might be tired, I thought, and might prefer being rowed home."

"It was very kind of you," she responded, with downcast eyes; and nothing more was said upon that subject, for they were now nearing the shore.

As soon as they had landed, Duncan set off at a trot for the inn; but Miss Anne was counselled to remain where she was, and, of course, Sydney stopped by the boat to keep her company. He was infinitely more anxious about this injury than she was; indeed, her cheerfulness convinced him more than ever that women can bear pain with far greater fortitude than men; even apart from the actual suffering of the moment, she seemed to look forward to the solitary confinement in her own room with perfect equanimity.

"If the doctor says I must not try to move about for a week or two, I know what I shall do," Miss Anne observed to the young man, to whom she spoke quite frankly and simply. "I shall send for a young lady who was governess to my sister's children for some time, and who has gone as travel-

ling-companion with me on several occasions. She is an exceedingly nice girl, clever, good-humoured, a capital companion; and we shall be able to pass the time somehow, with sewing, reading, chatting, playing chess——”

“Oh, do you play chess?” said he quickly—so quickly and eagerly that she looked up with a little surprise. Did *he* expect to be able to dissipate the monotony of the poor invalid’s seclusion in that fashion?

“I am very fond of it, at all events,” she said; and then she went on and told him a great deal more about Miss Ennerby, who appeared to have been much more the young lady’s friend than her paid travelling-companion.

“For you see, Mr. Durham,” she continued, in her frankly communicative way, “if papa goes to Lisbon, I don’t know how long he may have to remain. His late partner’s widow lives there, and she is a helpless kind of woman, who is always getting into trouble with her two boys; and papa is supposed to look after all her affairs. So there is a possibility of his not coming back here at all, and in that case he would want me to return to London at once; and if Miss Ennerby were to come up here now, she could go back with me, and it would be pleasanter for the two of us to be travelling together.”

“Returning to London at once?” he mechanically repeated to himself. This was no joyful prospect for Mr. Sydney Durham, who had set such store by this new acquaintanceship—this friendship!—begun in these far northern wilds. It was the very remoteness of the place—it was their isolation from all the rest of the world—that seemed to set an enduring seal on their intimacy. He and she were getting to know each other so well! And was she to be suddenly spirited away just as this gracious companionship was growing more and more delightful?

There was a distant, hushed sound of wheels on the snow. He went a few yards up the bank so that he could look along the road.

“Well, this is a stroke of luck!” he exclaimed, as he returned to the boat. “They have found Dr. Douglas at home, and he is coming now in his own pony-chaise. He must just have returned from one of his rounds.”

“Why everything is happening fortunately for me!” she said brightly.

“Oh, do you think so?” he said in reply; but none the less did he wonder—with a

young man’s wonder—at her resolute courage and cheerfulness.

The big, corpulent, good-humoured-looking doctor came tramping down through the snow as soon as Duncan had gone to the pony’s head; and, of course, when the examination of the young lady’s foot was going forward, Sydney stood aside. But presently he heard that this was nothing but a sprain—no bones were broken; and when the ankle had been carefully bandaged, the big doctor called upon Peter, who was standing by, to help him to carry the young lady up to the pony-chaise, in which she was soon on her way to Inver-mudal. Sydney and his two gillies returned to the boat; but he did not care about further fishing this afternoon. They pulled away along the loch, picked up his painting implements, landed at the head, and then, with the salmon they had got some time before, they all set out for the inn.

The doctor had just completed a more thorough treatment of the injured limb, and was coming away, when he encountered Sydney.

“Well, what is the report?” the younger man asked.

“I fear it is rather a bad sprain,” the doctor said. “But I shall look round again to-morrow morning—on my way to Croick—and see how it looks then. Absolute rest, of course, is the first consideration.”

“Yes, but see here, doctor,” Sydney said forthwith, “she tells me that at any moment her father may write to her summoning her to go south at once.”

“Well, then, she can’t go south at once,” the doctor said, in his easy, good-natured fashion; “no, nor for some time to come, unless she is a very wilful and imprudent young lady, and she does not seem to be that.”

“Have you told her she must not think of going?” the younger man said, rather anxiously.

“Not I; I heard nothing about it. But she knows she must not attempt to put her foot to the ground, so she is not likely to try a drive into Lairg and then a railway journey to London—at least for a while. It’s no use playing tricks with a sprained ankle, unless you want to have it come back again and again.”

“How is Mrs. Douglas, doctor?” was the next question.

“Very well indeed, thank ye.”

“And Mrs. Strang?”

“First rate. She and her two children are coming to stay with us in the autumn

for a while, for her husband is going over to the States with those American friends of his, to have a look at the country, I suppose."

But it was not of Mrs. Douglas, nor yet of Mrs. Ronald Strang, that Sydney Durham was thinking at this moment. He was considering the necessity of his seeking out Mrs. Murray. Mrs. Murray was a person of experience and authority. It was for Mrs. Murray now to impress on the ingenuous mind of Miss Anne the folly, the madness, nay, the wilful wickedness of any young lady who would think of undertaking a railway journey, while there was the remotest chance of her still further damaging an ankle already seriously injured.

CHAPTER V.—A GAME OF CHESS.

ALL that night it blew hard; such doors as had been left open slammed and banged; the wind howled in the chimneys; and in the morning when Sydney, on opening his eyes, perceived a curious glare shining along the ceiling, he knew quite well what had happened—another snow-storm was raging outside. When he went to the window it seemed as if the solitary little inn was more than ever cut off from the rest of the world by this wild bewilderment of snow—snow whirling through the air in gusts and eddies, snow lying thick on the fairy-like trees and on the bits of bushes in the garden, snow turning the broad highway into a trackless path of white. Beyond that nothing was visible. Clebrig had disappeared. The air was obscure with the heavy flakes, that swept hither and thither with the changeful squalls.

The life of a parish doctor in a sparsely-populated portion of the Highlands is not an enviable one. Here was Dr. Douglas, unable to drive, setting out for Croick on his pony, and, according to his promise, he called on his way to see how Miss Anne was getting on. When he had visited his patient he came along to the room in which Sydney was having breakfast.

"Your young lady friend is in a sad predicament," said he.

"How, then?" the young man asked in some alarm.

"The mail has just brought her a letter from her father," the big doctor said, as he went to the fire, and held out his hands and rubbed them briskly. "He is called away somewhere; he does not expect to be back here at all. His daughter is to pack up, make sufficient compensation to Mr. Murray

for leaving his rooms empty, and set off for London at once."

"But she can't!" the young man exclaimed, in dismay.

"That's just what I've been telling her," said the doctor drily. "She can't. What's more, she'll be a very ill-advised young lady if she attempts anything of the kind for a very considerable time to come. She must have wrenched her foot dreadfully on those stones——"

"And of course you insisted on her not thinking of such a thing!" Sydney broke in, impetuously.

"There was no need," Dr. Douglas said, with much good-humour. "She can't go, whether she wishes or not. And there's another reason why she may as well give up all notion of following her father's instructions. If this storm continues, and it looks as if it would, the roads will be impassable. I fancy the mail-car that came through this morning is the last we'll see for some time; the driver told me there were already deep drifts at Croick. Well, I'll have to take the road. The old mare will have the wind with her getting down to Croick, but she'll have to face a bitter blast coming back to-night—that is, if we do come back to-night. Good morning, Mr. Durham; I fear ye'll have a cold day on the loch."

"I say," the young man interposed, as he accompanied the doctor to the door, "don't you think it will be something dreadful for Miss Hague to be shut up in that room all by herself? Couldn't she be taken into Mrs. Murray's parlour, where she would have the children to talk to, or, if she liked, I would go in now and again and have a chat with her, and try to cheer her up a bit? You know she's never been in the Highlands before, she is not used to the loneliness."

"I think she would rather stay in her own room," the doctor said, as he tightened the muffler round his throat; "but she won't be all by herself for long. She has sent off a telegram by the mail for some friend of hers—a lady companion, I believe—who will come along at once, and perhaps get through before the roads are blocked. But there would be no harm in your sending in a message of inquiry now and again, just to let her know she was among friends."

"Oh, of course I will do that!" Sydney said. "And books—and—and illustrated newspapers—and my portfolio of sketches—perhaps she would like to look at that."

"I daresay she would," observed the doctor; but, good-humoured as he was, he did

not care to converse any longer about this not very serious case, especially as he had the long ride to Croick before him ; so again he bade the younger man good morning, and went forth into the snow.

To tell the truth, Sydney Durham would very much have preferred to hang about the house all day and invent a series of covert little attentions to be paid to that hapless prisoner ; but his gillies would not let him. They maintained that a snowstorm was "chist a gran' time for the salmon ;" so somewhat unwillingly he wrapped up his neck, put on his waterproof, slouched his hat down over his ears, and, accompanied by the gillies, set out for the loch. It did seem a mad undertaking, he had to confess to himself ; while the unpleasantness of it was unmistakable. The snow and sleet smote him sharply about the face ; the bitter wind pierced him to the bone ; and ere he had got half-way along the road he was so encrusted with powdered ice that he would have made an admirable presentment of old Father Christmas. Indeed, getting down to the loch, after they had left the highway, was no joke ; for the driven snow was now banking itself up in wreaths ; and sometimes he stumbled into one of these up to the thighs, while his eyes were so blinded by the sleet that he could with difficulty make out the margin of the frozen burn alongside which he was making his way. Even the gillies had to admit that there might be too much of a snow-storm for salmon-fishing. When at last they reached the loch-side they found the black water driving by before the gale, so that it was quite hopeless to think of putting out a boat on it. Disconsolately, Sydney sat down on the gunwale, turning his back to the wind, and huddling himself up as best he might. What a picture for a landscape-painter to sit and contemplate ! He could have thrown a stone as far as he could see. There was nothing at all visible but the bit of slaty beach at his feet ; then a space of heath from which the wind was tearing the finely-powdered snow into whirling white smoke ; and beside him the lashing black water, curling and hissing with dirty foam. The vast bulk of Clebrig, that ought to have been right before him, had departed, and in its place was an expanse of dull, cold white, against which the bigger of the falling flakes were opaquely grey. And meanwhile he was himself becoming more thickly caked with ice, that broke and fell off in lumps when he chanced to move.

The two gillies sat and silently stared at the stones at their feet ; sometimes they

tried to light a pipe. Their master sat and stared at the black and driven water, or amused himself by taking cakes of ice from off his coat. Did he chance to reflect that at that very time he might have been at the Arts Club in Hanover Square, in a comfortable easy-chair before the fire, reading one of Mr. Besant's novels, and knowing that lunch-time would bring in many friends and companions who might be induced to join in a game of pool during the afternoon ?

"Duncan, this is no use at all !" he called out after long and weary watching had given place to blank despair.

"Deed, no mich," said Duncan.

"If we tried to put the boat on the loch, we'd be driven to the other side in a couple of minutes !"

"Ay, chist that," Duncan said, with equanimity.

"I believe the storm is getting worse instead of better !"

"I'm thinking that too, sir."

"Very well," said Mr. Durham, very slowly, and beginning to shake off the cakes of ice and snow, "I am going home : you can bring the rods."

"Ferry well, sir."

The storm did not abate all that afternoon ; but next morning the wind had lessened ; and during the following day or two there were bursts of clear sky and sunlight that lit up the silent white world and caused Loch Naver to shine as with a summer blue. During all this time Sydney had not ceased to keep up communication with the forlorn imprisoned damsel, his confidential agent and go-between being the Highland lass Nelly. Everything that constant thoughtfulness could suggest was done for the poor lone prisoner ; and many were the messages of gratitude that Nelly had to bring back to him in return. Once, indeed, he had ventured into the room himself, and was not rebuked for his temerity. The occasion was this. He had with him a small portfolio of sketches he had made while travelling in County Galway ; and when he had sent her all the books and magazines and illustrated papers he could lay his hands on, he thought it might amuse her to look over this little collection of painter's memoranda. But when he brought down this portfolio from among his other traps, and rang the bell for Nelly to take it into the young lady, there was no answer to the summons ; then he remembered he had seen Nelly go up the road a few minutes before, apparently on her way to the keeper's cottage ; accordingly he took

the sketches in his hand, and made bold to carry them along himself. He knew the room well enough—it used to be his own private parlour. He knocked at the door; “Come in!” said a voice that he recognised; the next moment he caught sight of Miss Anne, who was lying on a sofa, her head propped up, reading. She looked up quickly—and certainly with a little surprise.

“Oh, Miss Hague,” said he, “I can’t find Nelly about—and I’ve got a portfolio of sketches here that I thought you might care to look over—shall I leave them with you?”

“Oh, thank you very much,” said she, most pleasantly. “But indeed you have been far too kind, Mr. Durham. I hope Nelly has told you how grateful I am to you for thinking of me.”

“Surely it was the very least that any one could do,” said he, while he still remained standing at the door, with his hand on the handle, “considering how you are shut up here alone, without a single friend or acquaintance.”

“Why, I have a whole houseful of friends around me!” said Miss Anne, in her cheerful fashion. “How could I be more comfortable? Nelly keeps a blazing fire always burning; Mrs. Murray looks in from time to time to see how I am getting on; and here you have been sending me things continually, and thinking of me, until I was quite ashamed to be so much trouble.”

“I wish I could do more,” said he, as he went forward and put the portfolio on the table, and then retreated to the door again. “I’ll leave them for you to look over at your leisure. I’m afraid you’ll find them very rough things—mere jottings, in fact—but the costumes are picturesque—the red homespun of the Galway women is invaluable in a landscape.” He paused for a second, not quite knowing how to escape from this situation, or whether he should try to escape, or whether he had properly expressed sympathy with this poor prisoner. “If there’s anything else,” he said in a sort of desperation, “you can think of, that I can get for you, I wish you would send word by Nelly.”

“Thank you so much!” said she, and her eyes expressed as much as her words. “After to-day I hope to be a little less helpless—that is to say, if Miss Ennerby comes to-morrow. How are the roads now, Mr. Durham? Have you heard?”

“Well, you know,” said he, “for the last two or three days the mail-cars haven’t been

running; they have brought the bags on horseback. I fancy there are bad drifts about Croick.”

“I know that Bess will get through if anybody can,” Miss Hague said with a smile. “She is a most indomitable traveller.”

There was a pause of half a second.

“Don’t be in any hurry to return the sketches,” he said. “Good afternoon, Miss Hague!”

“Good afternoon!—it is so very kind of you!” was her reply, as he gently shut the door behind him.

And presently he was in his own room, a little breathless and bewildered, and eagerly going over every incident and phrase of this momentous interview. No, he convinced himself, he had not been properly sympathetic at all. He had blundered and stumbled along like a helpless fool. Why had he not considered beforehand what he should say? He had not even asked how the injured foot was getting on. He had not told her how anxious he was to be of service to her. He had not even hinted that all the day long he was thinking of how he might lessen the rigour of her captivity. What would she think of him—standing awkward and embarrassed at the door, unable to offer a single word of condolence to the poor invalid?

And then he strove to reassure himself. It had never occurred to him to treat her as an invalid because she was far from having the appearance of one. He had never seen her look more bright, happy, and cheerful: what was there in her condition to demand any formal expression of sympathy? And as for his anxious desire to be of service to her, surely she would understand all that? Surely she did understand, or what was the meaning of the gratitude so plainly written in her expressive eyes? No; he was rather glad he had taken the occasion of Nelly’s absence to make that little visit. It was something to have seen Miss Anne again, to have spoken with her, to have the vision of her he carried about in his mind corrected and drawn with firmer outlines and warmer touches of colour. Her face had been in shadow, it is true; but the back of her head was towards the window; and the glare coming from the snow-world outside made a wonder of her hair—a kind of aureole, as it were. And even in the shadow her eyes could tell their tale.

This young man was getting into a bad way. He abandoned his salmon-fishing altogether; he neglected to seek for subjects for

his brush; he hung about the inn, devising little messages and attentions that would keep him in Miss Anne's mind. And thus it was that, on the day following the interview described above, when a light Stanhope phaeton drove up to the door, he was the only one in the house to notice its arrival. This was an unusual hour; no one was expecting any vehicle: and the phaeton had come noiselessly through the snow. But when Sydney perceived that the new-comer was a lady, he guessed that this was Miss Ennerby, and instantly he snatched up his cap and went to the door. She was just alighting from the phaeton: the glimpse he got of her showed a rather nice-looking young woman of about eight-and-twenty, with a grave face that was also refined and pleasant, and alert grey eyes.

"Miss Ennerby?" he said, raising his cap. She turned with a quick look.

"Yes."

"The landlord will be here presently, no doubt," said Sydney in his politest manner: "and if you like I will show you Miss Hague's room at once—you must be very cold. The man will bring in your things."

"Thank you," said she; and without more ado she followed him away along the passages leading to the wing of the inn.

"I suppose you had some difficulty in getting through?" he ventured to ask.

"Indeed, we had," she said. "We had to leave the road again and again, and the jolting over the moorland was pretty rough."

"Miss Hague said if any one could get through, you would," said this astute young man, who had his reasons for wishing to ingratiate himself with 'Bess.' Then he tapped at the door; "Come in!" was the answer; and when he had shown Miss Ennerby into the room, he retired discreetly, without any further intervention.

In the afternoon, to his surprise and delight, he received a visit from Miss Ennerby. He was standing at the window of his room, looking out on the white landscape, and smoking; but very quickly did he whip that pipe away when he saw who this was who had come to the door.

"Miss Hague's compliments," said 'Bess,' and she seemed to regard the young man with some kind of interest, "and would you be kind enough to tell her whether there is any chance of her getting a chess-board and chess-men, if she sent in to Lairg by the letter-carrier to-morrow morning?"

He paused for a moment.

"Lairg?" said he. "They keep most

things there, but not chess-men, I fancy. However, that is of no account; will you tell Miss Hague, with my compliments, that I shall get her something that will do instead—in the course of an hour or so?"

Miss Ennerby thanked him and withdrew; and forthwith he set to work to improvise the materials for a game of chess. He got a sheet of Bristol board about double the size of a chess-board; and that he divided into the proper number of squares, painting each alternate one a deep lilac. He got another sheet, and cut that into the number of pieces required; and then he proceeded to sketch, in colour, on each bit of board, the piece it represented—kings, queens, bishops, knights, and castles, along with the humble necessary pawns—the one set being rose-red, the other pale orange. And when all this was done, he did not ring for Nelly; he took the whole apparatus with him, and went along the passage, and presented himself at Miss Hague's room.

Miss Hague and her companion had just been having tea; a small table was drawn in by the side of the couch.

"I've got a kind of make-shift here," said he. "I don't know whether it will do; perhaps it will be better than nothing."

Miss Ennerby removed the tea-things; Sydney displayed his improvised chess-board and his coloured pieces; and Miss Anne was quite charmed.

"Why," she said, "you must be a chess-player yourself, or you couldn't have drawn the pieces so well."

There was a pause. Which of them was going to challenge the other to play? They both meant the same thing; but who was to say it? 'Bess' said it.

"You know, Miss Anne," she put in, "you always beat me; and it's no fun for either you or me. Perhaps, you won't find it so easy with Mr. Durham."

"Oh, you will beat me easily," Sydney said to Miss Anne, as he rather nervously proceeded to draw in a chair; "but then I don't mind being beaten."

He didn't mind being beaten! Why, he wanted to be beaten! He wanted to be pounded, thrashed, exterminated—anything that would give her pleasure. He would have made all her pawns queens; he would have lent to her bishops the leaping powers of knights; he would have allowed her to castle out of check—anything, everything, as long as he was to have the entrancement of sitting near her—only this trumpery little table between them—so near that if a single

hair had got out of its place on her smooth, pale forehead, he could have noticed it. What did he care about bishops and castles, when he could look at her small white hand moving over the board—a small white hand innocent of any ring! He forgot the existence of 'Bess.' She was in the room, doubtless, somewhere. Perhaps she was sewing; perhaps she was looking out of the window at the wild and wintry landscape, and wondering what could have brought any decent Christian folk to such a place. Meanwhile, Sydney was skilfully marshalling his forces so as to secure his own defeat, until a

protest from Miss Anne—"Mr. Durham, what are you doing? Look at your queen!" warned him that he must not play the traitor in too open a manner. Finally he was completely conquered, to his own exceeding joy; for immediately he said he must have his revenge, and to that she cheerfully assented. The result was that they played right on until dinner-time, when the arrival of the fair-haired Nelly drove him forth from this paradise to his own solitary little room.

This was but a beginning; Miss Ennerby, who had clear and shrewd grey eyes, thought she could foresee the end.

SHOOTING STARS.

By SIR R. S. BALL, LL.D., F.R.S., ASTRONOMER ROYAL FOR IRELAND.

SECOND PAPER.

GREAT fire-balls are much more numerous than any one would suppose who had not paid attention to the subject. Nor need this be a matter for surprise if it be remembered that when a fire-ball does arrive it is only by a favourable combination of circumstances that any particular individual is privileged to witness the exhibition. Let us examine the conditions that are necessary. In the first place, the observer who desires to look out for meteors will naturally choose some station which commands the most uninterrupted view of the sky on all sides. The deck of a ship on the open sea, or, better still, the summit of a lofty mountain will represent ideal sites for the purpose. Over head is the great ocean of air rising to a height which, for our present purpose, we may take to be about two hundred miles. But only a very small fraction of the entire atmosphere of our globe is within the sphere of observation from one locality. If a fire-ball plunges into the air it may perhaps be seen if in any part of its track it is above the horizon. With sufficient precision we may assert that the proportion of the total atmosphere which is above the horizon at any one place is $\frac{1}{16}$ of the whole, and that anything which may occur in the remaining 499 parts is of course occluded from view. Even were the sky so perfectly clear as to permit an unintermitting watch being maintained from one year's end to the other, we could not expect from any single station to see more than a mere fraction of the total number of fire-balls that had actually descended. It must also be remembered that the fire-balls which do travel above the horizon will have many chances of escap-

ing notice, for an observer cannot be always on the look out. He will be indeed a diligent astronomer and situated in a favoured clime who should spend a thousand hours in the year on the watch for shooting stars. Even this will, however, only amount to one hour out of every eight. We may reasonably suppose that meteors and fire-balls will be as likely to arrive in any one of the seven hours during which an observer is not on the watch as in the single hour during which he is present.

This will explain why it is that though fire-balls are really so very abundant, yet that the opportunities enjoyed by any individual for seeing them are comparatively infrequent. As a random example of the yearly crop of fire-balls, I take from the middle of 1877 to the middle of 1878. A list of the fire-balls noticed during this period will be found in that storehouse of valuable information, the Reports of the British Association. In the year referred to I see that eighty-six great fire-balls have been recorded. They have appeared in various localities, both in the old hemisphere and in the new. The most patient observer may think himself fortunate if he had even seen one of them.

As to the brilliant light from some of these great fire-balls, there are numerous statements. We are not infrequently told that even the beams of the full moon are ineffectual by comparison with the blaze of the meteor; and we find a high authority asserting that one of these bodies displayed a flash as "blinding as the sun." But our knowledge of the actual illuminating power of meteors is almost unavoidably of rather an inaccurate

description. We could measure the light, no doubt, with all practicable precision if we knew when and where to expect it, for then we could bring a suitable photometric apparatus to bear at the critical moment. In the absence of any precise information, we are forced to make the most of such occasional comparisons as may be available. On the 29th July, 1878, a fire-ball was seen which created so splendid an illumination that "the smallest objects were visible at Manchester." An eye-witness states that when at its best the fire-ball had the lustre of a powerful electric light seen from a distance of thirty or forty yards, though at the moment the fire-ball must certainly have been forty-five miles away. We can make a comparative estimate of the intrinsic intensity of a light which, when received from a distance of forty-five miles, has a brilliancy equal to that of a known source thirty-five yards away. It is thus shown that the fire-ball must have emitted more light than five millions of the electric lamps.

Fortunate indeed would the astronomer have been who, guided by some miraculous prescience, had gone to the ancient city of York on the evening of the 23rd of February, 1879, and on the tower of the glorious minster spent the night in observation of the heavens. It would have been his privilege to have witnessed a majestic meteor under circumstances of almost unique magnificence.

Unhappily, there was no expectant astronomer at once ready to observe and competent to record the great event on the morning of the 24th. The time of its occurrence was also the most unpropitious, so far as the attention of casual observers was concerned. Did a nocturnal fire-ball desire that its splendours should be witnessed by as few persons as possible, it could choose no hour so favourable as about three o'clock in the morning. Those who sit up latest have at last got to sleep; those who rise the earliest have not yet awaked. It was at seven minutes before three that such few stragglers as the streets of York still contained saw a pear-shaped ball of fire travelling across the sky. It drenched the ancient city with a flood of light. The superb front of the minster never before glowed with so romantic an illumination. The unwonted brilliancy streamed through every aperture in every window in the city, every wakeful eye was instantly on the alert, every light sleeper started up suddenly to know what was the matter. Even those whom the blaze of midnight light had failed to awaken were only permitted to protract their slum-

bers for another minute and a half. Only until an awful crash, like a mighty peal of thunder, burst over the town, shaking the doors, the windows, and even the houses themselves. The whole city was thus alarmed. Every one started at the noise. But that noise was not a clap of thunder. Nor was it produced by an earthquake. It was merely the explosion of the fire-ball which flung itself against the atmosphere after its unmeasurable voyage through space.

Let us imagine a wayfarer in the streets of Newcastle on the same morning. He is struggling on his way in dense darkness, and through a raging storm of snow. An instantaneous transformation scene takes place. Suddenly there was light above and around which rendered the white mantle of the city as bright as a summer day. The observer will at once see that this wondrous illumination is not lightning. A flash of lightning lasts for an inconceivably small fraction of a second. But while a man could count fifty the town glows with this strange illumination. And strange it is, for the source of the light is not visible. As the snowstorm would have hidden the sun itself at mid-day, so in the dead of night it hid the great meteor. An exquisite phase of the phenomenon was presented by the changes in the hue of the light, which passed from a brilliant white to a beautiful blue ere it disappeared.

Perhaps the most remarkable instance of the *explosion* of a meteor is recorded in the case of the great fire-ball so widely observed in America on the 21st December, 1876. The movements of this superb object have been carefully studied by Professor H. A. Newton and Professor D. Kirkwood. For a prodigious span of a thousand miles this meteor tore over the American continent with a speed of some ten or fifteen miles a second. It originated in Kansas at a height of seventy-five miles. Thence it glided over the Mississippi, over the Missouri; it passed to the south of Lake Michigan; it made a short voyage over Lake Erie, and it cannot have been very far from the falls of Niagara, when by becoming invisible all further traces of its movements were lost. While passing a point midway between Chicago and St. Louis a frightful explosion shattered the meteor into a cluster of brilliant balls of fire, which seemed to chase each other across the sky. This cluster must have been about forty miles long and five miles wide. The detonation by which the explosion was accompanied was a specially notable incident of this meteor. It was not

only heard with terrific intensity in the neighbourhood, but the volume of sound was borne to great distances. Bloomington, in Indiana, is one hundred and eighty-five miles from the actual point in the sky where the meteor was rent in pieces, yet about the neighbourhood of Bloomington not only was the sound of a frightful explosion heard, but the shock of the concussion was actually felt to such a degree that some of those who experienced it thought an earthquake must have happened.

The tremendous volume of sound that must have been emitted is forcibly presented to us when we consider the interval of time that elapsed between the moment when the inhabitants of Bloomington saw the gorgeous procession of fire-balls streaming over the heavens, and the moment when the appalling crash burst on their ears. Every one is familiar with the fact that the flash of the gun is seen ere the report is heard, and the greater the distance of the gun the longer is the interval by which the light and the noise are separated. Sound takes five seconds to travel a mile; light travels so quickly that the time necessary to traverse a mile, or a hundred miles, or a thousand miles, is utterly inappreciable by ordinary measurement.

The superb spectacle had been seen at Bloomington. It had excited the utmost astonishment; doubtless it had been discussed and notes had been compared by those whose good fortune had permitted them to see it. But the immediate excitement was over, friends had parted for the night; some of them had entered their houses; others had renewed their walk homewards, and had travelled nearly a mile on their journey; vehicles had driven a couple of miles; trains had run half-a-dozen miles; columns of newspapers had been read. Many who had seen the meteor had already forgotten it, when their ears were deafened by the arrival of the awful explosion. The waves of sound had to travel a distance as great as from London to Liverpool, and even at the rate of a mile every five seconds this cannot be done in less than a quarter of an hour. Probably many of those who both heard the noise and saw the light found it hard to believe in their connection. We are indebted to the care of one observer at Bloomington, who by looking at his clock when the fire-balls were seen, and again when the explosion was heard, has added an important particular to our knowledge of this great meteor.

Nor need we feel much astonishment at the stupendous phenomena, both of light and of sound, which accompany the advent of a splendid and detonating fire-ball. I must here give a few figures which will show how great is the store of energy possessed by a meteor in virtue of the amazing velocity with which it is animated. I shall suppose that the material element of the meteor consists of a small mass of stone or of some more or less metallic material which weighs one pound. We shall examine the circumstances under which we must endeavour by mechanical agents to project this small body with the meteoric speed of, let us say, twenty-five miles a second. Our utmost attempts with a cannon could hardly produce a speed of one-hundredth part of the required amount, and even for this a charge of gunpowder, certainly not less than a quarter of a pound, would be consumed. If a cannon of amazing strength and of ideal efficiency could be conceived, in which all the energy of the exploding powder should be usefully concentrated upon communicating velocity to the projectile, we should find that to double the speed the charge must be quadrupled. To treble the speed we should have to increase the charge ninefold. If the speed were to be increased ten times, we must put one hundred times as much powder into the cannon. Finally, if we could procure a piece of ordnance strong enough and gunpowder rapid enough to impart meteoric velocity to the missile, a charge would be necessary which is ten thousand times as great as the quarter of a pound that is sufficient under the conditions of ordinary artillery. This argument shows us that the energy of an entire ton weight of gunpowder would be required to impart to a stone one pound in weight the liveliness of an ordinary fire-ball.

Whatever may have been the original source whence the meteor acquired its energy (and this is a point on which I do not at present make any remark), that energy will be retained so long as the meteor retains its velocity. Even if the meteor moved through empty space for a million years, it would still be able to restore, if its motion were arrested, the precise quantity of energy which it had originally received. Hence, when the supreme moment has arrived, the meteor expends in the throes of its dissolution all the energy it contains. Everything that the energy liberated by the explosion of a ton of gunpowder can do, that meteor weighing only a pound is competent to accomplish. If the

weight of the missile were greater than one pound, the velocity remaining the same, the available energy would be increased in the same proportion. For example, if the meteor weighed ten pounds, one hundred pounds, or one thousand pounds, it would discharge as much energy as could be awakened by the detonation of ten tons, of one hundred tons, or of one thousand tons of gunpowder. Need we wonder, then, that gorgeous lights and that majestic thunders have occasionally accompanied the annihilation of large meteors.

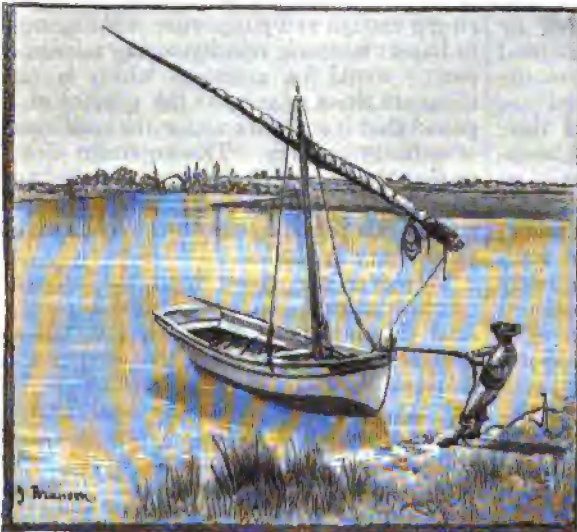
There is another instructive method for obtaining a due estimate of the potency of a meteor to produce tremendous effects notwithstanding its comparatively small size. In our present illustration we shall employ that great source of energy which is familiar in the steam engine. Let us think of a mighty Atlantic liner, the engines of which have, let us say, 8,200 horse-power. Let us conceive such appropriate mechanism as would permit the Titanic power of these engines to be concentrated on the single duty of imparting velocity to a small piece of matter one pound in weight. It can then be shown that the piece of matter would,

after the lapse of sixty seconds, have acquired a meteoric speed. So long as the meteor retained that speed it would retain the energy the engine had given to it, nor could the meteor surrender its rapid motion except the energy be transformed into some other form. If then the meteor lose its speed by piercing its way for a minute through our atmosphere it will reproduce all the energy that 8,200 horse-power can do in the same time.

Suppose that in the elevated regions of our atmosphere in the dead of night all the vigour of a set of engines, whose collective strength was equal to that of forty thousand horses, was concentrated on the production of an electric light; suppose, further, that the dazzling glare thus created was accompanied by the music from an orchestra of fog-horns blown by another forty thousand horses, surely a scare would be produced which the most pretentious fire-ball might be content to emulate. Yet the figures we have already given will prove that a meteor only ten pounds in weight, which a child could carry, bears in the mere swiftness of its flight a capacity adequate to such a display.

THE AZORES.

By PROFESSOR THORPE, F.R.S.

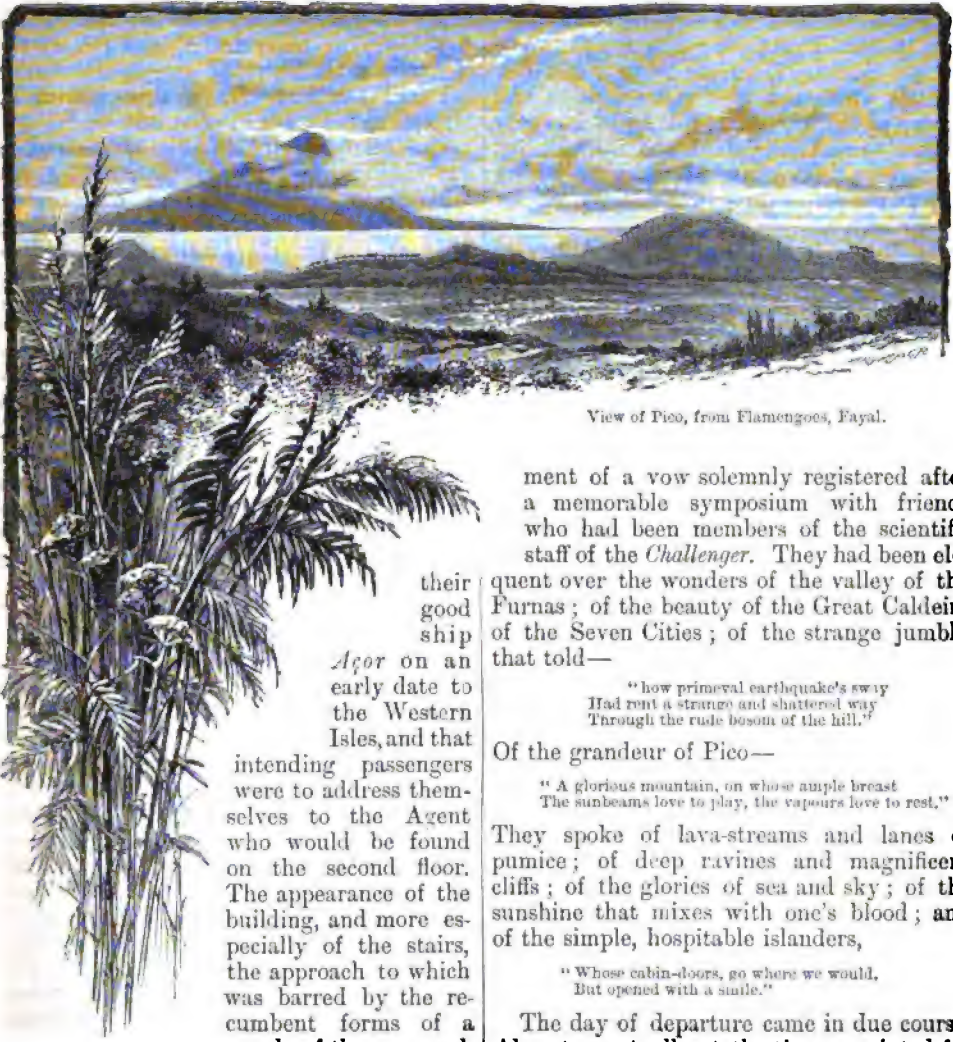


A Tagus Boat.

THERE is a characteristic bit of rhapsody in Lord Beaconsfield's "Endymion" which is as the wine of gladness and the oil of consolation to dozens of professional

men who are worn with the toil of office or the worry of work. It is that wherein the novelist describes the delights of that most sacred of mundane institutions, the Long Vacation. For is it not to them, he asks, "the fulfilment of the dream over which they have been brooding for ten months; which has sustained them in toil, lightened anxiety, and softened even loss? It is air, it is health, it is movement, it is liberty, it is nature—earth, sea, lake, moor, forest, mountain, and river."

It was, then, in the first flush of the pleasure of realisation of such a dream, that E. and I found ourselves on a certain day in the early part of the August of two or three years ago at the bottom of a narrow, tortuous stair of a house on the Caes do Sodré, in Lisbon, deciphering a not very legible intimation to the effect that the Empreza Insulana de Navegação proposed to dispatch



View of Pico, from Flamengoes, Fayal.

their
good
ship

Açor on an
early date to
the Western
Isles, and that

intending passengers
were to address them-
selves to the Agent
who would be found
on the second floor.
The appearance of the
building, and more es-
pecially of the stairs,
the approach to which
was barred by the re-
cumbent forms of a
couple of those marvel-

ously-tattered beggars to be found only
in Southern capitals, and who here seemed
to find, in the unbroken solitude of the
passage and the comparative coolness of
its flags, a fit place for the enjoyment of
their siesta, was not very reassuring as to
the prosperity of the *Empreza Insulana* or
the character of its steamers. In some little
trepidation we mounted to the office, and on
stating our wish to take passage in the *Açor*,
were received by the solitary clerk much in
the same way, we thought, as Mr. Scadder
must have welcomed poor Martin Chuzzlewit
and Mark on the occasion of that never-to-
be-forgotten transaction with the Eden Land
Corporation. But there was to be no turn-
ing back. For our journey was in fulfil-

ment of a vow solemnly registered after
a memorable symposium with friends
who had been members of the scientific
staff of the *Challenger*. They had been elo-
quent over the wonders of the valley of the
Furnas; of the beauty of the Great Caldeira
of the Seven Cities; of the strange jumble
that told—

"how primeval earthquake's sway
Had rent a strange and shattered way
Through the rude bosom of the hill."

Of the grandeur of Pico—

"A glorious mountain, on whose ample breast
The sunbeams love to play, the vapours love to rest,"

They spoke of lava-streams and lanes of
pumice; of deep ravines and magnificent
cliffs; of the glories of sea and sky; of the
sunshine that mixes with one's blood; and
of the simple, hospitable islanders,

"Whose cabin-doors, go where we would,
But opened with a smile."

The day of departure came in due course.
Almost punctually at the time appointed for
sailing, the portly form of the urbane repre-
sentative of the *Empreza Insulana* folds in
close embrace the no less portly form of the
gallant commander of the *Açor*. The agent,
scattering smiles and bows on his way to the
side, descends to his boat, the captain skips
up the ladder on to the bridge, flings away
the end of his cigarette, gives a wave of his
hand and half-a-dozen words of command,
and the solemn, measured thud of the en-
gines tells us that the *Açor* has started on
her voyage. Slowly threading her course
down the river, alive with graceful faluyas,
lazily-moving batels, and cumbrous salt-boats,
and anon giving way to an incoming barque,
gay with bunting, as if glad to reach the
haven where she would be, and with many

respectful dips of the ensign to the six or eight men-of-war which find pleasant quarters in the Tagus, our vessel at length reaches Belem. Here she stops for a few minutes whilst a boat comes alongside, and sundry papers are lowered down in a canvas bucket to the official in the stern-sheets. Everything is pronounced satisfactory; we take in the ship's gunpowder, and are again on our way.

At Belem is the Westminster Abbey of Portugal, and in the beautiful convent church lie the ashes of two of her greatest sons—Vasco da Gama and Luiz de Camoens. It was from here that the great navigator embarked on his memorable voyage of 1497; and it was here, too, that Camoens, when driven into exile, declared in bitterness of heart that his ungrateful country should not possess his bones. But seventeen weary years of hardship and misery had utterly crushed the spirit of the sprightly poet, whose cultured intellect and winning manners had made him, in happier times, a favourite in the gay court of Don John III.—the court of which Gil Vicente wrote, and as Camoens too truly found, that it was “a sea in which many fished, but found the pastime dangerous.” Broken in health, and so wretchedly poor that, as the story goes, his faithful Javanese had need to beg from passers-by for a meal for his master, Camoens turned back to his country, and offered her a treasure more lasting and more estimable than all the wealth of the Indies. He died, however, in a poor-house in Lisbon without a sheet to cover him. At the time of our visit the city was *en fête*, and the fine statue in the Praça which bears his name was draped with many-coloured flags, for they had removed the poet's bones from the Convent of Santa Ana to Belem. It was a great ceremony, and there was much eloquent speaking. But it was not said, that he had asked for bread and that they had given him a stone.

The *Açor* is again on her voyage. The cypresses which shelter the bones of poor Fielding are no longer to be seen; the parched brown and yellow sand-hills which line the turbid river drop down one by one; we pass the grand old Moorish tower which stands, like a sentinel, at the opening of the river; Fort St. Julian frowns for a moment upon us, and we speed with the ebbing tide over the bar; the little white windmills dotting every hillock and the pink and bright-red houses gradually disappear, and the purple hills of Cintra fade in the quivering air. We stop for a moment to put our

pilot over the side; he sings out a hearty “Boa viagem!” as his boat is cast off; and the *Açor*, now fairly feeling the roll of the big blue sea which lies stretched between her and her goal for a thousand miles, buckles to her work in good earnest.

Our interest is now suddenly centred in our ship, and we realise that, unlike Antonio's, our ventures *are* in one bottom trusted; that ships are but boards, sailors but men, and that there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. We thank heaven that the water-rats and water-thieves are now-a-days less numerous about the Azores than in Shakespeare's time, when gentlemen of the predatory instincts of the Earl of Cumberland, Lord Thomas Howard, and Sir Richard Grenville went prowling round the islands in waiting for the rich galleons of Spain. For it is to the Azores that we are bound. The object of our journey is to see a volcano which lies midway between Europe and America, and which rises sheer out of the Atlantic to a height of some eight thousand feet. Round this peak are scattered some seven or eight islands containing upwards of a quarter of a million of people. The islands extend in an oblique line from N.W. to S.E., between the parallels of 37° and 40° N. latitude, and between 25° and 31° W. longitude. Geographically they may be divided into three groups: the first or easterly group comprises St. Michael's and St. Mary's; the second or central group contains Terceira, Graciosa, St. George, Pico, and Fayal; whilst the third or westerly group consists of the lonely little islands of Flores and Corvo. They are all very small places; a very good walker might almost go round the biggest of them in a day. Every inch of them, with the exception of a curious little bit of St. Mary's, has been fused and burnt and charred out of all resemblance to anything we have in this part of the world save a forge-heap or a slag-hill. Each little island presents a solid front of hard black lava against the ravages of the great ocean which thunders at the base of cliffs and precipices hundreds of feet high. Even on the stillest day the black rocks are edged with an ever-moving fringe of white surf, which leaps up against their obdurate face or sullenly rolls in among the caverns at their base.

Marvellously fertile, too, are these islands; almost anything will grow there if it can but manage to get shelter from the violence of the winter winds. The hills of pumice and cinders are green to their very tops

with cedar, and juniper, and tree-heath; the lower lands and less exposed places grow rich crops of maize and grain, beans, tobacco, and sweet potatoes; in every little glen may be seen the bright-green shield-shaped leaves of "enhamo," together with enormous pendent fronds, six and eight feet long, of the *Woodwardia* fern, springing from a carpet, ankle deep, of the densest and greenest lycopodium. The lava walls which line the roads and mark off the fields are green and grey with moss and lichen. Here and there are broad banana-leaves, and the crumpled leaves of "nispera" peer above waving rows of cane-stalks. The islands are rich in all manner of kindly fruits. The vine and fig-tree straggle in all directions over the stony sides of Pico; there are pumpkins and pine-apples, passion-flower fruit and pomegranates; the peaches are as plentiful as the blackberries, and oranges and apricots are to be had for the asking:—

"Paradise and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
Bought in the Atlantic main."

When the Azores were first made known to geographers is not established with any degree of certainty. According to the usual account, St. Mary's was first found by Gonçalo Velho Cabral, who in 1431 had been directed by Don Henry "the Navigator" "to sail towards the setting sun, and on discovering an island to return with an account of it." The terms of these instructions might imply that Don Henry was aware of the existence of undiscovered lands to the west. Indeed this is probable. The enlightened prince, to whose liberality and energy we owe the discovery of at least one-half of our globe, and who, it is pleasant to remember, was half an Englishman, for his maternal grandfather was John of Gaunt, had accumulated at his little court at Sagres, in the Algarve, all the geographical information of his time. He had set up an observatory, and, under the direction of Mestre Jayme, of Majorca, his officers were instructed in mathematics and in the art of navigation. Don Henry was doubtless familiar with the writings of the Arabian geographers of the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, and the account given by Al Idrisi of the nine islands to the west of the Canaries was probably known to him. According to Candido Luzitano (Padre Joseph Freire), the biographer of Don Henry, all the islands were laid down on a map brought from the East in 1428 by Don Pedro, an elder brother of Don Henry. It is related that Don Pedro, in the course of

his wanderings among the courts of the Grand Turk, the Sultan of Babylon, and other Oriental potentates, had become possessed of a map of the world, on which were figured various unknown lands. The Jesuit, Antonio Cordeyro, who wrote a history of the Azores, mentions a tradition that a Greek was driven by stress of weather close to St. Michael's about 1370, and that the discoverer thereafter made an unsuccessful attempt to colonise the island by Spaniards. The islands are apparently indicated on certain Catalan maps of the fourteenth century. In one, dated 1351, the group which comprises St. Mary's and St. Michael's is designated as the Goat Islands (*Insule de Cabrera*); St. George, Fayal, and Pico are classed together as the Wind or Dove Islands (*Insule de Ventura sive de Colombis*), and Flores and Corvo are called the Crow Islands (*Insule de Corvis marinis*). Terceira alone has a distinctive appellation of the Brazil Island (*Insule de Brazil*). It is only possible to account for these names on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle. It is certain that no goat would be found either on St. Mary's or St. Michael's until long after the date of this map, for when the islands were first colonised not a quadruped or even a biped, except the feathered ones, was to be seen there. Pigeons were doubtless met with on all the islands, together with plenty of wind at times. The term *brazil* was formerly given to any red vegetable dye-stuff, and its application to the country which now bears that name is to be traced to the circumstance that Pinçon, the companion of Columbus, who discovered the South American Continent in 1499, took home with him a quantity of the wood of *Cesalpinia brasiliensis*, which was used by the aborigines as a dye-stuff. It is remarkable, however, that the name "brazil" still persists in Terceira; the outlying volcano which shelters Angra from the south-west gales is called Monte Bresil, but whether in relation to the original designation of the island or to the rubiginous colour of the slopes of that land-mark is not clear.

This island of Brazil, like that of St. Brandon and of the Seven Cities, the *Isla Verde*, and many others, is continually to be met with on the maps of early geographers. In the charts of Mercator the Atlantic Ocean is seen to be studded with hundreds of islands, called up from the vasty deep by the fancy of successive cosmographers. The shapes, sizes, and relative positions of these islands are so obviously dependent upon the exigencies of construction as to suggest that in

these, as in that famous map of the American humourist, "more attention had been paid to artistic picturesqueness than to geographical reliability." It is curious to note, however, how many of these names have come down to us after having wandered over the blank expanse of the oceans of generations of map-makers. Thus the *Antilia* of the map which Columbus must have had with him still survives in the Antilles which he discovered; and the Land of the Seven Cities, which had its origin in a legend which tells how a body of Christians, fleeing from the persecutions of their Moorish conquerors, had trusted themselves to the guidance of seven bishops

and to the mercies of the Western Ocean, has finally rested, in all probability, as the name of that wonderful volcanic district at the western end of St. Michael's known as the "Sete Cidades."

We may assume, then, that the "Navigator" had good grounds for his belief in the existence of these islands when he directed Cabral to sail towards the west. Be this as it may, Cabral set out, and after several days' sail came upon a cluster of bare rocks, on which it was impossible to land, even had there been any inducement to do so, on account of the terrible surf which washed over them. These rocks were termed the



Coast View, Azores.

Ant Islands, or Formigas, by Cabral, a name which they still retain, and by which they are known to navigators as one of the most dangerous shoals in the Atlantic Ocean. Disgusted with the result of his voyage, Cabral bore up for home; but in the following year he was again dispatched by Don Henry, and on the 15th of August, 1432, he came in sight of the most southerly of the group, which he named Santa Maria. Don Henry conferred the lordship of the island on Cabral, who settled there, taking out with him a few of his countrymen, cattle, articles of husbandry, and a number of slaves. Although St. Mary's is only thirty-six square miles in extent, and is but sixty miles from St. Michael's, the largest of the group, eleven years elapsed before the

latter island was discovered. It appears that the early colonists had planted themselves on the southern coast, near the only harbour that St. Mary's possesses. There was little to tempt them to sail round the island, which offered no shelter outside its one harbour. Not a human being was on the place when Cabral first landed, and the ground was covered almost to its highest point with a thick growth of faya and tree-heath. On a summer's day in 1443 a wretched negro, fleeing from punishment, had plunged into this tangle of vegetation, and gained the high land to the rear of the settlement. Looking out upon the broad ocean to the north was,

"Dim seen in outline faintly blue,"

another and a larger island. The slave

turned back with the news of his discovery; and as soon as the winter storms were past, and his crazy ship refitted, Cabral passed over to the new land, which he named St. Michael's, from the circumstance that he landed on the fête-day of that saint, the 8th of May, 1444. The existence of the other islands was quickly made out. Next came Terceira, so named from being third in the order of discovery; and from this could be seen at once Graciosa—the beautiful island; the long narrow ridge of St. George; the cloud-capped summit of Pico, and behind it the green island of Fayal. Corvo—the island of crows—and Flores—the island of flowers—which lie upwards of one hundred and fifty miles away to the west, were not found until 1457. The whole group was rapidly colonised, and in 1466 was given by Alphonso V. to his aunt Isabella, Duchess of Burgundy, who sent out so large a number of Flemish settlers that the islands became known for a time as the Flemish Islands. The admixture of northern blood has left its influences upon the people and upon their language. The subsequent history of the

Azores may be very shortly dismissed. Up to 1640, when Spain and Portugal were severed, they were part of the Spanish dominions. Since that time they have belonged to Portugal, and form a province of that kingdom. During the turbulent times of Elizabeth's reign they were the frequent scenes of strife between our ships and those of Spain, which made the Azores a calling-place on their homeward voyages from the Indies. We all remember the Laureate's stirring ballad of the *Revenge* and how "At Flores, in the Azores, Sir Richard Grenville lay," and what he did with the fifty-three "huge sea castles" that closed in upon his little ship.

The commerce of the Indies has long since passed out of the hands of the Spaniards, and the quaint little forts which the islanders had put up to protect their towns from their troublesome English visitors are moss-grown and crumbling. Our relations with the Azores are to-day of a happier character, and nowhere do the islanders find a better market for their golden fruit than in England.

(To be continued.)

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

"THE house seems quiet without Frithiof," remarked Herr Falck on the Monday after his son's departure.

Frithiof at that very moment was walking through the streets of Hull, feeling lonely and desolate enough. They felt desolate without him at Bergen, and began to talk much of his return, and to wonder when the wedding would be, and to settle what presents they would give Blanche.

The dining-room looked very pleasant on that October morning. Sigrid, though never quite happy when her twin was away, was looking forward eagerly to his return, and was so much cheered by the improvement in her father's health and spirits that she felt more at rest than she had done for some time. Little Swanhild, whose passion for Blanche increased daily, was in the seventh heaven of happiness, and though she had not been told everything, knew quite well that the general expectation was that Frithiof would be betrothed to her ideal. As for

Herr Falck he looked eager and hopeful, and it seemed as if some cloud of care had been lifted off him. He talked more than he had done of late, teased Swanhild merrily about her lessons, and kept both girls laughing and chattering at the table till Swanhild had to run off in a hurry, declaring that she should be late for school.

"You should not tell such funny stories in the morning, little father!" she said laughingly as she stopped for the customary kiss and "tak for maden" (thanks for the meal) on her way out of the room.

"Ah, but to laugh is so good for the digestion," said Herr Falck. "You will read English all the better in consequence. See if you don't."

"Are you busy to-day, father?" asked Sigrid as the door closed behind the little girl.

"Not at all. I shall take a walk before going to the office. I tell you what, Sigrid, you shall come with me and get a new English story at Beyer's, to cheer you in Frithiof's absence. What was the novel

some one told you gave the best description of English home life?"

"'Wives and Daughters,'" said Sigrid.

"Well, let us get it, then, and afterwards we will just take a turn above Walkendorf's Tower, and see if there is any sign of our vessels from Iceland."

"You heard good news of them last month, did you not?" asked Sigrid.

"No definite news, but everything was very hopeful. They sent word by the steamer to Granton, and telegraphed from there to our station in Öifjord."

"What did they say?"

"That as yet there had been no catch of herrings, but that everything was most promising, as plenty of whales were seen every day at the mouth of the fjord. Oh, I am perfectly satisfied. I have had no anxiety about the expedition since then." So father and daughter set out together. It was a clear frosty morning, the wintry air was invigorating, and Sigrid thought she had never seen her father look so well before; his step seemed so light, his brow so smooth, his eyes so unclouded. Beyer's shop had fascinations for them both; she lingered long in the neighbourhood of the Tauchnitz shelves, while Herr Falck discussed the news with some one behind the counter, and admired the pictures temptingly displayed.

"Look here, Sigrid!" he exclaimed. "Did you ever see a prettier little water-colour than that? Bergen in winter, from the harbour. What is the price of it? A hundred kroner? I must really have it. It shall be a present to you in memory of our walk."

Sigrid was delighted with the picture, and Herr Falck himself seemed as pleased with it as a child with a new toy. They walked away together, planning where it should hang at home, and saying how it was just the sort of thing Frithiof would like.

"It is quite a pity we did not see it when he was away in Germany, he would have liked to have it when he was suffering from *heim weh*," said Sigrid.

"Well, all that sort of thing is over for him, I hope," said Herr Falck. "No need that he should be away from Bergen any more, except now and then for a holiday. And if ever you marry a foreigner, Sigrid, you will be able to take Bergen with you as a consolation."

They made their way up to a little wooded hill above the fortress, which commanded a wide and beautiful view.

"Ah!" cried Herr Falck. "Look there,

Sigrid! Look, look! there is surely a vessel coming."

She gazed out seawards.

"You have better eyes than I have, father. Whereabouts? Oh! yes, now I see, ever so far away. Do you think it is one of yours?"

"I can't tell yet," said Herr Falck; and glancing at him she saw that he was in an agony of impatience, and that the old troubled look had come back to his face.

Again the nameless fear which had seized her in the summer took possession of her. She would not bother him with questions, but waited silently beside him, wondering why he was so unusually excited, wishing that she understood business matters, longing for Frithiof, who would perhaps have known all about it and could have reassured her.

"Yes, yes," cried Herr Falck at length, "I am almost sure it is one of our Öifjord vessels. Yes! I am certain it is the *Solid*. Now the great question is this—is she loaded or only ballasted?"

The fresh strong wind kept blowing Sigrid's fringe about distractingly; sheltering her eyes with her hand she looked again eagerly at the approaching vessel.

"I think she is rather low in the water, father, don't you?"

"I hope so—I hope so," said Herr Falck, and he took off his spectacles and began to wipe the dim glasses with fingers that trembled visibly.

The ship was drawing nearer and nearer, and every moment Sigrid realised more that it was not as she had first hoped. Undoubtedly the vessel was high in the water. She glanced apprehensively at her father.

"I can't bear this any longer, Sigrid," he exclaimed. "We will go down to Tydske-bryggen, and take a boat and row out to her."

They hurried away, speaking never a word. Sigrid feared that her father would send her home, thinking it would be cold for her on the water, but he allowed her to get into the little boat in silence, perhaps scarcely realising her presence, too much taken up with his great anxiety to think of anything else. As they threaded their way through the busy harbour, she began to feel a little more cheerful. Perhaps after all the matter was not so serious. The sun shone brightly on the sparkling water; the sailors and labourers on the vessels and the quays shouted and talked at their work; on a steamer, which they passed, one of the men was cleaning the brass-work and singing blithely the familiar tune of "Sønner af Norge."

"We must hope for the best," said Herr

Falck, "perhaps also feeling the influence of the cheerful tune.

Just as they neared the *Solid* the anchor dropped.

"You had better wait here," said Herr Falck, "while I go on board. I'll not keep you long, dear."

Nevertheless anxious waiting always does seem long, and Sigrid, spite of her sealskin jacket, shivered as she sat in the little boat. It was not so much the cold that made her shiver, as that horrible nameless dread, that anxiety which weighed so much more heavily because she did not fully understand it.

When her father rejoined her, her worst fears were realised. He neither looked at her nor spoke to her, but, just giving a word of direction to the boatman, sat down in his place with folded arms and bent head. She knew instantly that some terrible disaster must have happened, but she did not dare to ask what it was, she just sat still listening to the monotonous stroke of the oars, and with an uneasy wonder in her mind as to what would happen next. They were nearing the shore, and at last her father spoke.

"Pay the man, Sigrid," he said, and with an unsteady hand he gave her his purse. He got out of the boat first and she fancied she saw him stagger, but the next moment he recovered himself and turned to help her. They walked away together in the direction of the office.

"You must not be too anxious, dear child," he said. "I will explain all to you this evening. I have had a heavy loss."

"But, little father, you look so ill," pleaded Sigrid. "Must you indeed go to the office? Why not come home and rest?"

"Rest!" said Herr Falck dreamily. "Rest? No, not just yet—not just yet. Send the carriage for me this afternoon, and say nothing about it to any one—I'll explain it to you later on."

So the father and daughter parted, and Sigrid went home to bear as best she could her day of suspense. Herr Falck returned later on, looking very ill and complaining of headache. She persuaded him to lie down in his study, and would not ask him the question which was trembling on her lips. But in the evening he spoke to her.

"You are a good child, Sigrid, a good child," he said, caressing her hand. "And now you must hear all, though I would give much to keep it from you. The Iceland expedition has failed, dear; the vessels have come back empty."

"Does it mean such a very great loss to you, father?" she asked.

"I will explain to you," he said more eagerly; "I should like you to understand how it has come about. For some time trade has been very bad, and last year and the year before I had some heavy losses connected with the Lofoten part of the business."

He seemed to take almost a pleasure in giving her all sorts of details which she could not half understand; she heard in a confused way of the three steamers sent to Nordland in the summer with empty barrels and salt for the herrings; she heard about buying at the Bourse of Bergen large quantities, so that Herr Falck had ten thousand barrels at a time, and had been obliged to realise them at ruinous prices.

"You do not understand all this, my Sigrid," he said, smiling at her puzzled face. "Well, I'll tell you the rest more simply. Things were looking as bad as possible, and when in the summer I heard that Haugesund had caught thousands of barrels of herrings in the fjords of Iceland, I made up my mind to try the same plan, and to stake all on that last throw. I chartered sailing vessels, hired hands, bought nets, and the expedition set off—I knew that if it came back with full barrels I should be a rich man, and that if it failed, there was no help for it—my business must go to pieces."

Sigrid gave a little cry. "You will be bankrupt?" she exclaimed. "Oh, surely not that, father—not that!"

She remembered all too vividly the bankruptcy of a well-known timber merchant some years before; she knew that he had raised money by borrowing on the Bank of Norway and on the Savings Bank of Bergen, and she knew that it was the custom of the land that the Banks, avoiding risk in that way, demanded two sureties for the loan, and that the failure of a large firm caused distress far and wide, to an extent hardly conceivable to foreigners.

"There is yet one hope," said Herr Falck. "If the rumour I heard in the summer is false, and if I can still keep the connection with Morgans, that guarantees me 7,200 kroner a year, and in that case I have no doubt we could avoid open bankruptcy."

"But how?" said Sigrid. "I don't understand."

"The Morgans would never keep me as their agent if I were declared a bankrupt, and, to avoid that, I think my creditors would accept as payment the outcome of all my

property, and would give me what we call voluntary agreement; it is a form of winding up a failing concern which is very often employed. They would be the gainers in the long run, because of course they would not allow me to keep my 7,200 kroner untouched, so in any case, my child, I have brought you to poverty."

He covered his face with his hands. Sigrid noticed that the veins about his temples stood out like blue cords, so much were they enlarged.

She put her arm about him, kissing his hair, his hands, his forehead.

"I do not mind poverty, little father; I mind only that you are so troubled," she said. "And surely, surely they will not take the agency from you after all these years! Oh, poverty will be nothing, if only we can keep from disgrace—if only others need not be dragged down too!"

They were interrupted by a tap at the door, and Swanhild stole in, making the pretty little curtsy without which no well-bred Norwegian child enters or leaves a room.

"Mayn't I come and say good night to you, little father?" she asked. "I got on ever so well at school, just as you said, after our merry breakfast."

The sight of the child's unconscious happiness was more than he could endure; he closed his eyes that she might not see the scalding tears which filled them.

"How dreadfully ill father looks," said Swanhild uneasily.

"His head is very bad," said Sigrid. "Kiss him, dear, and then run to bed."

But Herr Falck roused himself.

"I too will go up," he said. "Bed is the best place, eh, Swanhild? God bless you, little one; good night. What, are you going to be my walking-stick?"

And thus, steadying himself by the child, he went up to his room.

At breakfast the next morning he was in his place as usual, but he seemed very poorly, and afterwards made no suggestion as to going down to the office, but lay on the sofa in his study, drowsily watching the flames in his favourite English fireplace. Sigrid went about the house, busy with her usual duties, and for the time so much absorbed that she almost forgot the great trouble hanging over them. About eleven o'clock there was a ring at the door-bell; the servant brought in a telegram for Herr Falck. A sort of wild hope seized her that it might be from Frithiof. If anything could cheer her father on that day it would be to hear that

all was happily settled, and, taking it from the maid, she bore it herself into her father's room. He rose from the sofa as she entered.

"I am better, Sigrid," he said. "I think I could go to the office. Ah! a telegram for me!"

"It has come this minute," she said, watching him as he sat down before his desk, adjusted his spectacles, and tore open the envelope. If only Frithiof could send news that would cheer him! If only some little ray of brightness would come to lighten that dark day! She had so persuaded herself that the message must be from Frithiof that the thought of the business anxieties had become for the time quite subservient. The telegram was a long one.

"How extravagant that boy is!" she thought to herself. "Why, it would have been enough if he had just put 'All right.'"

Then a sudden cry broke from her, for her father had bowed his head on his desk like a man who is overwhelmed.

"Father, father!" she cried, "oh! what is the matter?"

For a minute or two he neither spoke nor moved. At last, with an effort, he raised himself. He looked up at her with a face of fixed despair, with eyes whose anguish wrung her heart.

"Sigrid," he said in a voice unlike his own, "they have taken the agency from me. I am bankrupt!"

She put her hand in his, too much stunned to speak.

"Poor children!" he moaned. "Ah! my God! my God! Why——?"

The sentence was never ended. He fell heavily forward; whether he was dead or only fainting she could not tell.

She rushed to the door calling for help, and the servants came hurrying to the study. They helped to move their master to the sofa, and Sigrid found a sort of comfort in the assurances of her old nurse that it was nothing but a paralytic seizure, that he would soon revive. The good old soul knew nothing, nor was she so hopeful as she seemed, but her words helped Sigrid to keep up; she believed them in the unreasoning sort of way in which those in trouble always do catch at the slightest hope held out to them.

"I will send Olga for the doctor," she said breathlessly.

"Ay, and for your uncle too," said the nurse. "He's your own mother's brother, and ought to be here."

"Perhaps," said Sigrid hesitatingly. "Yes, Olga, go to Herr Grönvold's house and just

tell them of my father's illness. But first for the doctor—as quick as you can.”

There followed a miserable time of waiting and suspense. Herr Falck was still perfectly unconscious; there were signs of shock about his face, which was pale and rigid, the eyelids closed, the head turned to one side. Sigrid took his cold hand in hers, and sat with her fingers on the pulse; she could just feel it, but it was very feeble and very rapid. Thus they waited till the doctor came. He was an old friend, and Sigrid felt almost at rest when she had told him all he wanted to know as to the beginning of the attack and the cause.

“You had better send for your brother at once,” he said. “I suppose he will be at the office?”

“Oh, no!” she said trembling. “Frithiof is in England. But we will telegraph to him to come home.”

“My poor child,” said the old doctor kindly, “if he is in England it would be of no possible use; he could not be in time.”

She covered her face with her hands, for the first time utterly breaking down.

“Oh! is there no hope?” she sobbed. “No hope at all?”

“Remember how much he is spared,” said the doctor gently. “He will not suffer. He will not suffer at all any more.”

And so it proved; for while many went and came, and while the bad news of the bankruptcy caused Herr Grönvold to pace the room like one distracted, and while Sigrid and Swanhild kept their sad watch, Herr Falck lay in painless quiet—his face so calm that, had it not been for an occasional tremor passing through the paralysed limbs, they would almost have thought he was already dead.

The hours passed on. At length little Swanhild, who had crouched down on the floor with her head in Sigrid's lap, became conscious of a sort of stir in the room. She looked up and saw that the doctor was bending over her father.

“It is over,” he said in a hushed voice as he stood up and glanced towards the two girls.

And Swanhild, who had never seen any one die, but had read in books of death struggles and death agonies, was filled with a great wonder.

“It was so quiet,” she said afterwards to her sister. “I never knew people died like that; I don't think I shall ever feel afraid about dying again. But oh, Sigrid!” and the child broke into a passion of tears, “we have got to go on living all alone—all alone!”

Sigrid's breast heaved. Alas! the poor child little knew all the troubles that were before them; as far as possible she must try to shield her from the knowledge.

“We three must love each other very much, darling,” she said, folding her arms about Swanhild. “We must try and be everything to each other.”

The words made her think of Frithiof, and with a sick longing for his presence she went down-stairs again to speak to her uncle, and to arrange as to how the news should be sent to England. Herr Grönvold had never quite appreciated his brother-in-law, and this had always made a barrier between him and his nephew and nieces. He was the only relation, however, to whom Sigrid could turn, and she knew that he was her father's executor, and must be consulted about all the arrangements. Had not she and Frithiof celebrated their twenty-first birthday just a week ago Herr Grönvold would have been their guardian, and naturally he would still expect to have the chief voice in the family counsels.

She found him in the sitting-room. He was still pale and agitated. She knew only too well that although he would not say a word against her dead father, yet in his heart he would always blame him, and that the family disgrace would be more keenly felt by him than by anyone. The sight of him entirely checked her tears; she sat down and began to talk to him quite calmly. All her feeling of youth and helplessness was gone now—she felt old, strangely old; her voice sounded like the voice of some one else—it seemed to have gone cold and hard.

“What must we do about telling Frithiof, uncle?” she said.

“I have thought of that,” said Herr Grönvold. “It is impossible that he could be back in time for the funeral. This is Tuesday afternoon, and he could not catch this week's steamer, which leaves Hull at nine o'clock to-night. The only thing is to telegraph the news to him, poor boy. His best chance now is to stay in England and try to find some opening there, for he has no chance here at all.”

Sigrid caught her breath.

“You mean that he had better not even come back?”

“Indeed, I think England is the only hope for him,” said Herr Grönvold, perhaps hardly understanding what a terrible blow he was giving to his niece. “He is absolutely penniless, and over here feeling will be so strong against the very name of Falck that he

would never work his way up. I will gladly provide for you and Swanhild until he is able to make a home for you; but he must stay in England, there is no help for that."

She could not dispute the point any further; her uncle's words had shown her only too plainly the true meaning of the word "bankrupt." Why, the very chair she was sitting on was no longer her own! A chill passed over her as she glanced round the familiar room. On the writing-table she noticed her house-keeping books, and realised that there was no longer any money to pay them with; on the bookshelf stood the clock presented a year or two ago to her father by the clerks in his office—that too must be parted with; everything most sacred, most dear to her, everything associated with her happy childhood and youth must be swept away in the vain endeavour to satisfy the just claims of her father's creditors. In a sort of dreadful dream she sat watching her uncle as he wrote the message to Frithiof, hesitating long over the wording of the sad tidings, and ever and anon counting the words carefully with his pen. It would cost a good deal, that telegram to England. Sigrid knew that her uncle would pay for it, and the knowledge kept her lips sealed. It was absurd to long so to send love and sympathy at the rate of thirty öre a word! Why, in the whole world she had not so much as a ten öre piece! Her personal possessions might, perhaps, legally belong to her, but she knew that there was something within her which would utterly prevent her being able to consider them her own. Everything must go towards those who would suffer from her father's failure; and Frithiof would feel just as she did about the matter, of that she was certain.

"There, poor fellow," said Herr Grönvold, "that will give him just the facts of the case; and you must write to him, Sigrid, and I, too, will write by the next mail."

"I am afraid he cannot get a letter till Monday," said Sigrid.

"No, there is no help for that," said Herr Grönvold. "I shall do all that can be done with regard to the business; that he will know quite well, and his return later on would be a mere waste of time and money. He must seek work in London without delay, and I have told him so. Do you think this is clear?"

He handed her the message he had written, and she read it through, though each word was like a stab.

"Quite clear," she said, returning it to him.

Her voice was so tired and worn that it attracted his notice for the first time.

"My dear," he said kindly, "it has been a terrible day for you; you had better go to bed and rest. Leave everything to me. I promise you all shall be attended to."

"You are very kind," she said, yet with all the time a terrible craving for something more than this sort of kindness, for something which was perhaps beyond Herr Grönvold's power to give.

"Would you like your aunt or one of your cousins to spend the night here?" he asked.

"No," she said; "I am better alone. They will come to-morrow. I—I will rest now."

"Very well. Good-bye then, my dear. I will send off the telegram at once."

She heard the door close behind him with a sense of relief, yet before many minutes had passed, the dreadful quiet of the house seemed almost more than she could endure.

"Oh, Frithiof! Frithiof! why did you ever go to England?" she moaned.

And as she sat crouched together in one of the deep easy-chairs, it seemed to her that the physical faintness, the feeling that everything was sliding away from her, was but the shadow of the bitter reality. She was roused by the opening of the door. Her old nurse stole in.

"See here, Sigrid," said the old woman. "The pastor has come. You will see him in here?"

"I don't think I can," she said wearily.

"He is in the dining-room talking to Swanhild," said the nurse: "you had better just see him a minute."

But still Sigrid did not stir. It was only when little Swanhild stole in, with her wistful, tear-stained face, that she even tried to rouse herself.

"Sigrid," said the child, "Herr Askevold has been out all day with some one who was dying, he is very tired and has had no dinner, he says if he may he will have supper with us."

Sigrid at once started to her feet, her mind was for the moment diverted from her own troubles, it was the thought of the dear old pastor tired and hungry yet coming to them, nevertheless, which touched her heart. Other friends might perhaps forsake them in their trouble and disgrace but not Herr Askevold. Later on, when she thought it over, she knew that it was for the sake of inducing them to eat, and for the sake of helping them through that terrible first meal

without their father, that he had come in just then. She only felt the relief of his presence at the time, was only conscious that she was less desolate because the old white-haired man, who had baptized her as a baby and confirmed her as a girl, was sitting with them at the supper table. His few words of sympathy as he greeted her had been the first words of comfort which had reached her heart, and now, as he cut the bread and helped the fish, there was something in the very smallness and fineness of his consideration and care for them which filled her with far more gratitude than Herr Grönvold's offer of a home. They did not talk very much during the meal, but little Swanhild ceased to wonder whether it was wrong to feel so hungry on such a day, and, no longer ashamed of her appetite, went on naturally and composedly with her supper; while Sigrid, with her strong Norwegian sense of hospitality, ate for her guest's sake, and in thinking of his wants was roused from her state of blank hopelessness.

Afterwards she took him to her father's room, her tears stealing down quietly as she looked once more on the calm, peaceful face, that would never again bear the look of strained anxiety which had of late grown so familiar to her.

And then Herr Askevold knelt by the bedside and prayed. She could never quite remember in after days what it was that he said, perhaps she never very clearly took in the actual words; but something, either in his tone or manner, brought to her the sense of a presence altogether above all the changes that had been or ever could be. This new consciousness seemed to fill her with strength, and a great tenderness for Swanhild came to her heart; she wondered how it was she could ever have fancied that all had been taken from her.

As they rose from their knees and the old pastor took her hand in his to wish her good-bye, he glanced a little anxiously into her eyes. But something he saw there comforted him.

"God bless you, my child," he said.

And again as they opened the front door to him and he stepped out into the dark wintry night, he looked back, and said,

"God comfort you."

Sigrid stood on the threshold, behind her the lighted hall, before her the starless gloom of the outer world, her arm was round little Swanhild, and as she bade him good night, she smiled, one of those brave, patient smiles that are sadder than tears.

"The light behind her, and the dark before," said the old pastor to himself as he walked home wearily enough. "It is like her life, poor child. And yet I am somehow not much afraid for her. It is for Frithiof I am afraid."

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Frithiof found that instead of addressing a stranger at Hyde Park Corner, he had actually spoken to Roy Boniface, his first feeling had been of mere blank astonishment. Then he vehemently wished himself alone once more, and cursed the fate which had first brought him into contact with the little child by the Serpentine, and which had now actually thrown him into the arms of a being who would talk and expect to be talked to. Yet this feeling also passed; for as he looked down the unfamiliar roads, and felt once more the desolateness of a foreigner in a strange country, he was obliged to own that it was pleasant to him to hear Roy's well-known voice, and to feel that there was in London a being who took some sort of interest in his affairs.

"I wish I had seen you a minute or two sooner; my mother and my sister were in that carriage," said Roy, "and they would have liked to meet you. You must come and see us some day, or are you quite too busy to spare time for such an out-of-the-way place as Brixton?"

"Thank you. My plans are very uncertain," said Frithiof. "I shall probably only be over here for a few days."

"Have you come across the Morgans?" asked Roy, "or any of our other companions at Balholm?"

In his heart he felt sure that the young Norwegian's visit was connected with Blanche Morgan, for their mutual liking had been common property at Balholm, and even the semi-engagement was shrewdly guessed at by many of the other tourists.

Frithiof knew this, and the question was like a sword-thrust to him. Had it not been so nearly dark Roy could hardly have failed to notice his change of colour and expression. But he had great self-control, and his voice was quite steady, though a little cold and monotonous in tone, as he replied.

"I have just been to call on the Morgans, and have only just learnt that their business relations with our firm are at an end. The connection is of so many years' standing that I am afraid it will be a great blow to my father."

Roy began to see daylight, and perceived,

what had first escaped his notice, that some great change had passed over his companion since they parted on the Sogne Fjord; very possibly the business relations might affect his hopes, and make the engagement no longer possible.

"That was bad news to greet you," he said with an uneasy consciousness that it was very difficult to know what to say. "Herr Falck would feel a change of that sort keenly, I should think. What induced them to make it?"

"Self-interest," said Frithiof, still in the same tone. "No doubt they came to spy out the land in the summer. As the head of the firm remarked to me just now, it is impossible to sentimentalise over old connections—business is business, and of course they are bound to look out for themselves—what happens to us is, naturally, no affair of theirs."

Roy would not have thought much of the sarcasm of this speech if it had been spoken by any one else, but from the lips of such a fellow as Frithiof Falck, it startled him.

They were walking along Piccadilly, each of them turning over in his mind how he could best get away from the other, yet with an uneasy feeling that they were in some way linked together by that summer holiday, and that if they parted now they would speedily regret it. Roy, with the increasing consciousness of his companion's trouble, only grew more perplexed and ill at ease. He tried to picture to himself the workings of the Norwegian's mind, and as they walked on in silence some faint idea of the effect of the surroundings upon the new-comer began to dawn upon him. What a contrast was all this to quiet Norway! The brightly lighted shops, the busy streets, the hurry and bustle, the ever-changing crowd of strange faces.

"Do you know many people in London?" he asked, willing to shift his responsibility if possible.

"No," said Frithiof, "I do not know a soul."

He relapsed into silence. Roy's thoughts went back to his first day at Bergen; he seemed to live it all through once more; he remembered how Frithiof Falck had got the Linnæa for them, how he had taken them for shelter to his father's house; the simplicity and the happiness of the scene came back to him vividly, and he glanced at his companion as though to verify his past impressions. The light from a street lamp fell on Frithiof at that moment, and Roy started; the Norwegian had perhaps forgotten that

he was not alone, at any rate he wore an expression which had not hitherto been visible. There was something about his pale, set face which alarmed Roy, and scattered to the winds all his selfishness and awkward shyness.

"Then you will of course dine with me," he said, "since you have no other engagement."

And Frithiof, still wishing to be alone, and yet still dreading it, thanked him and accepted the invitation.

The ice once broken, they got on rather better, and as they dined together Roy carefully abstained from talking of the days at Balholm, but asked after Sigrid and Swanhild and Herr Falck, talked of the winter in Norway, of skating, of Norwegian politics, of everything he could think of which could divert his friend's mind from the Morgans.

"What next," he said, as they found themselves once more in the street. "Since you go back soon we ought to make the most of the time. Shall we come to the Savoy? You must certainly hear a Gilbert and Sullivan opera before you leave."

"I am not in the mood for it to-night," said Frithiof. "And it has just struck me that possibly my father may telegraph instructions to me—he would have got Morgan's telegram this morning. I will go back to the Arundel and sea."

This idea seemed to rouse him. He became much more like himself, and as they walked down the Strand the conversation dragged much less. For the first time he spoke of the work that awaited him on his return to Bergen, and Roy began to think that his scheme for diverting him from his troubles had been on the whole a success.

"We must arrange what day you will come down to us at Brixton," he said, as they turned down Arundel Street. "Would to-morrow suit you?"

"As far as I know, it would," said Frithiof, "but if you will just come into the hotel with me we will find out if there is any message from my father. If there is nothing, why I am perfectly free. It is possible though that he will have business for me to see to."

Accordingly they went into the hotel together, and Frithiof accosted a waiter in the entrance hall.

"Anything come for me since I went out?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, I believe there is, sir. Herr Falck, is it not?"

He brought forward a telegram and handed

it to Frithiof, who hurriedly tore open the orange envelope and began eagerly to read. As he read, every shade of colour left his face; the telegram was in Norwegian, and its terse, matter-of-fact statement overwhelmed him. Like one in some dreadful dream he read the words: "Father bankrupt owing to failure Iceland expedition, also loss Morgan's agency." There was more beyond, but this so staggered him that he looked up from the fatal pink paper with a sort of wild hope that his surroundings would reassure him, that he should find it all a mistake. He met the curious eyes of the waiter, he saw two girls in evening dress crossing the vestibule.

"We ought to be at the Lyceum by this time!" he heard one of them say to the other. "How annoying of father to be so late!"

The girl addressed had a sweet, sunshiny face.

"Oh, he will soon be here," she said smiling, but as her eyes happened to fall on Frithiof she grew suddenly grave and compassionate; she seemed to glance from his face to the telegram in his hand, and her look brought him a horrible perception that after all this was real waking existence. It was a real telegram he held, it was all true, hideously true. His father was bankrupt.

Shame, misery, bitter indignation with the Morgans, a sickening perception that if Blanche had been true to him the worst might have been averted, all this seethed in his mind. With a desperate effort he steadied his hand and again bent his eyes on the pink paper and the large round-hand scrawl. Oh, yes, there was no mistake, he read the fatal words again: "Father bankrupt owing to failure Iceland expedition, also loss Morgan's agency." By this time he had partly recovered, was sufficiently himself again to feel some sort of anxiety to read the rest of the message. Possibly there was something he might do to help his father. He read on and took in the next sentence almost at a glance. "Shock caused cerebral hemorrhage. He died this afternoon."

Frithiof felt a choking sensation in his throat, if he could not get out into the open air he felt that he should die, and by an instinct he turned towards the door, made a step or two forward, then staggered and caught at Roy Boniface to save himself from falling.

Roy held him up and looked at him anxiously.

"You have had bad news?" he asked.

Frithiof tried to speak, but no words would come, he gasped for breath, felt his limbs failing, saw a wavy confused picture of the vestibule, the waiter, the two girls, an elderly gentleman joining them, then felt himself guided down on to the floor, never quite losing consciousness, yet helpless either to speak or move and with a most confused sense of what had passed.

"It is in Norwegian," he heard Roy say. "Bad news from his home, I am afraid."

"Poor fellow!" said another voice. "Open the door some one. It's air he wants."

"I saw there was something wrong, father," this was in a girl's voice. "He looked quite dazed with trouble as he read."

"You'll be late for the Lyceum," thought Frithiof, and making an effort to get up he sank for a moment into deeper depths of faintness; the voices died away into indistinctness, then came a consciousness of hands at his shoulders and his feet, he was lifted up and carried away somewhere.

Struggling back to life again in a few moments he found that he was lying on a bed, the window was wide open and a single candle flickered wildly in the draught, Roy Boniface was standing by him holding a glass of water to his lips. With an effort he drank.

"You are better, sir?" asked the waiter. "Anything I can do for you, sir? Any answer to the telegram?"

"The telegram! What do you mean?" exclaimed Frithiof. Then as full recollection came back to him, he turned his face from the light with a groan.

"The gentleman had, perhaps, better see a doctor," suggested the waiter to Roy. But Frithiof turned upon him sharply. "I am better. You can go away. All I want is to be alone."

The man retired, but Roy still lingered. He could not make up his mind to leave any one in such a plight, so he crossed the room and stood by the open window looking out gravely at the dark river with its double row of lights and their long shining reflections. Presently a sound in the room made him turn. Frithiof had dragged himself up to his feet, with an impatient gesture he blew out the flickering candle, then walked with unsteady steps to the window and dropped into a chair.

"So you are here still?" he said, with something of relief in his tone.

"I couldn't bear to leave till you were all right again," said Roy. "Won't you tell me what is the matter, Falck?"

"My father is dead," said Frithiof, in an unnaturally calm voice.

"Dead!" exclaimed Roy, and his tone had in it much more of awe and regret. He could hardly believe that the genial, kindly Norwegian who had climbed Munkeggen with them only a few weeks before, was actually no longer in the world.

"He is dead," repeated Frithiof quietly.

"But how was it?" asked Roy. "It must have been so sudden. You left him well only three days ago. How was it?"

"His Iceland expedition had failed," said Frithiof, "that meant a fatal blow to his business; then, this morning, there came to him Morgan's telegram about the agency. It was that that killed him."

"Good God!" exclaimed Roy, with indignation in his voice.

"Leave out the adjective," said Frithiof bitterly. "If there's a God at all He is hard and merciless. Business is business, you see, one can't sentimentalise over old connections. God allows men like Morgan to succeed, they always do succeed, and He lets men like my father be dragged down into shame and dishonour and ruin."

Roy was silent, he had no glib, conventional sentences ready to hand. In his own mind he frankly admitted that the problem was beyond him. He knew quite well that far too often in business-life it was the pushing, unscrupulous, selfish man who made his fortune, and the man of Herr Falck's type, sensitive, conscientious, altogether honourable, who had to content himself with small means, or who, goaded at last to rashness, staked all on a desperate last throw and failed. It was a problem that perplexed him every day of his life, the old, old problem which Job dashed his heart against, and for which only Job's answer will suffice. Vaguely he felt that there must be some other standard of success than that of the world; he believed that it was but the first act of the drama which we could at present see; but he honestly owned that the first act was often perplexing enough.

Nevertheless, it was his very silence which attracted Frithiof; had he spoken, had he argued, had he put forth the usual platitudes, the two would have been for ever separated. But he just leant against the window-frame, looking out at the dark river, musing over the story he had just heard, and wondering what the meaning of it could be. The "Why?" which had been the last broken ejaculation of the dead man echoed in the hearts of these two who had been brought

together so strangely. Into Roy's mind there came the line, "'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise." But he had a strong feeling that in Frithiof's case sorrow would harden and embitter; indeed, it seemed to him already that his companion's whole nature was changed. It was almost difficult to believe that he was the same high-spirited boy who had been the life of the party at Balholm, who had done the honours of the villa in Kalvedalen so pleasantly. And then as he contrasted that bright homely room at Bergen with this dark forlorn hotel-room in London, a feeling that he must get his companion away into some less dreary atmosphere took possession of him.

"Don't stay all alone in this place," he said abruptly. "Come home with me to-night."

"You are very good," said Frithiof, "but I don't think I can do that. I am better alone, and indeed must make up my mind to-night as to the future."

"You will go back to Norway, I suppose?" asked Roy.

"Yes, I suppose so; as soon as possible. To-morrow I must see if there is any possibility of getting back in fair time. Unluckily, it is too late for the Wilson line steamer, which must be starting at this minute from Hull."

"I will come in to-morrow then and see what you have decided on," said Roy. "Is there nothing I can do for you now?"

"Nothing, thank you," said Frithiof. And Roy, feeling that he could be of no more use, and that his presence was perhaps a strain on his friend, wished him good-night and went out.

The next day he was detained by business and could not manage to call at the Arundel till late in the afternoon. Noticing the same waiter in the hall who had been present on the previous evening he inquired if Frithiof were in.

"Herr Falck has gone, sir," said the man; "he went off about an hour ago."

"Gone!" exclaimed Roy in some surprise. "Did he leave any message?"

"No sir, none at all. He was looking very ill when he came down this morning, but went out as soon as he had had breakfast and didn't come back till four o'clock. Then he called for his bill and ordered his portmanteau to be brought down and put on a hansom, and as he passed out he gave me a trifle, and said he had spoken a bit sharp to me last night, he was afraid, and thanked me for what I had done for him. And so he drove off, sir."

"You didn't hear where he was going to?"



"Everything had been taken from him in one blow."

"No, sir ; I can't say as I did. The cab, if I remember right, turned along the Embankment, towards Charing Cross."

"Thank you," said Roy. "Very possibly he may have gone back to Norway by the Continent."

And with a feeling of vague disappointment he turned away.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Roy Boniface had gone Frithiof sat for a long time without stirring. He had longed to be alone, and yet the moment he had got his wish the most crushing sense of desolation overwhelmed him. He, too, was keenly conscious of that change in his own nature which had been quite apparent to Roy. It seemed to him that everything had been taken from him in one blow—love, hope, his father, his home, his stainless name, his occupation, his fortune, and even his old self. It was an entirely different character with which he now had to reckon, and an entirely new life which he had to live. Both character and surroundings had been suddenly changed very much for the worse. He had got to put up with them, and somehow to endure life. That was the only thing clear to him. The little child by the Serpentine had given him so much standing ground, but he had not an inch more at present ; all around him was a miserable, cheerless, grey mist. Presently, becoming aware that the cold wind from the river was no longer reviving him but chilling him to the bone, he roused himself to close the window. Mechanically he drew down the blind, struck a light, and noticing that on the disordered bed there lay the crumpled pink paper which had brought him the bad news, he picked it up, smoothed it out, and read it once more.

There was still something which he had not seen in the first horrible shock of realising his father's death. With darkening brow he read the words which Herr Grönvold had weighed so carefully and counted so often.

"I will provide for your sisters till you can. Impossible for you to return in time for funeral. My advice is try for work in London. No opening here for you, as feeling will be strong against family."

It was only then that he actually took in the fact that he was penniless—indeed far worse than penniless—weighed down by a load of debts which, if not legally his, were his burden none the less. There were, as he well knew, many who failed with a light heart, who were bankrupt one week and

starting afresh with perfect unconcern the next, but he was too much his father's son to take the disaster that way. The disgrace and the perception of being to blame which had killed Herr Falck now fell upon him with crushing force ; he paced the room like one distracted, always with the picture before him of what was now going on in Bergen, always with the thought of the suffering and misery which would result from the failure of a firm so old and so much respected as his father's.

And yet it was out of this very torture of realisation that his comfort at last sprang—such comfort at least as he was at present capable of receiving. We must all have some sort of future to look to, some sort of aim before us, or life would be intolerable. The veriest beggar in the street concentrates his thought on the money to be made, or the shelter to be gained for the coming night. And there came, fortunately, to Frithiof, jilted, ruined, bereaved as he was, one strong desire—one firm resolve. He would pay off his father's debts to the last farthing ; he would work, he would slave, he would deny himself all but the bare necessities of life. The name of Falck should yet be redeemed ; and a glow of returning hope rose in his heart as he remembered his father's parting words, "I look to you, Frithiof, to carry out the aims in which I myself have failed, to live the life I could wish to have lived." Yet how different all had been when those words had been spoken ! The recollection of them did him good—brought him, as it were, back to life again—but at the same time they were the most cruel pain.

He saw again the harbour at Bergen, the ships, the mountains, the busy quay, he saw his father so vividly that it seemed to him as if he must actually be before him at that very moment, the tone of his voice rang in his ears, the pressure of his hand seemed yet to linger with him.

What wonder that it should still be so fresh in his memory ? It was only three days ago. Only three days ! Yet the time to look back on now seemed more like three years. With amazement he dwelt on the fact, thinking, as we mostly do in sudden trouble, how little time it takes for things to happen. It is a perception that does not come to us in the full swing of life, when all seems safe and full of bright promise, any more than in yachting it troubles us to reflect that there is only a plank between ourselves and the unfathomed depths of the sea. We expect all to go well, we feel no

fear, we enjoy life easily, and when disaster comes its rude haste astounds us—so much is changed in one sudden, crushing blow.

He remembered how he had whistled the "Bridal Song of the Hardanger," as he cheerfully paced the deck full of thoughts of Blanche and of the bright future that was opening before him. The tune rang in his ears now with a mournful persistence. He buried his face in his hands, letting the flood of grief sweep over him, opposing to it no thought of comfort, no recollection of what was still left to him. If Blanche had been faithful to him all might have been different; her father would never have taken away the agency if she had told him the truth when she first got home; the Iceland expedition might have failed, but his father could have got voluntary agreement with his creditors, he himself might perhaps have been put at the head of the branch at Stavanger, all would have been well.

In bitter contrast he called up a picture of the desolate house in Kalvedalen, thought of Herr Grönvold making the final arrangements, and alternately pitying and blaming his brother-in-law; thought of Sigrid and Swanhild in their sorrow and loneliness; thought of his father lying cold and still. Choking sobs rose in his throat as more and more clearly he realised that all was indeed over, that he should never see his father again. But his eyes were dry and tearless, the iron had entered into his soul, and all the relief that was then possible for him lay in a prompt endeavour to carry out the resolve which he had just made.

Perhaps he perceived this, for he raised himself, banished the mind pictures which had absorbed him so long, and began to think what his first practical step must be. He would lose no time, he would begin that very moment. The first thing must of course be retrenchment, he must leave the Arundel on the morrow and must seek out the cheapest rooms to be had. Lying on the table was that invaluable book "Dickens' Dictionary of London." He had bought it at Hull on the previous day, and had already got out of it much amusement and much information. Now, in grim earnest, he turned over its well-arranged pages till he came to the heading "Lodgings," running his eye hurriedly over the paragraph, and pausing over the following sentence:—"Those who desire still cheaper accommodation must go further afield, the lowest priced of all being in the north-east and south-east districts, in either of which a bed and sitting-room may

be had at rents varying from ten shillings, and even less, to thirty shillings."

He turned to the maps at the beginning, and decided to try the neighbourhood of Vauxhall and Lambeth.

Next came the question of work. And here the vastness of the field perplexed him, where to turn he had not the slightest idea. Possibly Dickens might suggest something. He turned over the pages, and his eye happened to light on the words, "Americans in distress, Society for the relief of." He scanned the columns closely, there seemed to be help for every one on earth except a Norwegian. There was a home for French strangers; a Hungarian aid society; an Italian benevolent; sixteen charities for Jews; an association of Poles; a Hibernian society; a Netherlands benevolent; a Portuguese and Spanish aid; and a society for distressed Belgians. The only chance for him lay in the "Universal Beneficence Society," a title which called up a bitter smile to his lips, or the "Society of Friends of Foreigners in distress."

He made up his mind to leave these as a last resource, and turning to the heading of Sweden and Norway looked out the address of the Consulate. He must go there the first thing the next day, and get what advice and help he could. There was also in Fleet Street a Scandinavian club, he would go there and get a list of the members, it was possible that he might meet with some familiar name, and at any rate he should hear his own language spoken, which in itself would be a relief. This arranged, he tried to sleep, but with little success; his brain was too much overwrought with the terrible reversals of fortune he had met with that day, with the sorrows that had come to him, not as

"Single spies,
But in battalions!"

Whenever he did for a few minutes sink into a doze, it was only to be haunted by the most horrible dreams, and when morning came he was ill and feverish, yet as determined as before to go through with the programme he had marked out.

The Swedish Minister received him very kindly, and listened to as much of his story as would bear telling with great patience. "It is a very hard case," he said. "The English firm perhaps consulted their own pockets in making this new arrangement, but to break off an old connection so suddenly, and as it chanced at such a trying moment, was hard lines. What sort of people are they, these Morgans? You have met them?"

"Oh, yes," said Frithiof colouring. "One of the brothers was in Norway this summer, came to our house, dined with us, professed the greatest friendliness, while all the time he must have known what the firm was meditating."

"Doubtless came to see how the land lay," said the Minister. "And what of the other brother?"

"I saw him yesterday," replied Frithiof. "He was very civil; told me the telegram had been sent off that morning about the affair, as it would not bear delay, and spoke very highly of my father. Words cost nothing, you see."

The Consul noted the extreme bitterness of the tone, and looked searchingly into the face of his visitor. "Poor fellow!" he reflected; "he starts in life with a grievance, and there is nothing so bad for a man as that. A fine, handsome boy, too. If he stays eating his heart out in London he will go to the dogs in no time."

"See," he said, "these Morgans, though they may be keen business men, yet they are after all human. When they learn at what an unlucky time their telegram arrived, it is but natural that they should regret it. Their impulse will be to help you. I should advise you to go to them at once and talk the affair over with them. If they have any proper feeling they will offer you some sort of employment in this new Stavanger branch, or they might, perhaps, have some opening for you in their London house."

"I cannot go to them," said Frithiof in a choked voice. "I would rather die first."

"I can understand," said the Consul, "that you feel very bitter, and that you resent the way in which they have behaved. But still I think you should try to get over that. After all they knew nothing of your father's affairs; they did not intentionally kill him. That the two disasters followed so closely on each other was but an accident."

"Still I could never accept anything from them; it is out of the question," said Frithiof.

"Excuse me if I speak plainly," said the Consul. "You are very young, and you know but little of the world. If you allow yourself to be governed by pride of this sort you cannot hope to get on. Now turn it over in your mind, and if you do not feel that you can see these people, at any rate write to them."

"I cannot explain it all to you, sir," said Frithiof. "But there are private reasons which make that altogether impossible."

The blood had mounted to his forehead,

his lips had closed in a straight line; perhaps it was because they quivered that he compressed them so.

"A woman in the question," reflected the Consul. "That complicates matters. All the more reason that he should leave London." Then, aloud, "If you feel unable to apply to them, I should recommend you strongly to try America. Every one flocks to London for work, but as a matter of fact London streets just now are not paved with gold; everything is at a standstill; go where you will you will hear that trade is bad, that employment is scarce, and that living is dear."

"If I could hear of any opening in America I would go at once," said Frithiof. "But at Bergen we have heard of late that it is no such easy thing even over there to meet with work. I will not pay the expenses of the voyage merely to be in my present state, and hundreds of miles farther from home."

"What can you do?" asked the Consul. "Is your English pretty good?"

"I can write and speak it easily. And, of course, German too. I understand book-keeping."

"Any taste for teaching?" asked the Consul.

"None," said Frithiof decidedly.

"Then the only thing that seems open to you is the work of a secretary, or a clerkship, or perhaps you could manage translating, but that is not easy work to get. Everything now is overcrowded, so dreadfully overcrowded. However, of course I shall bear you in mind, and you yourself will leave no stone unturned. Stay, I might give you a letter of introduction to Herr Sivertsen; he might possibly find you temporary work. He is the author of that well-known book on Norway, you know. Do you know your way about yet?"

"Pretty well," said Frithiof.

"Then there is his address—Museum Street. You had better take an omnibus at the Bank. Any of the Oxford Street ones will put you down at the corner, by Mudie's. Let me know how you get on; I shall be interested to hear."

Then, with a kindly shake of the hand, Frithiof found himself dismissed; and somewhat cheered by the interview, he made his way to the address which had been given him.

Herr Sivertsen's rooms were of the gloomiest; they reeked of tobacco, they were ill lighted, and it seemed to Frithiof that the window could not have been opened

for a week. An oblique view of Mudie's library was the only object of interest to be seen without, though, by craning one's neck, one could get just a glimpse of the traffic in Oxford Street. He waited for some minutes wondering to himself how a successful author could tolerate such a den, and trying to imagine from the room what sort of being was the inhabitant thereof. At length the door opened, and a grey-haired man of five-and-fifty, with a huge forehead and somewhat stern, square-jawed face, entered.

"I have read the Consul's letter," he said, greeting Frithiof and motioning him to a chair. "You want what is very hard to get. Are you aware that thousands of men are seeking employment and are unable to meet with it?"

"I know it is hard," said Frithiof. "Still I have more chance here than in Norway, and anyhow I mean to get it." The emphatic way in which he uttered these last words made the author look at him more attentively.

"I am tired to death of young men coming to me and wanting help," he remarked frankly. "You are an altogether degenerate race, you young men of this generation; in my opinion you don't know what work means. It's money that you want, not work."

"Yes," said Frithiof drily, "you are perfectly right. It is money that I want."

Now Herr Sivertsen had never before met with this honest avowal. In reply to the speech which he had made to many other applicants he had always received an eager protestation that the speaker was devoted to work, that he was deeply interested in languages, that Herr Sivertsen's greatest hobbies were his hobbies too. He liked this bold avowal in his secret heart, though he had no intention of letting this be seen. "Just what I said!" he exclaimed. "A pleasure-seeking, money-grubbing generation. What is the result? I give work to be done, and as long as you can get gold you don't care how the thing is scamped. Look here!" He took up a manuscript from the table. "I have paid the fellow who did this. He is not only behind time, but when at last the work is sent in it's a miserable performance, bungled, patched, scamped, even the handwriting a disgrace to civilisation. It's because the man takes no pride in the work itself, because he has not a spark of interest in his subject. It just means to him so many shillings, that is all."

"I can at least write a clear hand," said Frithiof.

"That may be; but will you put any heart into your work? Do you care for culture? for literature? Do you interest yourself in progress? do you desire to help on your generation?"

"As far as I am concerned," said Frithiof bitterly, "the generation will have to take care of itself. As for literature, I know little of it and care less; all I want is to make money."

"Did I not tell you so?" roared Herr Sivertsen. "It is the accursed gold which you are all seeking after. You care only for money to spend on your own selfish indulgences. You are all alike! All! A worthless generation!"

Frithiof rose.

"However worthless, we unluckily have to live," he said coldly. "And as I can't pretend to be interested in 'culture,' I must waste no more time in discussion."

He bowed and made for the door.

"Stay," said Herr Sivertsen; "it will do no harm if you leave me your address."

"Thank you, but at present I have none to give," said Frithiof. "Good morning."

He felt very angry and very sore-hearted as he made his way down Museum Street. To have met with such a rebuff from a fellow-countryman seemed to him hard, specially in this time of his trouble. He had not enough insight into character to understand the eccentric old author, and he forgot that Herr Sivertsen knew nothing of his circumstances. He was too abrupt, too independent, perhaps also too refined to push his way as an unknown foreigner in a huge metropolis. He was utterly unable to draw a picturesque description of the plight he was in, he could only rely on a sort of dogged perseverance, a fixed resolve that he must and would find work; and in spite of constant failures this never left him.

He tramped down to Vauxhall and began to search for lodgings, looked at some half-dozen sets, and finally lighted on a clean little house in a new-looking street a few hundred yards from Vauxhall station. There was a card up in the window advertising rooms to let. He rang the bell and was a little surprised to find the door opened to him by a middle-aged woman who was unmistakably a lady, though her deeply-lined face told of privation and care, possibly also of ill-temper. He asked the price of the rooms.

"A sitting-room and bedroom at fifteen shillings a week," was the reply.

"It is too much, and besides I only need one room," he said.

"I am afraid we cannot divide them."

He looked disappointed. An idea seemed to strike the landlady.

"There is a little room at the top you might have," she said; "but it would not be very comfortable. It would be only five shillings a week, including attendance."

"Allow me to see it," said Frithiof.

He felt so tired and ill that if she had shown him a pigstye he would probably have taken it merely for the sake of settling matters. As it was, the room, though bare and comfortless, was spotlessly clean, and, spite of her severe face, he rather took to his landlady.

"My things are at the Arundel Hotel," he explained. "I should want to come in at once. Does that suit you?"

"Oh, yes," she said, scanning him closely.

"Can you give us any references?"

"You can, if you wish, refer to the Swedish consul at 24, Great Winchester Street."

"Oh, you are a Swede," she said.

"No, I am a Norwegian, and have only been in London since yesterday."

The landlady seemed satisfied, and having paid his five shillings in advance Frithiof went off to secure his portmanteau, and by five o'clock was installed in his new home.

It was well that he had lost no time in leaving his hotel, for during the next two days he was unable to quit his bed, and could only console himself with the reflection that at any rate he had a cheap roof over his head and that his rent would not ruin him.

Perhaps the cold night air from the river had given him a chill on the previous night, or perhaps the strain of the excitement and suffering had been too much for him. At any rate he lay in feverish wretchedness, tossing through the long days and weary nights, a misery to himself and an anxiety to the people of the house.

He discovered that his first impression had been correct. Miss Turnour, the landlady, was well born; she and her two sisters—all of them now middle-aged women—were the daughters of a country gentleman, who had either wasted his substance in speculation or on the turf. He was long since dead, and had left behind him the fruits of his selfishness, three helpless women, with no particular aptitudes and brought up to no particular profession. They had sunk down and down in the social scale, till it seemed that there was nothing left them but a certain refinement of taste, which only enabled them

to suffer more keenly, and the family pedigree, of which they were proud, clinging very much to the peculiar spelling of their name, and struggling on in their little London house, quarrelling much among themselves, and yet firmly determined that nothing on earth should part them. Frithiof dubbed them the three Fates. He wondered sometimes whether, after long years of poverty, he and Sigrid and Swanhild should come to the same miserable condition, the same hopeless, cold, hard spirit, the same pinched, worn faces, the same dreary, monotonous lives.

The three Fates did not take much notice of their lodger. Miss Turnour often wished she had had the sense to see that he was ill before admitting him. Miss Caroline, the youngest, flatly declined waiting on him, as it was quite against her feelings of propriety. Miss Charlotte, the middle one of the three, who had more heart than the rest, tried to persuade him to see a doctor.

"No," he replied, "I shall be all right in a day or two. It is nothing but a feverish attack. I can't afford doctor's bills."

She looked at him a little compassionately, his poverty touched a chord in her own life.

"Perhaps the illness has come in order that you may have time to think," she said timidly.

She was a very small little woman, like a white mouse, but Frithiof had speedily found that she was the only one of the three from whom he could expect any help. She was the snubbed one of the family, partly because she was timid and gentle, partly because she had lately adopted certain religious views upon which the other two looked down with the most supreme contempt.

Frithiof was in no mood to respond to her well-meant efforts to convert him, and used to listen to her discourses about the last day with a stolid indifference which altogether baffled her. It seemed as if nothing could possibly rouse him.

"Ah," she would say, as she left the room with a sad little shake of the head, "I shall be caught up at the second Advent. I'm not at all sure that *you* will be."

The eldest Miss Turnour did not trouble herself at all about his spiritual state; she thought only of the risk they were running and the possible loss of money.

"I hope he is not sickening with any infectious disease," she used to remark a dozen times a day.

And Miss Charlotte said nothing, but silently thanked Heaven that she had not been the one to accept the new lodger.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

An Address to Children in Westminster Abbey on Innocents' Day, 1838.

By THE DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."
ST. MATTHEW v. 7.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—You all know why this is called Innocents' Day. We keep the day in memory of the little children so cruelly massacred in the village of Bethlehem, nearly nineteen hundred years ago. And we keep it here in this ancient and famous church for another reason. It was on this day, more than eight hundred years ago, that—I will not say this same church—but the great abbey church which stood on the same ground, and in place of which this church was built two hundred years later, was solemnly dedicated to the worship of God. To-day is at once, you see, the death-day of those innocent children and the birthday of Westminster Abbey. And it has been the custom for many years to give to the utmost of our power the best seats in the abbey to children; and to speak to them from this pulpit, so far as possible, words to which they will gladly listen, and from which they may carry home some simple and useful lesson. And for myself, I think it best to try and tell you some story or stories connected with the building in which you are seated. It may help you to think of those who are buried or commemorated here, and may make you feel, as many of your elders feel, that the stones and walls around us are full of teachings.

And to-day I am going, not to preach to you an old sermon, but to speak to you on an old subject. I am going to tell you about the true founder of this abbey, the builder, that is, of the first great church; in whose honour his own church was taken down, and this more lofty and more stately and beautiful fabric reared in its place.

If ever you are taken over the abbey, I hope that you do not, and will not, try to see at one time all the tombs and monuments that lie so thick within its walls. You will only be tired and bewildered, and will come away remembering perhaps some things of little interest, and forgetting what you would be glad to remember when long years have passed. But you will go, I hope, when you have learned a little English history, to the part that lies behind the Holy Table, and will see above all the tomb of King Edward the Confessor, with those of later kings and

queens, whose bones even now lie beneath and around him.

It is the story of that king of which I would speak to you to-day.

He was born in a dark and troubled time. A thousand years had passed since the first Christmas-day. So terrible had become the confusion, and so wide-spread the wars of those evil days, that it seemed to many that the end of the world must be even now at hand. But though in this they were mistaken, yet throughout the whole Christian world there was no doubt of things being present of which our Lord speaks as signs of the end: "Distress of nations and perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking on those things that were coming on the world." And England, this our own land, had been, with some intervals of peace, a country ravaged and torn with war for centuries. Those of you who have learned a little English history will know how, when the Romans went away, a rough, strong, adventurous race—the Angles and the Saxons—came across the seas, and killed and drove away into Wales and into the West the Britons over whom the Romans had ruled. You have heard, perhaps, how, by degrees, these new-comers, our own heathen ancestors, worshippers of Woden and Thor, gods whose names still live in our days of the week, became civilised and converted to Christianity. And you may have heard how they, in their turn, were harried and plundered and massacred, generation after generation, by rovers from the North—heathen Danes, who not only burnt, and slew, and devastated, but also seized on land and settled largely in many parts of England. Some few of you to whom I speak may be descended from those ancient Britons; many more, doubtless, from the Saxons or Angles, to whom we owe the name of England; not a few from the Norsemen or Danes, who were so long the deadliest foes of those early Englishmen. I speak of these things, not to teach you English history, though I am not at all ashamed to do so in this abbey, but to remind you of the savage and fierce and cruel times which had come before the days of him whose story I am going to tell you.

Now and then England had had peace.

There was peace at last in the time of the best and most perfect of English kings, King Alfred. There had been peace again in the days of King Edgar; but as a rule, the ages that had passed since the Romans went had been times of storm and tempest. Long after Northern and Eastern England had become largely peopled by Danes, who had laid aside their roving habits and become peaceful farmers, our coasts, even in and near quiet sea-side places where you perhaps spent your summer holidays, were perpetual scenes of desolation and bloodshed.

Scarcely had the year 1000 passed when angry and impatient Englishmen rose and massacred, not of course all of Danish blood, but multitudes of the Danes who had lately come. And in the fierce war of vengeance that followed the Danes were successful. A Danish king, of whom some of you have heard, Cnut or Canute, reigned on the throne of England; and the English king, a poor and feeble character, Ethelred the Unready, was driven out of England, and took refuge across the sea with the Duke of Normandy, whose sister, Emma, he had married. With him he took two sons, one named after the great Alfred, of whose sad fate I will not speak; the other a young boy, whose name was Edward.

There, among Frenchmen, the young Edward grew up in exile and almost forgotten. His father came back for a while, but died soon, unable to recover his kingdom from the fierce Dane, and was laid to sleep in the old St. Paul's, in the place where now you see that great cathedral. His mother left him, strange as it seems, and became the wife of the Danish conqueror, King Canute, her husband's enemy; and she and he were both buried after death in Winchester Cathedral.

So the young Edward grew from boyhood to manhood in a foreign land. There he lived almost or entirely for five-and-twenty years; parted from his mother by her marriage, from his father by death, and quite forgotten for a while by his countrymen. I can tell you very little of his early life. There is no doubt that, from quite a boy, he was very unlike the fierce, war-loving, adventurous Norman knights among whom he lived; that he had not a spark of the stubborn and dauntless courage of his half-brother, Edmund Ironsides, who had fought so bravely against Canute, and who was buried in Glastonbury Abbey. He gave no promise of being a great soldier, like many of his ancestors, or a great ruler, like King

Alfred; indeed, he did not look like other men. Even early in manhood his hair and beard were white—white as a swan, says one old writer; white as wool, says another—his hands long, and his fingers white as ivory; and his face pink, like the roses which were then not so common in England as they became later. But except for occasional outbursts of anger, he was exceedingly gentle and soft in manner. He could deny a request, it was said, so sweetly to those who asked him, that his “No” was pleasanter than other persons’ “Yes.” He was exceedingly religious, and very fond, even then, of the society of monks and priests, and, indeed, more, far more, fit to live in a monastery and serve God in a quiet and devout life, than to rule over the rough and noisy England from which he was banished. He lived, as I told you, long years in Normandy, and grew up, as was natural, a Frenchman rather than an Englishman. Still he was not wholly forgotten. The English were ruled meanwhile sternly, but on the whole well, by the Danish king, himself indeed a Christian, but many of whose countrymen were still heathens. And when King Canute died, and was succeeded first by one and then by another of two worthless sons—one of whom was the first king who was buried here in Westminster, in a smaller church that stood near this place, but whose body was torn from its grave by his own half-brother—the throne of England became vacant. All men’s hearts turned to the exile, who had visited England for a while in the time of the second and worst of these young kings, the son of Edward’s own mother, Emma. And with one voice, weary and sick of foreign sovereigns and Danish rule, the English people made the gentle Edward their king—the last king of the house of Cedric and Egbert, and Alfred and Edgar, of whom some of you have heard.

Now I am not going to tell you the story of his reign. I cannot speak of him to you as of a great, even as a really wise and good ruler. He left the business and the duties of a king to others. He was not, as King Alfred was, at once a true Christian and a true ruler, a lawgiver, a soldier, a saint, and a scholar. He left undone much that, if he accepted the crown, he ought to have done; and we could not, I think, compare him for real goodness to either our own Alfred or to the saintly French king St. Louis, the descendants of both of whom sleep within these walls, and from both of whom our Queen is descended. But I would rather

dwell to you to-day on the things that made his memory so dear to future ages than on his very real faults and shortcomings. He was dear to the English people because they were sick of wars and inroads and forays; and because, thanks to the king's pacific nature, and to the wise rule of Earl Godwin and his son Harold, they enjoyed peace and quiet during his reign, and with peace and quiet much remission of burdens and war taxes under which they had groaned. He was dear to them also from his very unlikeness to other rulers of his day. His gentleness, and simplicity, and charity, and kindness to the poor and lowly, made, and rightly made, a deep impression on his subjects; and the stories which grew up after he was dead, one or two of which I will tell you, though many of them we cannot take as true, would show the way in which the nation looked on him. And he was, no doubt, a deeply religious man. He thought much about, and cared much for, another world than this; and though, like other good men of that age, his thoughts and actions were mixed with belief in much that we cannot believe, yet we must needs honour one who strove to overcome the world, the flesh, and the evil one, and who did his best in his own way to serve God.

But the thing by which we here most remember him was this. He had vowed, it was said, to make a pilgrimage to Rome to visit the supposed tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. I wish I had time to talk to you of the pilgrims of those ages, but I have none. Both Canute, the great Danish king, and Harold, Edward's successor, had gone as pilgrims to Rome. It was a habit that was extremely common in those days, and long after, among men of all kinds. But the English people objected to their new-found native sovereign leaving them for so long and so hazardous a journey. So the king, who had been crowned at Winchester, then the great sanctuary of the royal West-Saxon race to which he belonged, got the Pope to release him from his vow. But the condition was made that he should honour St. Peter—who in those dark times was looked on as almost the representative of God Himself—by building or greatly enlarging some monastery that was dedicated to him.

Then the story tells us how, aided by some pious monk or hermit, he selected the monastery of Thorn-eye, or the Isle of Thorns, the very spot where we are now, about whose earlier history I will not speak, and resolved to build there—near to but not

too near the great City of London—his own palace, and also a great monastery and a great church, dedicated to St. Peter, where his own bones should be laid, and where future kings should receive the crown that had been placed on his head at Winchester.

For about fifteen years the work went on. Norman builders from France did or guided the work, and the church was, like the great French cathedrals, vast far beyond the size of any church then known in England. A tenth of all his treasures, perhaps far more, was spent on it; and as Christmas, 1065, drew near, the work was completed, *i.e.* not the monastery only, but the church in which the monks were to worship; where he himself, hard by the palace in which he lived, was to lie in death.

At last then the church was ready, and the nobles and great men of the nation, and bishops and clergy, were summoned to be present at the dedication of that Minster of the West, or West Minster—so called from its lying westward of the great Church, or Minster, of St. Paul, where the king's unworthy father had been buried nearly half a century ago. And on Christmas Day and two days after, the king, who had long been ailing, appeared among them wearing his crown. But when the day came, this very Innocents' Day, he was too ill to leave his palace, and the Abbey Church was thrown open for the first time and consecrated and dedicated to St. Peter, whose name it still bears, in the presence of his queen and people, but in the absence of its founder. He lay sick on his death-bed in the palace close by. And the day before the feast of the Epiphany, on the 5th of January, 1066, all was over, and his soul was with God. And as he lay dying, men remembered all that was best in him—his tender heart, his feeling for the poor, his gentleness and simplicity, his building this great church; and even then, as they thought how the last of the old royal race left in England was passing away, they shuddered at the strife that must follow; and they treasured up his last words as those of a saint and a prophet.

So King Edward died, and was buried in the new church of the Abbey of Westminster. It was the first of the many, many, funerals that have been celebrated there, and there is in a town in Normandy a picture in tapestry, worked while his memory was still fresh, of his body as borne to its rest by eight of his mourning subjects, to be laid near the altar of St. Peter.

I must not tell you of all that followed.

You have heard, I dare say, how the people instantly made the queen's brother, the brave Harold, king. He was crowned, we have much reason to believe, on that very day, in that very abbey; and you know how, after defeating his brother Tostig and the invading Northmen far away in the North of England, he fell, and with him the cause of England, in the great battle near Hastings, in the month of October—fighting against the Norman William, who said that the pious Edward, son of a Norman mother, had bequeathed the throne to him. You have heard, I dare say, how, on the very next Christmas Day, the conqueror in the battle, William, a foreign king to whom even the English language was unknown, was in his turn crowned in the abbey. So within less than a year of the day of its consecration it had been the scene of a royal burial and of two coronations.

A time of trouble was in store for the poor English people. Once more the island was overrun by foreign conquerors; and this time the invaders were no longer men in many ways like themselves, whose speech was not quite unlike their own. Their invaders were Frenchmen in language, birth, and habit, and looked with scorn on the rough English churls, as they thought them. It was long before these men of foreign blood learned to treat with respect the sturdy Englishmen, who in time, but only slowly, won back the freedom and the rights which they had enjoyed for ages, and became once more one nation with their conquerors.

And in these generations of suffering their thoughts went back to the gentle, pious king of their own blood, who had built the mighty Abbey, and whose peaceful reign seemed like a golden age in the past. They could not call him a martyr, for he had not been put to death, but had died peacefully among loving subjects. But they remembered how he had been driven out as a boy to a sad exile by a half-heathen race, and they called him the Confessor, meaning one who had not been ashamed to confess Christ before men, and had suffered for Him. And many marvels, they said, were worked at his tomb; and by degrees stories spread through the nation of miracles that he had wrought even in his life, and of acts of kindness and charity that stood out like bright lights in the darkness of that rough age, when might was right, and the poor and the needy had few helpers. For instance, as they groaned under heavy taxes, they told a story how, as King Edward went one day into his treasury he saw a demon sitting on the coins that had been paid in by

the people, grinning with delight at the sufferings the tax had caused, and how his heart was touched, and he straightway remitted the war tax that had raised them. As they lived under laws, by which he who robbed the king's treasury was flayed alive and left to die in torture, they told a story how the gentle king had seen a poor scullion take coins from his chest as he lay apparently asleep, and had bade him haste away, and saved him from punishment. As they saw the sick and poor neglected and despised, they told how a poor man, an Irishman, almost sick to death, and with running sores, "thin, deformed, feeble, weary," says an old poem, whom no one else would touch, had been carried by the king on his own shoulders to the altar of the earlier church on this very Isle of Thorns, and had been there healed, and had hung up his stool by the altar and set out to go on foot to Rome. I could tell you the sweet and touching tale of the ring which he gave to the poor beggar, which was given really, the story said, to the Apostle St. John, which came back to him from the apostle with a kindly and loving message to prepare for heaven. This ring he wore on his finger when he died, and it was buried with him, and taken off his dead finger in later days and worn by kings at their coronation. All these stories, even had they been all true, do not prove that he was a wise or a vigorous king. It was not as such that his memory was dear to his people, or deserves to be honoured by us; but they remind us not only that he was the founder of this Abbey, which has been the scene of so many funerals, so many coronations, where sleeps the dust and stand the memorials of so many mighty Englishmen, but that he won the heart of mankind by following out, up to the full light of his age, one precept of our Lord, much and terribly neglected in those days, "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father which is in heaven is merciful."

"Who clothed the naked poor,"

says the same old poem,

"But Edward, the holy and gentle?
Who fed the hungry
But Edward, the glorious?"

And in time his memory grew more and more sacred. Once his tomb was opened, and it was said that his body had not seen corruption, but lay there after nearly forty years even as in quiet sleep. Later on, when nearly a hundred years had passed, he was canonised—declared, that is, to be a Saint—and was moved on October 13th to a more

stately grave. And when another hundred years had passed, another king, somewhat like himself in his failings, his very unkingly failings, and also in some of his virtues, destroyed in his honour the church which Edward had built, in order to build in its place this more beautiful abbey church, where you sit to-day. Once more Edward's body was taken from its grave and borne, on another 13th of October, on the shoulders of kings and princes and great men, each eager to take a part, to the lofty shrine, which you can now visit. Among those who then bore his body was the prince who was named after him, the far greater King of England, Edward I.,—the first since the Conquest,—and his brother, the Edmund who was called after another English king, slain by Danes, and also counted a Saint.

And what more shall I say to you of the king who was the real founder of the abbey, and in whose honour this the second abbey was built? Shall I tell you that inasmuch as he is called a saint, and is the only saint whose bones rest beneath this roof, that you are to reverence him beyond all who are buried here—kings, or warriors, or statesmen, or poets, or philosophers? Shall I tell you that God will hear prayers offered close by his tomb more readily than if you kneel where you are now seated? Or shall I tell you that you are to pay him an honour far higher than and quite different from what you would pay to any other king of England, or to any great Christian philosopher, like Sir Isaac Newton, or any Christian workers for the poor and despised, such as the William Wilberforce of whom you may have heard, or the Lord Shaftesbury whose statue is just placed among us? No; I cannot tell you this. I might talk long to you of his shortcomings as a king, of his neglect of the cares and duties of royalty, of his dividing his time between attending services at church and, strange as it will sound to you, hunting and hawking. It is good to go to church and worship God, and behave as we are told he did, reverently and quietly. It is good to enjoy such relaxation and amusement as busy lives will allow. But it was not good to neglect the cares and duties of a king whether to go to church or to hunt the stag. He owed to God the duty not only of going to church, but of doing with all his heart the work which God had given him to do. It is not for this that we will honour his memory; nor can we praise him for having lived abroad in exile, on which rests his title to Confessor; but we may honour him for this, that, even

if in doing so he thought more about his own soul's welfare than his people's good, he raised the mighty church which from that time became the national sanctuary of the English race, and where all here can see the stone shrine where lies his coffin. And we may praise him still more for this, that in the rough and terrible age in which he lived, when the hearts of men for generations had been growing harder and harder, he had a kind and tender heart, and practised that Christian grace of mercy and kindness of which Christ our Lord was the great example. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." We, my dear children, can at any age bear in mind our Saviour's words. You boys, now at home for your holidays, you know how ready you are to imitate many around you in using hardly those who are weak, those who are for any reason, just or unjust, disliked by others. See how brightly through the mist of ages still shine these stories of the Confessor's tender heart, of the courage which made one so unlike the stalwart, hard-hearted, coarser warriors of his day, face the sneers of his courtiers, in order to show himself pitiful and of tender mercy. We may speak severely of his want of many kingly qualities; yet after all we feel that he who sleeps in the midst, with kings and conquerors round him, may in one point stand nearer to God and Christ than his great successors—that he was like him of whom the psalm speaks, "He shall be favourable to the simple and needy, and dear shall their blood be in His sight."

In these things at least, in his real love for Christian worship, and in his real care for the poor, the sick, the suffering, let us try in our own way, not in his, to imitate the king whom for so many ages England has called a Saint. Let us do so, I say, in our own way. He gave, they said, his royal ring to a poor man in distress, he forgave the thief, he carried on his shoulders the poor sick cripple. Let us do what we can to give something of our own to help those who need it sorely; you, fresh from your Christmas dinners, to help children who have no dinners, good or bad, to eat; all of us to learn to be kind, gentle, and forgiving, not to be carried away by those around us to be unfeeling, unpitiful, unmerciful, but to take home with us from the tomb of the founder of the Abbey, on a day that reminds us of, and is named after, a deed of horrid cruelty, the words, "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful," and "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."



“THE FAIRY TALES OF SCIENCE.”

By DR. J. G. McPHERSON, F.R.S.E.

TO many the teaching of science within the last few years is as interesting, if not as startling, as were Grimm's fairy tales to our youthful fancy. Time-honoured notions and revered fictions, around which the hallowed associations of our early scientific training fondly and firmly cling, are being weighed in the balance; and with reluctance we have to part with them. The freshness of the stories of scientific research is only equalled by their boldness. Yet, when grasped by a clear mind open to accurate instruction, the new theories are fascinating in their grandeur and comprehensiveness; and whether we wander in the pathless woods or by the lonely shore we can rapturously nourish not only our youth sublime but our maturer age, “with the fairy tales of science, and the long results of time.”

Some of these beautiful stories we will glance at in this paper; but little more than the contents can be given in the space allowed to us. One of the most interesting of the tales is on the *formation of dew*. Until very recently a fairy-like charm was attached to this beautiful phenomenon, for the poet described the orient dew as “shed from the

bosom of the morn into the glowing roses.” But no longer can it be truly said that on any sweet spot “early fa's the dew;” though the tender song will not suffer by the altered interpretation of science. For it is now held by the best physicists that instead of falling from above, the dew rises from the earth. The generally received opinion that the dew is formed of vapour existing at the time in the atmosphere must be given up for the established fact, that the vapour which rises from the heated earth is trapped by the cold surface-earth. Besides, when we imagine that, on a cool evening after a sultry day in summer, our feet are being wet by the dew on the grass, we make a grave mistake. For that moisture on the grass is not dew at all; it is false dew—in reality the transpired humour of the plants. The drops at the tips, which glisten diamond-like, are not dew: close examination shows that these crystalline spheres are all situated at the points where the veins of the leaves cut the outer edges. These drops only give evidence of the vitality of the plant. The difference between the true dew on the grass and the exuded drops through the veins from within

the grass can be easily distinguished; for the former is distributed all over the blade in a moist film; whereas the latter are of some size, and are situated near the tips of the blade. Altered, then, is the meaning of the line, "Ilka blade o' grass keeps its ain drap o' dew;" for those brilliant globules on the petal, shaking to the same sweet air, and often "gliding at once all fragrant into one," are not dew-drops, but are the exudations of the healthy plants. They give evidence of the *elixir vite* of vegetation; whereas the true dew is the pearly lustre, varnished in filmy humidity over the blades by that wondrous alchemy which transforms the water-vapour rising from the ground into the plant-refreshing dew.

The monopoly of being the only colourless substance in the universe is no longer conceded to water; for it is now found that *blueness* is its inherent hue. Even distilled water has been examined with the best sets of apparatus, and its colour has been found to be of the same tint as a solution of Prussian blue. Some still cling to the prevalent fallacy—handed down by diluted mythology—that the water of a mountain tarn is blue only because of the reflected blue of the clear sky above. But the reflected light of the sky has only an influence on the apparent colour of the water. If the sky be deep blue, then this blue light, when reflected by the surface of the water, causes it to appear of a deeper and richer hue. Far more important, however, is the truth of the inherent blueness of the water, through its selective absorption. The brilliancy of the water, as in parts of the Mediterranean, depends on the solid particles suspended in it, and these have a beautiful and important transforming influence on the colour phenomena; yet water has its own blue colour; no longer can the most crystalline stream be called colourless.

So important is the part played by *dust* in the phenomena of nature that without it there would be no fogs, no mist, no clouds, no rain at all. Particles of water-vapour do not combine with each other to form a cloud particle. Before such a combination is possible it is essential to have some solid body on which the vapour particles are to condense. The particles of dust, then, are the free-surfaces on which the change takes place from water-vapour to fog. When there is abundance of dust in the air and little water-vapour is present, there is an over-production of dust-particles, and the fog-particles are in consequence close packed, but light in form, and take the lighter appearance of fog.

If, therefore, dust is increased in the air in fine particles, fogs are increased. But if the particles of dust are fewer and larger, in proportion to the molecules of water-vapour, each particle gets weighted, becomes visible, and speedily falls in mist or rain. Without dust, however, every blade of grass and every branch of the trees would be dripping with moisture; there would be no use then for umbrellas, but our feet and lower clothing would be always wet. Better is it for the housekeeper to bear without fretting the annoying dust in her rooms, than to have the walls always running with moisture! Without dust there would be no clouds to shield us from the sun's burning rays; yet, if the sun's heat—as is prophesied by our best authority—should diminish, nature may have the compensating decrease of the quantity of atmospheric dust; so that, with less cloud, the sun's heat may reach the earth through a less dense medium, to compensate for the decrease of the initial heat. This fog-producing dust, moreover, is partly formed by the breaking up of the dried spray of the ocean into minute particles, and by the infinitesimal division of meteoric matter; but most of all this dust is produced from the sulphur of burnt coals. The three hundred and fifty tons of sulphur thrown into the atmosphere every winter day in London are quite sufficient to account for the density of the fogs in that city. One of the most brilliant discoveries of our day is the numbering of the dust of the air. "The gay motes that people the sunbeam" have been mechanically enumerated. It has been computed that in ordinary dry air there are more than two millions of dust-particles in the cubic inch, and in an ordinary room there are no fewer than eighty-eight millions.

But the *organic* particles in the air command even more attention, for they exercise a very important influence upon the health and comfort of man and beast. Though unseen by the naked eye, these are the disease-germs and death-germs which cause so much sickness and mortality in the world. So far as the material frames are concerned, these micro-organisms are far more real messengers of evil than poet or painter ever imagined. We have only to realise the fact that in the air of a bedroom have been counted no less than six thousand organisms per cubic yard, and that even in a fairly healthy locality a man must breathe, along with the fifteen cubic yards of dusty air in twenty-four hours, about forty thousand baneful bacteria, to be painfully struck how he can escape dis-

case, or how his lungs are not, like chimneys, soon lined with dust. Fortunately, however, nature has provided a wonderful means of prevention. The heat of the lung-surfaces repels the colder dust-particles, and prevents them from alighting. The lungs, too, are moist as well as warm, and the constant evaporation of moisture at the surface of the air-tubes tends to ward off the dust. Invalids most distinctly observe the great difference in the amount of dust deposited in the bronchials from air breathed on the heights of Switzerland and by the shores of the Madeiras. It is not that there is less dust in the air of the Alpine resorts than in the almost pure air of the Madeiras, but because the air is cold and dry, in the very best condition for the repulsion of the dust by the warm and moist lung-surfaces.

Since the tremendous eruption of Krakatoa, in the Straits of Sunda, five and a half years ago, some remarkably *fine sunsets* have been witnessed in this country. Scientific men have connected the exceedingly rich colours in these sunsets with the amount of very fine dust floating in the atmosphere. No less than seventy thousand cubic yards of dust actually fell round the volcano. The light of the sun in the evening passing through this floating dust and the water-vapour, is at times brilliantly coloured, the green tints being due to the dust, and the blue tints to the water-vapour. Crimson after-glows are often observed over a very large area. While the sky is deep blue overhead it will be observed that lower down the blue changes to blue-green, and in some cases to green; this wonderful greenness sometimes seen in a clear space in the sky being occasionally intensified by contrast with a rose-coloured cloud or haze alongside of it. The fine particles of dust allow the red rays to pass on to be reflected on the clouds far to the east as well as to the south and north. Some of the most beautiful and delicate rose tints are formed by the air cooling and depositing its moisture on the dust, increasing the size of the particles, especially in the upper and colder regions of the atmosphere, until they are able to stop and reflect the rays of the red end of the spectrum, when the haze glows with a strange aurora-like light. How brilliant have sometimes been these after-glows! With what rapture have we gazed on the glorious scene!

It has been practically shown that in the bad-conducting property of *snow* there is a remarkable protecting power in the economy of nature. However cold the air and the

surface of the snow may be, if there is a considerable thickness of snow, the temperature of the surface of the soil underneath does not fall below the freezing point. Thus the snow is actually a warm covering to the vegetation; for on its removal in Alpine slopes by the ethereal mildness of the spring, the surface of the earth is seen to be gorgeously verdant and studded with beautiful flower-bloom. But, though the snow is a beneficent protection to the plant-world in cold climates, it is chilling to the atmosphere. The radiation from the snow in a cloudless sky considerably lowers the temperature of the superincumbent air; and in extensive snow-clad lands, when the winter is protracted, the chilling effect is very manifest. The surface of the snow receives so little heat from the earth that it gets cooled down to hoar-frost in a brilliant layer, glistening in the weaker sunlight. Thus the ground may be of a temperature above freezing when the snow-surface is bitterly cold. However, animals which live in the air have the power of locomotion to keep up the body's temperature by active work. The plants in a cold winter would die or become stunted without the protection of the snow-mantle, whereas animals that can keep themselves in heat by exercise, do not suffer by the necessary loss of the heat of the earth which is prevented by the snow-covering from passing through to them.

Careful observers have noticed a remarkable coincidence between the maxima of *sun-spots*, the earth's magnetic disturbances, the display of auroræ boreales, and, strange to say, grain prices in India. Charts show in all a marked similarity of cycles every eleven years. "The rosy red flushing in the northern night" is no longer absolutely independent of the control of law. The aurora and the lightning are alternate modes of relief—electricity which misses the one channel must traverse the other. Accompanying the "polar lightning" is a "hissing eerie din" as of distant thunder, or the sound which attends the brush discharge of the electrical machinery. In correspondence with the sun's rhythmical changes are produced magnetic variations in the earth and auroral displays in the atmosphere. From careful statistics kept of the prices of grain in India we observe a wonderful correspondence between the minimum numbers for the price of grain and the minimum of sun-spots. Amid all the apparently irregular fluctuations of the yearly prices, there is a periodical rise and fall of prices once every

eleven years, corresponding to the regular variation which takes place in the number of sun-spots during the same period. The same forces, then, which cause violent storms in the sun's photosphere, thrill by physical sympathy to the earth in waves of magnetism and electricity, as well as of heat and light; and fitting as appear the "merry dancers," irregular as seem the magnetic disturbances, and uncontrollable as are to men the prices of grain, still these are under the firm control of the powerful fixed centre which keeps all the planets in their orbits with marvellous regularity.

We now understand the meaning of the expression, "*Thunder clears the air.*" It has been found by experiment that oxygen, the life-sustaining element in the air, loses its vital energy by passing through the lungs of warm-blooded animals; but that currents of positive electricity passed through the devitalised oxygen immediately restore the lost energy. Before the thunder-storm, everything has been so still for days that the oxygen in the air has been to some extent deprived of its life-sustaining power, and a feeling of drowsiness comes over all. But the lightning flashes restore the lost energy to the oxygen, and a feeling of exhilaration is experienced after the storm is over.

Spectrum analysis has shown that in the *solar atmosphere* the elementary bodies, which on earth are not yet reducible, are dissociated by means of the intense heat. Dalton's atoms are merely so in a relative sense; for temperature regulates the nature of the elements. Very high temperatures, such as that of the sun, or even that produced by electricity, dissociate the ordinary chemical elements into more primary elements. The so-called chemical elements are compound bodies, or at least behave after the manner of compound bodies. This discovery explains those phenomena which proved stumbling-blocks to many investigators, so long as it was supposed that solar chemistry was conditioned similarly to our own.

It is a very remarkable fact that if a vessel with water at 50° Fahr. be placed in the receiver of an air-pump, where the pressure of the air is only three ounces on the square inch, the water will boil, i.e. there will be a free and rapid discharge of vapour. But it is even stranger to know that the *boiling-point* under a fixed pressure of the air is affected by the nature of the vessel in which the water is boiled: e.g. when iron filings are thrown into the boiling water—the vessel being of glass—the boiling point is lowered.

This is because an important condition has only lately been discovered—the existence of a *free-surface*, at which a change from liquid to gaseous takes place. Every bubble of vapour which ascends in the process of boiling must have originated by means of a free-surface. If a flask of distilled water be placed in an oil bath at 260° Fahr., the water may be heated above 220° (i.e. eight superheated degrees) without showing the least motion. Accordingly, in engines, if the heating go on till the water in the boiler is very much superheated, then the moment the engine is started and the feed-water enters the boiler, a free-surface is at once formed, and the vaporisation takes place with great rapidity, till in some cases an explosion is the result. The best remedy for boiler explosions, therefore, is an increase of free-surface by the introduction of dissolved air into the boiler, or by the forcing of a few large inverted cups over the hottest part of the boiler.

One of the most remarkable discoveries of modern times is that of the products of *coal-tar*. From that apparently useless substance colours, medicines, perfumes and sweeteners have been abundantly extracted. These products vie in power and benefit with the rarest vegetable alkaloids. The colours, of numberless variety, unequalled beauty, trifling cost, and well-tested permanency, are used in dress and house-furnishings. The medicines, useful and cheaper than quinine, can assuage the violent fever and lessen human suffering without any of the bad effects of the drug extracted from the Peruvian bark. The perfumes, for soaps and other purposes, are healthy, pleasant, and moderate in price. The sweeteners, 220 times the strength of sugar, with germ-killing power, are useful for preserves and beneficial in certain forms of disease. The attainment of such results might well be regarded as savouring of the chimerical dreams of the alchemist rather than of the real production of the practical chemist.

From the coca leaf has been extracted a *drug* which has been found eminently serviceable as a local anæsthetic. No longer is chloroform required for operations on the eye; for a few drops of a four per cent. solution of the hydrochlorate of cocaine render the nerves about the eye quite feelingless, so that the operation can be performed without stupefying the brain or risking the life of those affected in the heart by the use of chloroform. From the Kola-nut has been formed a paste which has marvellous powers of sustaining the bodily energies. Being five times the strength of cocoa, it is useful for

travellers and invalids; being an antidote to the poison of alcohol, it has been found of considerable service in cases of dipsomania. From the eucalyptus-tree the black bees are producing a honey which, containing 62 per cent. of sugar and 18 per cent. of the essential properties of that tree, has already proved itself to be a capital antiseptic, an admirable substitute for cod liver oil in chest diseases, and a useful sedative in cases of heart affection. What a boon are these to suffering humanity?

In a small loch in the Isle of Skye has been discovered, in excellent *diatomite*, an unexpected source of wealth for the manufacture of ultramarine and dynamite. Proprietors and labourers will both be glad of the find, especially when the quality of the deposit is before that found in Germany or America.

Balloons have been so utilised for war that the Laureate's dream may not be far distant in realisation, when he saw "The nation's airy navies grappling in the central blue." By the use of electricity and *captive balloons*, signals can be flashed in the balloon without the necessity of having the operator in it. The balloon is made of a very transparent substance, and into it are placed several incandescent electric lamps, in circuit with the source of electricity on the ground. By varying the duration of the flashes of light in the balloon, any system of telegraphic nomenclature can be employed. If from the besieged city of Khartoum General Gordon could have sent up an electric signalling balloon, its flashes of light in the heavens would have told the rescuers of the gallant band and the painful reality of the sufferers' misery.

Photography, too, has been doing marvels. Lightning can now be fixed on the photographic plate, and the flight of birds can be traced in successive fractions of a second of time. By the limner power of light on the sensitive plate are revealed nebulae which have defied the searching power of the best telescopes. Now the Pleiades appear like a miniature sidereal system, the richness and variety of which bewilder theoretical conceptions, eclipsing the Laureate's beautiful image of "A swarm of fireflies tangled in a silver braid." Artists are now hard at work in their endeavour to accomplish what will be considered the discovery of the age—the photography of the colours of the object.

In *electricity* the discoveries are numberless. The storage of electricity has been accomplished, and Sir William Thomson's bright prophecy when he first had stored electricity in his hands has now been fulfilled, that the Falls of Niagara might yet be utilized for the production and storing of the electricity which would light the towns instead of gas. With the electric megaloscope the physician can see into the cavities of the stomach and bladder. It will likely work a true revolution in pathology and treatment of diseases in these parts of the human frame. The enlarged image of the diseased part can be photographed, and a map of the whole interior can be made for the physician to study afterwards at his leisure. The telephone is now as familiar in its advantages as is the telegraph. The hydrophone will be very useful in detecting the flaws in the main drains of streets. The telephoto, though yet in a crude state, will yet be of great service. Already by its means, an image thrown upon a screen in one town can be transmitted by the electric wire to a screen in another town by the help of the selenium cells. The bullet explorer has been found to be a most useful instrument. This can detect and locate any piece of metal wherever situated in the human body. It is a combination of the induction balance and telephonic probe. As soon as the explorer approaches a piece of metal the balance is disturbed, and a musical note is produced in the receiver. The probe is then inserted, and as soon as it reaches the metal, a distinct click is heard. In times of war this apparatus will be found of great value, saving much suffering to the wounded soldiers by the old method of probing for the bullets.

The stories of the sea from the valuable volumes published by the *Challenger* expedition, the use of oil on troubled waters, the cross-fertilisation of flowers, the progress made in artificial fish culture, the prevention and cure of hydrophobia, and a thousand other subjects of minor importance, we have not space even to enumerate. But this rapid review of the wonderful discoveries of the last few years may awaken in some of our readers a desire to go and read more particularly about some of them; and will at least prove that the Laureate's epithet, "the fairy tales of science," is, even in our day, not a misnomer.



CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD, LL.D.

THE New World was expected to be the source of fresh sensations for the jaded appetites of the Old. Tobacco was the first: inspiration and plague, solace and curse, whose fumes overhung a vast and gorgeous island in the sea of dreams. Canvas-back ducks, terrapin, Catawba and Delaware grapes, and sweet-corn ears, revealed to epicures novel and often exquisite savours.

Similarly piquant and grateful to the intellectual perceptions are certain new contributions to literature: Irving's "Knickerbocker," Lowell's "Hosea Biglow," Holmes's "Autocrat," Locke's "Nasby," Mrs. Stowe's "Old Town Folks," Bret Harte's tales of miners' camps, and Clement's "Innocents Abroad." Most dainties can be fully enjoyed only on the spot where they are produced. The luscious perfection of garden corn does not continue beyond a day. The appetising odour of a "clam-bake" can only be imagined; a Briton must remain unblest by that sweet assault upon the sensorium until, in some sheltered bay of Massachusetts or Rhode Island, he stands by the steaming pile of seaweed at the uncovering of the feast. So with much of the indigenous humour, like certain wines, it does not bear transportation; or, rather, like them, it needs the inborn sentiment and associations of the country, and the friendly warmth of the natal sky, for its perfect degustation. Hosea Biglow, for instance, is often quoted in this country, and I have seen some people here who fancied they enjoyed him; but no one who has not lived in New England, and in the time of what might be called the pre-historic Yankee, has the faintest notion of the masterly touches of description and allusion in his verses. An interpreter of the dialect is indispensable, to begin with; and when that is mastered, without an intimate knowledge of the country-life in the old time, the matter to a Briton, especially a practical, unimaginative one, will be as distant as a pastoral scene of Virgil, and incomprehensible as a "fourth dimension" in space.

Most judicious people will agree that there has been too much comedy in the United States, not of the pure, high comedy of literature, but of the frantic and farcical attempts at it in newspapers and magazines by young writers struggling for recognition. These have evidently been blind to the fact that

wit and humour are in ideas or conceptions rather than in their garb, and that eccentric phrases, and somersaults in style, are not necessarily marks of distinction. The "funny columns" in the American press, as well as in British imitations, contain now and then a neatly turned joke, but their average contents are generally fatuous or absurd. One seems to see a clown grinning through a horse-collar in every capital O. The exuberance of the grotesque, and the hunting of unhappy, Janus-faced words by 'prentice punsters has been wearisome, but the juvenile caprice is passing away. It is beginning to be seen that pure English is not incompatible with humour and airy grace, and that Addison, Steele, Thackeray, and Irving have not been wholly overshadowed by the motley crew who counted upon dazzling the world by assaults on the mother tongue. But for a time it seemed that a writer had no chance for popularity without concessions to the jocular portion of the public. There are many traces of this in the literary attempts of the last thirty years. And what is so dead as a book of exploited farce? What so dreary as the "fun" of times gone by, especially when that fun consisted of local allusions and fugitive slang? It is like walking over the *débris* of burned fire-works the day after a fête.

Dr. Holmes was the first in our day to blend the personal element in essays. When a man of genius frankly offers us glimpses of his intellectual life, his notes on favourite authors, his notions of style and of the beautiful in nature and art, his ideas of study and discipline and of society and manners, with hints of his tastes and aversions, we welcome the book as a part of himself; for it is his soul made manifest. There are books which command more of our homage, but those in which we feel the heart of the author win our love.

Memorable essays of this kind, fruity and *sui generis* as to personal quality, are not to be compassed by toil, like works of history and science. A writer may be as jaunty in movement as Sterne, and may turn and polish his sentences like a diamond worker, and still miss whatever gives charm to the world's favourites. These are predestined, individual, apart; the author and the work are one.

In the writings of Charles Dudley Warner

the personal element is their leading characteristic. It is not egotism consciously displayed; there is nothing of vanity or presumption; it is rather a tone, like that which marks a painter of strong individuality; and the reader is interested mainly in observing how the writer's mind is affected by the scenes or the persons described. The chief value of his sketches, as in the case of other artists, lies in the treatment.

The conditions of life in New England have been sufficiently varied to admit of many workers in the same field; at least this is true of the life of forty or fifty years ago; at present the rapid extinction of the Yankee dialect, the decline of farming, the predominance of large cities and villages, the immigration of Irish and of French Canadians, and the growing uniformity of manners and dress, are tending to destroy all that has been quaint and individual among the people. Warner's early experience of New England country life was gained in the western part of Massachusetts, not far from the scenes of Judd's "Margaret" and the "Old-Town Folks." Whittier, in his "Snow Bound," "The Barefoot Boy," and other autobiographic poems, shows that life among farmers in the eastern part of the State was not unlike that described by Warner in his "Being a Boy;" and probably there was fifty years ago a general resemblance in manners throughout the State. Holmes and Lowell, who were sons of well-to-do clergymen in a populous town near Boston, could not have had any personal experience of the simplicity and rudeness of the interior, but must have gained their knowledge by sharp and curious observation. There is not a trace of this experience in the other leading poets; and all the modern novelists are totally ignorant of it.

There has been in literature, as in society, a certain stateliness, a holding aloof from the ways, the ideas, and the speech of rustics. Everything has been as refined as a page of Prescott or a stanza of Longfellow. At best, the attitude has been that of Sir Roger de Coverley toward his tenants—courteous, but distinctly *de haut en bas*. Most of this polished literature might as well have been written in England, for there is no suggestion of the New World in it. The great authors who are remembered beyond their age—unless they have dealt with topics that are of no time—are generally those who have been rooted in native soil, penetrated with the thought of their time, and familiar with the life and character of all classes. Readers of

fifty and upwards find an inexpressible pleasure in books which recall their early associations. That is one secret of the charm of Whittier. Every dweller in the valley of the Merrimack finds in his poems the mirror of his own boyhood. And, as I believe that the old life in New England has passed away for ever, books like some of Warner's in which it is described, or which retain its quaint aroma, will have an increasing value with coming generations.

Warner was born in Plainfield, Mass., Sept. 12, 1829. His ancestors on his mother's side were among the pilgrims of the *Mayflower*. His father was a gentleman farmer, a man of considerable culture, who died at the early age of thirty-five. The lad was sent to a school in Charlemont, a neighbouring town, and many of his experiences are recorded in "Being a Boy." The household books to which he had access were almost exclusively religious, and probably beyond his comprehension. He was a hardy, brave youth, fond of sport, and, though he liked his studies, he liked better to hunt woodchucks and squirrels, or to lie on the hillsides, watching the clouds, dreaming and wondering. His first strong impulse was to be a soldier. He was captain of the company of boys of the village, and doubtless performed many deeds of valour. He might have been appointed a cadet in the U.S. military school at West Point, but he shyly concealed his desire until it was too late. In 1842 he went with his mother to Cazenovia, N.Y., where he attended a seminary preparatory for entering Hamilton College. He entered in 1849 and received his Bachelor's degree in 1851. His wide reading and original powers gained him distinction even in his "freshman" year, and he wrote during his college course for the *Knickerbocker* and *Putnam's Magazine*, two popular periodicals. He had intended to establish a monthly magazine at Detroit, but the project miscarried, owing to the failure of the publisher. He then joined a surveying party on the frontier of Missouri. On his return to the east he read law in New York City and was graduated in 1856 in the law department of the University of Pennsylvania. He began the practice of his profession at Chicago and remained there until 1860, when he removed to Hartford, Conn., where he became editor of the *Press*. He was a Whig in politics and afterwards a Republican (when the Whig party lost its identity), and was always strongly anti-slavery in sentiment. The *Press* acquired a high reputation under his management,

both as a political and as a literary newspaper. In 1867 the *Press* was consolidated with the *Courant*, a long-established and influential paper, and Warner became one of the editors. He visited Europe in 1868-9, and wrote letters to the *Courant*, which were widely copied. They were marked by a sportive humour quite unlike that of any writer in America.

A successful editor of a newspaper is not necessarily a literary man; in fact his success is quite independent of literary eminence; it is due rather to good sense, an instinctive knowledge of public tastes and prejudices, and patient labour. His daily comments on politics, foreign news, and local affairs are to be lucid and forcible; but he well knows that the best of his editorials will fall like leaves, and be trodden underfoot. He must not waste time in nicety of phrases, nor bewilder readers with allusions or similes. If he has literary aspirations, they must be nursed apart; his ambitious efforts must not be wasted in his own columns.

Warner has been a judicious editor. The value of the newspaper property has largely increased, and he is part owner, assured of a good income. Literature with him was at first a pastime, a recreation after the labours of the day. In this way he wrote his first book, "My Summer in a Garden," which appeared first in numbers in the weekly edition of his paper. The matter was taken quite seriously by many of his readers, who fancied they were going to have practical lessons upon raising squashes and beans, with hints of domestic economy. But the garden, though its prototype existed in Hartford, is as far as that of the Hesperides. Nothing could be more simple and unconventional than the narration, but the effect is quite disproportioned to the apparent means. Insensibly the author engages the reader in his daily experiences. The various objects in the garden are recalled by strokes of picturesque description, although you are not thinking of epithets or adjectives, but are merely looking on with the gardener at the processes of nature. The gardener meanwhile often gives you a merry glance; you are played upon with quips and mystification. The gay and capricious style suits best the hours of leisure, and is chiefly welcome to youth, and to the happy few who never grow old. There are readers, I know, who do not see what is to be seen in this garden; the worse for them. They see only plain or playful descriptions of vegetables, with jocose

comments. It will depend upon the reader whether he finds this a garden of delight, or the travesty of a *potager*.

It must be admitted that here and there the composition shows signs of haste, and would be better now for revision.

"Saunterings" came next (1872), an account of tour in Europe.

"Back Log Studies" is a series of papers describing a family party that met on winter evenings around the broad hearthstone in a country house, before a huge wood fire. It makes one think somewhat of the company in which the *Autocrat* shone, although there was no dominating voice at Warner's fireside. There is no imitation of the autocrat's manner; the resemblance is only in the conversational and informal treatment of topics. As Warner has pointedly said, "A great many scribblers have felt the disadvantage of writing after Montaigne; and it is impossible to tell how much originality in others Dr. Holmes has destroyed in this country."

In the opening chapter the author laments that "the fire on the hearth has almost gone out in New England," its cheerful blaze succeeded by the dismal warmth of furnaces and stoves. The great chimney and its burning logs were once the central idea of the home. He does not "know how any virtue whatever is possible over an imitation gas-log. What a sense of insincerity the family must have if they indulge in the hypocrisy of gathering about it!" He likes the fire of hickory, and "the smell of this aromatic forest timber;" the birch, too, "a sweet wood for the hearth" with its soft white light. He feels the beauty and the solace of the open fire. "The hot air of a furnace is a sirocco; the heat of a wood fire is only an intense sunshine, like that bottled in *Lacrimæ Christi*." "With a whole leisure day before you, a good novel in hand, and the back log only just beginning to kindle, . . . has life anything more delicious?"

The conversation of this well-balanced group, without being too dazzling to be natural, is sensible, shrewd, and entertaining. As the author says, "The best talk is that which escapes up the open chimney and cannot be repeated. . . . The best of it is when the subject unexpectedly goes cross-lots by a flash of short-cut to a conclusion so suddenly revealed that it has the effect of wit."

A variety of topics engages the attention: women as novelists, snow-storms, the unreality of character as seen on the stage, the disagreeable personal traits of eminent reformers, the ethics of dress, the sphere of the

newspaper, the ludicrous side of Gothic architecture in the little modern churches, &c. Here are a few sentences taken at random.

"Criticism by comparison is the refuge of incapables, and especially is this true in literature. . . . 'This is not a rose,' says the critic, taking up a pansy and rending it; 'it is not at all like a rose, and the author is either a pretentious idiot or an idiotic pretender.'"

"Photography, the art which enables common-place mediocrity to look like genius."

"The dwelling-house is a modern institution. It is a curious fact that it has only improved with the condition of women."

"Nature is entirely indifferent to any reform. She perpetuates a fault as persistently as a virtue. You see it in trees whose bark is cut, and in melons that have had only one summer's intimacy with squashes. The bad traits in character are handed down from generation to generation with as much care as the good ones. Nature, unaided, never reforms anything."

One of the most felicitous of the slight sketches is that of a typical lazy man, a character rare in New England, who lived on a succession of rocky and bramble-grown farms, "moving from desolation to desolation;" too lazy even to fish, since the trout brooks, stretching lengthwise, covered so much ground; a man so inert as "never to catch anything, even an epidemic," but one whom "diseases would be likely to overtake, even the slowest of slow fevers." "The drawback to his future is that the rest be-

yond the grave will not be much changed for him, and he has no works to follow him."

"Back Log Studies" is a maturer and more substantial book than its predecessor, full of wise and witty observation and delightful in its quiet, mellow tone. There is no effort to shine by laboured antithesis in style, but only a bright and playful fancy, a

suggestion of quaint images, and the warmth of a genial and generous nature; in short, that rare quality or assemblage of qualities never yet defined, Humour. The wit which glitters at the expense of another, and exults in sardonic laughter, may touch the intellect, but not the heart. There are brilliant jokers whose want of human feeling gives to their points a malignity that shocks us. Far different is the effect of the unobtrusive



James May
C. D. Warner

and kindly humour of Warner. He never poses, nor cackles over his jokes. His sentences have a buoyant swell like the waves of a summer sea, inspiring and restful. Modest to a fault, and sparing of words, he merely suggests a pleasantry, but never pursues it. His books leave with the reader the enduring impression of a wholly lovable man.

"Baddeck, and That Sort of Thing," an amusing narrative of a short sojourn in Cape Breton, was published in 1874. The following year he went to Europe again, and

the fruit of his observation appeared in two books, "My Winter on the Nile" (1876) and "In the Levant" (1877).

"My Winter on the Nile" is a book with vivid colour and movement, and is full of brilliant bits of description; but its successive scenes are rather overloaded so as to produce after a while the effect of repetition; and the author's pleasantry too often takes the form of Yankee colloquialisms, which impair the literary quality. To be easy in narration and never trivial or profuse is a most difficult art. The Nile book has a great store of information from latest Egyptologists; the scenery is done in a masterly way; the people we meet are real flesh and blood; and all the incidents of the voyage are as vivid as the pictures in one's own memory. These are great and positive merits. If the author had made the book for the English-speaking world and not specially for the American people, and had somewhat shortened the occasional descriptions which have a family likeness, he would have made a masterpiece like "Eöthen." As it is, it is one of the very best accounts of Egypt ever written. The mysterious *distance* and solemn impressiveness of the art and architecture of the Pharaohs had their inevitable effect upon Warner's mind; and it is noteworthy to see how in presence of the Pyramids, the Sphinx, the temples of Luxor, Karnak, Philæ, and Ipsamboul, certain strange flesh-creeping sensations pierce through the gaiety of modern life, and assert themselves among the off-hand and sometimes slangy phrases of the traveller. But if the book had been pitched on this key throughout! No; human nature could not endure it. Better occasional sportiveness than the long-drawn solemnity of Volney's "Ruins."

"Being a Boy" (1877) is naturally retrospective, and in a sense autobiographical; every country-bred New England man of mature age finds in it the essential elements of his own early life. Of course there are many things trivial and even ridiculous; but no genuine experiences of childhood can ever be without interest to thoughtful and especially to imaginative men. "The child is father of the man," and his first glimpses of the world have not only the iris hues of romance, but the mystic light of prophecy. I do not wonder that the poet Whittier read this book three times. It gives one the delightful sensation of going back to one's birthplace in the country.

It is to be feared that the "local colour" may be strange to other than New England

eyes. The boy's delight in wintergreen, either its red berries or its tender young shoots, in the fragrant bark of sassafras root, or sweet-flag root, will be recounted to the young people of these islands in vain. Equally strange will be many incidents of farm life, the quaint simplicity of Sunday worship, the exhilaration of sleighing and coasting, the attack and defence of snow forts, and the military manœuvres and sham combats in which all the young fellows of the township were engaged. But a hearty and natural boy in any country will find much to entertain him; for Mr. Warner's boy, though a scion of Yankee stock, exhibits traits of British ancestors, and in a sense is a type of the lively, curious, impressionable, unstable, aspiring young male animal seen in all households the world over. The sketch is that of a farmer's son in Massachusetts, but it is also a faithful study of the heart of every healthy boy that has lived. While looking at it, the staidest man renews his youth, and would be glad to experience once more its delights, even if burdened with its follies.

One or two touches have a forecast in them: the fancy of naming the ten cows by Latin numerals, and the association of milking with repeating the solemn lines of "Thanatopsis." The boy's thoughts were already reaching out to the future. Bryant, the author of that poem, probably the most remarkable ever written by a youth of eighteen, was a native of a neighbouring town, and there was naturally a local admiration. But the fame of "Thanatopsis" has since gone into all lands.

"In the Wilderness" (1878), one of his most popular books, is composed of sketches in the Adirondacks, a wild region in north-eastern New York. His description of Phelps, a famous guide, has become historic; and some years ago the Legislature of the State printed in pamphlet form the sketch entitled "A Hunting of the Deer," and distributed it as an argument against their wanton destruction in the Adirondack forests.

"The Life of Captain John Smith" (1879), written as a quasi comic history, aims to discredit the romance that has gathered about the Captain and Pocahontas. It was not successful as a humorous book, but it is the result of careful study of the colonisation of Virginia, and shows that there was something to be desired in the character of the original founder.

The succeeding year he wrote a life of Washington Irving for a series of "American Men of Letters," of which he is editor.

The lively susceptibility and agreeable humour of the author give to all his works a unique charm. He has the art of sketching scenes and people with light and effective touches, and the reader is led on not only without weariness, but with the writer's own enthusiasm. He gives little of the information that guide books supply, but rather the gay and humorous impressions made on his mind. We are interested in the vivid pictures he shows us, but mainly in the delightful personal medium through which we behold them. The "Roundabout Journey," through south-eastern France, a part of Italy, Sicily, Morocco, Spain, and Portugal, is one of the most fascinating books of travel; and the proof is that the reader mentally determines to follow the charming route as soon as ever he can. The remains of Greek and Roman art are shown us in a clear and fascinating light, without any of the pedantry which makes most writers upon art tiresome. No time is wasted upon unimportant details or inevitable accidents in the journey: we have only what is conspicuous and memorable in the daily experiences. The "Roundabout Journey" appears to me among the most fortunate of his many books.

As this sketch does not pretend to be exhaustive, there need not be a particular notice of all the works. Enough has been written to show something of Warner's qualities as a writer, and to establish his claim upon the reading public. His three books upon life in New England in the time of his boyhood are genuine and natural fruits of genius, dear to his countrymen and not unappreciated here, as many can testify. His books of travel cover wide fields, into which he has carried the sharpest faculty of observation, with buoyant good-humour and the inimitable art of the story-teller.

His best literary work has been expended upon occasional addresses for college commencements. It is a custom in the colleges of the United States to have annual addresses, both religious and literary, delivered before the students by eminent men outside the faculty. The most noted of Emerson's and Everett's efforts had their origin in that way. Such addresses are naturally the result of long study, and often exhibit high qualities of style. Warner has delivered many, but he has not yet collected them. For the most part these are pleas for high education, for national culture, and for an enlargement of collegiate methods. A series was delivered at Yale College in 1884, en-

titled "Literature in Relation to Life." There was a lecture on Shelley in 1888, also several addresses on Prison Reform and Social Science topics. I refer to these merely to indicate the place he holds in the world of letters at home.

He became connected with *Harper's Monthly* in 1884, and has charge of the "Editor's Drawer." He has also written many papers for it, the most important of which has been a series of studies in the South, in Mexico, and in the Great West. During his tour of the South in 1884-5, he made the acquaintance of many aspirants to literary honours, and some who gladly acknowledge themselves his *protégés* have gained a national reputation. It is much to say that any one man has affected the feelings of two great sections, divided by political differences like the North and the South. But his papers, though full of kindly criticism upon political, economical, and literary matters, were received with almost affectionate admiration, and were eulogised for their fairness everywhere. His papers on Mexico are mainly picturesque. Those upon the West are still going on.

He is an earnest and careful student, spending many hours daily at hard work, and with a passion for accuracy on every topic. His graver papers are wholly without exaggeration, and at first seem colourless, on account of the simplicity of style and the absence of adjectives; but when considered carefully they have the force of truth.

Warner is rather tall and slender, with keen blue eyes under gold-rimmed glasses, a fair and transparent complexion, wholly white hair and beard, a prominent nose, a high, retreating forehead, and a look of refinement, dignity, and good-humour. He appears nervous and delicate, but by no means weak or effeminate. In fact, he is athletic, and keeps himself in training. His manners are cordial and prepossessing, and his solid qualities and perfect tact have secured for him fast friends. At an author's dinner one of his *confères* declared that "he is better loved by his own craft than any man in America." He was married years ago to a charming woman, but their union is unblest with children. His house is modest, but one of the most attractive in a city of beautiful dwellings. It is in the western suburb, near a pleasant piece of woods and a wild glen that is a surprise and a delight in the border of a city. Among his near neighbours are Mrs. Stowe and Mr. Clemens, better known as "Mark Twain."

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER X.—HARRY VINE HAS A WANT.

BREAKFAST-TIME, with George Vine quietly partaking of his toast and giving furtive glances at a *Beloe* in a small squat bottle. He was feeding his mind at the same time that he supplied the wants of his body. Now it was a bite of toast, leaving in the embrowned bread such a mark as was seen by the dervish when the man asked after the lost camel: for the student of molluscous sea life had lost a front tooth. Now it was a glance at the little gooseberry-shaped creature, clear as crystal, glistening in the clear water with iridescent hues, and trailing behind it a couple of filaments of an extreme delicacy and beauty that warranted the student's admiration.

Louise was seated opposite performing matutinal experiments, so it seemed, with pots, cups, an urn, and various infusions and crystals.

Pradelle was reading the paper, and Harry was dividing his time between eating some fried ham and glancing at the clock, which was pointing in the direction of the hour when he should be at Van Helder's.

"More tea, Louie: too sweet," said the head of the house, passing his cup, *vis à* Pradelle.

The cup was filled up and passed back, Louise failing to notice that Pradelle manoeuvred to touch her hand as he played his part in the transfer. Then the door opened, and Liza, the brown-faced, black-haired Cornish maid, entered, bearing a tray with an untouched cup of tea, a brown piece of ham on its plate, and a little covered dish of hot toast.

"Please, 'm, Miss Vine says she don't want no breakfast this morning."

The *Beloe* bottle dropped back into George Vine's pocket.

"Eh? My sister ill?" he said anxiously.

"No, sir; she seems quite well, but she was gashly cross with me, and said why didn't Miss Louie bring it up."

"Liza, I forbid you to use that foolish word—'gashly,'" said Louise, pouring out a fresh cup of tea, and changing it for the one cooling on the tray.

"Why don't you take up auntie's breakfast as you always do? You know she doesn't like it sent up."

Louise made no reply to her brother, but turned to Pradelle.

"You will excuse me for a few minutes, Mr. Pradelle," she said as she rose.

"Excuse—you?" he replied with a peculiar smile; and, rising in turn, he managed so badly as he hurried to the door to open it for Louise's passage with the tray, that he and Liza, bent on the same errand, came into collision.

"Thank you, Mr. Pradelle," said Louise, quietly, as she passed out with the tray, and Liza gave him an indignant glance as she closed the door.

"Ha, ha! What a bungle!" cried Harry mockingly, as he helped himself to more ham.

George Vine was absorbed once more in the study of the *Beloe*.

"Never you mind, my lord the count," said Pradelle in an undertone; "I don't see that you get on so very well."

Harry winced.

"What are you going to do this morning?"

"Fish."

"Humph! well to be you," said Harry, with a vicious bite at his bread, while his father was too much absorbed in his study even to hear. "You're going loafing about, and I've got to go and turn that grindstone."

"Which you can leave whenever you like," said Pradelle meaningly.

"Hold your tongue!" cried Harry roughly, as the door re-opened and Louise, looking slightly flushed, again took her place at the table.

"Aunt poorly?" said Vine.

"Oh, no, papa; she is having her breakfast now."

"If you're too idle to take up auntie's breakfast, I'll take it," said Harry severely.

"Don't send it up by that girl again."

"I shall always take it myself, Harry," said Louise quietly.

The breakfast was ended; George Vine went to his study to feed his sea anemones on chopped whelk; Pradelle made an excuse about fishing lines, after reading plainly enough that his presence was unwelcome; and Harry stood with his hands in his pockets looking on as his sister put away the tea-caddy.

"Will you not be late, Harry?"

"Perhaps," he said, ill-humouredly. "I shall be there as soon as old bottle-nose I daresay."

"How long is Mr. Pradelle going to stay?"

"Long as I like."

There was a pause. Then Harry continued. "He's a friend of mine, a gentleman, and Aunt Marguerite likes him to stay."

"Yes," said Louise gravely. "Aunt Marguerite seems to like him."

"And so do you, only you're such a precious coquette."

Louise raised her eyebrows. This was news to her, but she said nothing.

"The more any one sees of Pradelle the more one likes him. Deal nicer fellow than that Scotch prig Leslie."

There was a slight flush on Louise Vine's face, but she did not speak, merely glanced at the clock.

"All right; I'm not going yet."

Then, changing his manner—

"Oh, Lou, you can't think what a life it is," he cried impetuously.

"Why, Harry, it ought to be a very pleasant one."

"What, with your nose over an account book, and every time you happen to look up, old Crampton staring at you as much as to say, 'Why don't you go on?'"

"Never mind, dear. Try and think that it is for your good."

"For my good!" he said with a mocking laugh.

"Yes, and to please father. Why, Harry dear, is it not something to have a chance to redeem your character?"

"Redeem my grandmother! I've never lost it. Why, Lou, it's too bad. Here's father rich as a Jew, and Uncle Luke with no end of money."

"Has he, Harry?" said Louise thoughtfully. "Really I don't know."

"I'm sure he has—lots. A jolly old miser, and no one to leave it to; and I don't see then why I should be ground down to work like an errand boy."

"Don't make a sentimental grievance of it, dear, but go and do your duty like a man."

"If I do my duty like a man I shall go and try to recover the French estates which my father neglects."

"No, don't do that, dear; go and get my old school spelling-book and read the fable of the dog and the shadow."

"There you go, sneering again. You

women can't understand a fellow. Here am I worried to death for money, and have to drudge as old Van Heldre's clerk."

"Worried for money, Harry? What nonsense!"

"I am. You don't know. I say, Lou dear."

"Now, Harry! you will be so late."

"I won't go at all if you don't listen to me. Look here; I want fifty pounds."

"What for?"

"Never mind. Will you lend it to me?"

"But what can you want with fifty pounds, Harry? You're not in debt?"

"You've got some saved up. Now, lend it to me, there's a good girl; I'll pay you again, honour bright."

"Harry, I've lent you money till I'm tired of lending, and you never do pay me back."

"But I will this time."

Louise shook her head.

"What, you don't believe me?"

"I believe you would pay me again if you had the money; but if I lent it you would spend it, and be as poor as ever in a month."

"Not this time, Lou. Lend it to me."

She shook her head.

"Then hang me if I don't go and ask Duncan Leslie."

"Harry! No; you would not degrade yourself to that."

"Will you lend it?"

"No."

"Then I will ask him. The poor fool will think it will please you, and lend it directly. I'll make it a hundred whilst I'm about it."

"Harry!"

"Too late now," he cried, and he hurried away.

"Oh!" ejaculated Louise, as she stood gazing after him with her cheeks burning.

"No," she said, after a pause; "it was only a threat; he would not dare."

"Harry gone to his office?" said Vine, entering the room.

"Yes, dear."

"Mr. Pradelle gone too?"

"Yes, dear; fishing, I think."

"Hum. Makes this house quite his home."

"Yes, papa; and do you think we are doing right?"

"Eh?" said Vine sharply, as he dragged his mind back from where it had gone under a tide-covered rock. "Oh, I see, about having that young man here. Well, Louie, it's like this: I don't want to draw the rein too tightly. Harry is at work now, and

keeping to it. Van Heldre says his conduct is very fair. Harry likes Mr. Pradelle, and they are old companions, so I feel disposed to wink at the intimacy, so long as our boy keeps to his business."

"Perhaps you are right, dear," said Louise.

"You don't like Mr. Pradelle, my dear?"

"No, I do not."

"No fear of his robbing me of you, eh?"

"Oh, father!"

"That's right; that's right; and look here, as we're talking about that little thing which makes the world go round, please understand this, and help me, my dear. There's to be no nonsense between Harry and Madelaine."

"Then you don't like Madelaine?"

"Eh? What? Not like her? Bless her! You've almost cause to be jealous, only you need not be, for I've room in my heart for both of you. I love her too well to let her be made uncomfortable by our family scapegrace. Dear me! I'm sure that it has."

"Have you lost anything, dear?"

"Yes, a glass stopper. Perhaps I left it in my room. Mustn't lose it; stoppers cost money."

"And here's some money of yours, father."

"Eh? Oh, that change."

"Twenty-five shillings."

"Put it on the chimney-piece, my dear; I'll take it presently. We will not be hard on Harry. Let him have his companion. We shall get him round by degrees. Ah, here comes some one to tempt you away."

In effect Madelaine was passing the window on her way to the front entrance; but Vine forgot all about his glass stopper for the moment, and threw open the glass door.

"Come in here, my dear," he said. "We were just talking about you."

"About me, Mr. Vine? Whatever were you saying?"

"Slander of course, of course."

"My father desired to be kindly remembered, and I was to say, 'Very satisfactory so far.'"

"Very satisfactory so far?" said Vine dreamily.

"He said you would know what it meant."

"To be sure—to be sure. Louie, my dear, I'm afraid your aunt is right. My brain is getting to be like that of a jelly fish."

He nodded laughingly and left the room.

"Did you meet Harry as you came?" said Louise, as soon as they were alone.

"Yes; but he kept on one side of the street, and I was on the other."

"Didn't he cross over to speak?"

"No; he couldn't see the Dutch fraulein—the Dutch doll."

"Oh, that's cruel, Maddy. I did not think my aunt's words could sting you."

"Well, sometimes I don't think they do, but at others they seem to rankle. But, look, isn't that Mr. Pradelle coming?"

For answer Louise caught her friend's hand to hurry her out of the room before Pradelle entered.

CHAPTER XL—AUNT MARGUERITE STUDIES A COMEDY.

THAT morning after breakfast Aunt Marguerite sat by her open window in her old-fashioned French *peignoir*.

She saw Pradelle go out, and she smiled and beamed as he turned to look up at her window, and raised his hat before proceeding down into the back lanes of the port to inveigle an urchin into the task of obtaining for him a pot of ragworms for bait.

Soon after she saw her nephew go out, but he did not raise his head. On the contrary, he bent it down, and heaved up his shoulders like a wet sailor, as he went on to his office.

"*Mon pauvre enfant!*" she murmured, as she half closed her eyes, and kissed the tips of her fingers. "But wait a while, Henri, *mon enfant*, and all shall be well."

There was a lapse of time devoted to thought, and then Aunt Marguerite's eyes glistened with malice, as she saw Madelaine approach.

"Pah!" she ejaculated softly. "This might be Amsterdam or the Boompjes. Wretched Dutch wench! How can George tolerate her presence here!"

Then Pradelle came back, but he did not look up this time, merely went to the door and entered, his eyes looking searchingly about as if in search of Louise.

Lastly, a couple of particularly unseaman-like men, dressed in shiny tarpaulin hats and pea-jackets, with earrings and very smooth pomatumy hair, came into sight. Each man carried a pack and a big stick, and as they drew near their eyes wandered over window and door in a particularly searching way.

They did not come to the front, but in a slouching, furtive way went past the front of the house and round to the back, where the next minute there was a low tapping made by the knob of a stick on a door, and soon after a buzzing murmur of voices arose.

Aunt Marguerite had nothing whatever to do, and the murmur interested her to the extent of making her rise, go across her room, and through a door at the back into

her bed-chamber, where an open lattice window had a chair beneath, and the said window being just over the back entrance from whence the murmur came, Aunt Marguerite had nothing to do but go and sit down there unseen, and hear every word that was said.

"Yes," said the familiar voice of brown-faced, black-haired Liza; "they're beautiful, but I haven't got the money."

"That there red ribbon 'd just suit you, my lass," said a deep voice, so fuzzy that it must have come from under a woollen jacket.

"Just look at that there hanky, too," said another deep voice. "Did you ever see a better match?"

"Never," said the other deep voice emphatically.

"Yes, they're very lovely, but I ain't got the money. I let mother have all I had this week."

"Never mind the gashly money, my lass," said the first deep-voiced man huskily, "ain'tcher got nothing you can sell?"

Then arose a good deal of murmuring whisper, and Aunt Marguerite's lips became like a pale pink line drawn across the lower part of her face, and both her eyes were closely shut.

"Well, you wait," was the concluding sentence of the whispered trio, and then the door was heard to shut.

The click of a latch rose to where Aunt Marguerite sat, and then there was a trio once again—a whispered trio—ending with a little rustling, and the sound of heavy steps.

Then the door closed, and Liza, daughter of Poll Perrow, the fish woman, who carried a heavy maund by the help of a strap across her forehead, hurried up to her bedroom, and threw herself upon her knees as she spread two or three yards of brilliant red ribbon on the bed, and tastefully placed beside the ribbon an orange silk kerchief, whose united colours made her dark eyes sparkle with delight.

The quick ringing of a bell put an end to the colour-worship, and Liza, with a hasty ejaculation, opened her box, thrust in her new treasures, dropped the lid, and locked it again before hurrying down to the dining-room, where she found her young mistress, her master, and Madelaine Van Heldre.

"There was some change on the chimney-piece, Liza," said Louise. "Did you see it?"

"No, miss."

"It is very strange. You are quite sure you did not take it, papa?"

"Quite, my dear."

"That will do, Liza."

The girl went out, looking scared.

"It is very strange," said Vine.

"Yes, dear; and it is a great trouble to me. This is the third time money has been missing lately. I don't like to suspect people, but one seems to be forced."

"But surely, Louie, dear, that poor girl would not take it."

"I have always tried to hope not, Maddy," said Louise sadly.

"You had better make a change."

"Send her away, father? How can I do that? How can I recommend her for another situation?"

"Ah! it's a puzzle—it's a puzzle," said Vine irritably. "One of the great difficulties of domestic service. I shall soon begin to think that your uncle Luke is right after all. He has no troubles, eh, Louise?"

She looked up in his face with a peculiar smile, but made no reply. Her father, however, seemed to read her look, and continued,

"Ah, well, I dare say you are right, my dear; we can't get away from trouble; and if we don't have one kind we have another. Get more than our share, though, in this house."

Louise smiled in his face, and the comical aspect of chagrin displayed resulted in a general laugh.

"Is one of the sea anemones dead?"

"Yes, confound it! and it has poisoned the water, so that I'm afraid the rest will go."

"I think we can get over that trouble," said Louise laughing. "It will be an excuse for a pleasant ramble with you."

"Yes," said Vine dryly, "but we shall not get over the trouble of the thief quite so well. I'm afraid these Perrows are a dishonest family. I'll speak to the girl."

"No, father, leave it to me."

"Very well, my child; but I think you ought to speak."

The old man left the room, the bell was rung, and Liza summoned, when a scene of tears and protestations arose, resulting in a passionate declaration that Liza would tell her mother, that she would not stop in a house where she was going to be suspected, and that she had never taken anybody's money but her own.

"This is the third time that I have missed money, Liza, or I would not have spoken. If you took it, confess like a good girl, and

we'll forgive you if you promise never to take anything of the kind again."

"I can't confess, miss, and won't confess," sobbed the girl. "Mother shall come and speak to you. I wouldn't do such a thing."

"Where did you get the money with which you bought the red ribbon and orange kerchief this morning, Liza?" said a voice at the door.

All started to see that Aunt Marguerite was there looking on, and apparently the recipient of all that had been said.

Liza stood with eyes dilated, and jaw dropped.

"Then you've been at my box," she suddenly exclaimed. "Ah, what a shame!"

"At your box, you wretched creature!" said Aunt Marguerite contemptuously. "Do you suppose I should go into your room?"

"You've been opening my box," said the girl again, more angrily; "and it's a shame."

"I saw her take them up to her room, Louise. My dear, she was buying them under my window, of some pedlar. You had better send her away."

Liza did not wait to be sent away from the room, but ran out sobbing, to hurry upstairs to her bed-chamber, open her box, and see if the brilliant specimens of silken fabric were safe, and then cry over them till they were blotched with her tears.

"A bad family," said Aunt Marguerite. "I'm quite sure that girl stole my piece of muslin lace, and gave it to that wretched woman your uncle Luke encourages."

"No, no, aunt, you lost that piece of lace one day when you were out."

"Nonsense, child! your memory is not good. Who is that with you? Oh, I see; Miss Van Heldre."

Aunt Marguerite, after suddenly becoming aware of the presence of Madelaine, made a most ceremonious curtsy, and then sailed out of the room.

"Louise must be forced to give up the companionship of that wretched Dutch girl," she said as she reached her own door, at which she paused to listen to Liza sobbing.

"I wonder what Miss Vine would have been like," thought Madelaine, "if she had married some good sensible man, and had a large family to well employ her mind?" Then she asked herself what kind of man she would have selected as possessing the necessary qualifications, and concluded that he should have been such a man as Duncan Leslie, and wondered whether he would marry her friend.

"Why, Madelaine," said Louise, breaking her chain of thought, "what are you thinking about?"

"Thinking about?" said the girl, starting, and colouring slightly. "Oh, I was thinking about Mr. Leslie just then."

CHAPTER XII.—UNCLE LUKE'S SPARE CASH.

"LATE again," said old Crampton, as Harry Vine entered the office.

"How I do hate the sight of that man's nose!" said the young man; and he stared hard, as if forced by some attraction.

The old clerk frowned, and felt annoyed.

"I beg pardon," he said.

"Granted," said Harry, coolly.

"I said I beg pardon, Mr. Harry Vine."

"I heard you."

"But I thought you spoke."

"No," grumbled Harry; "didn't speak."

"Then I will," said old Crampton merrily.

"Good morning, Mr. Harry Vine," and he rattled the big ruler by his desk.

"Eh? oh, yes, I see. Didn't say it as I came in. Good morning, Mr. Crampton."

"Lesson for the proud young upstart in good behaviour," grumbled old Crampton.

"Bother him!" muttered Harry, as he took his place at his desk, opened a big account book Crampton placed before him, with some amounts to transfer from one that was smaller, and began writing.

But as he wrote, the figures seemed to join hands and dance before him; then his pen ceased to form others, and an imaginary picture painted itself on the delicately tinted blue paper with its red lines—a pleasant landscape in fair France with sunny hill-sides on which ranged in rows were carefully cultured vines. To the north and east were softened bosky woods, and dominating all, one of those antique castellated chateaus with pepperbox towers and gilded vanes, such as he had seen in pictures or read of in some books.

"If I only had the money," thought Harry, as he entered a sum similar to that which Pradelle had named. "He knows all these things. He has good advice from friends, and if we won—Hah!"

The chateau rose before his eyes again, bathed in sunshine. Then he pictured the terrace overlooking the vineyards—a grey old stone terrace, with many seats and sheltering trees, and along that terrace walked just such a maiden as Aunt Marguerite had described.

Scratch! scratch! scratch! scratch! His pen and Crampton's pen; and he had no

money, and Pradelle's project to borrow as he had suggested was absurd.

Ah, if he only had eighty-one pounds ten shillings and sixpence! the sum he now placed in neat figures in their appropriate columns.

Old Crampton tilted back his tall stool, swung himself round, and lowered himself to the ground. Then crossing the office, he went into Van Heldre's private room, and there was the rattle of a key, a creaking hinge, as an iron door was swung open; and directly after the old man returned.

Harry Vine could not see his hands, and he did not raise his eyes to watch the old clerk, but in the imagination which so readily pictured the chateau that was not in Spain, he seemed to see as he heard every movement of the fat, white fingers, when a canvas bag was dumped down on the mahogany desk, the string untied, and a little heap of coins were poured out. Then followed the scratching of those coins upon the mahogany, as they were counted, ranged in little piles, and finally, after an entry had been checked, they were replaced in the bag, which the old man bore back into the safe in the private room.

"Fifty or a hundred pounds," said Harry to himself, as a curious sensation of heat came into his cheeks, to balance which there seemed to be a peculiarly cold thrill running up his spine, to the nape of his neck.

"Anybody at home?"

"Yes, sir; here we are hard at work."

Harry had looked up sharply to see Uncle Luke standing in the opening, a grim-looking grey figure in his old Norfolk jacket and straw hat, one hand resting on his heavy stick, the other carrying a battered fish-basket. The old man's face was in shadow, for the sunshine streamed in behind him, but there was plenty of light to display his grim, sardonic features, as, after a short nod to Crampton, he gazed from under his shaggy brows piercingly at his nephew.

"Well, quill-driver," he said sneeringly; "doing something useful at last?"

"Morning, uncle," said Harry shortly; and he muttered to himself, "I should like to throw the ledger at him."

"Hope he's a good boy, hey?"

"Oh, he's getting on, Mr. Luke Vine—slowly," said Crampton unwillingly. "He'll do better by-and-by."

A sharp remark was on Harry's lips, but he checked it for a particular reason. Uncle Luke might have the money he wanted.

"Time he did," said the old man. "Look

here, boy," he continued with galling, sneering tone in his voice. "Go and tell your master I want to see him."

Harry drew a long breath, and his teeth gritted together.

"I caught a splendid conger this morning," continued Uncle Luke, giving his basket a swing, "and I've brought your master half."

"My master!" muttered Harry.

"Like conger pie, boy?"

"No," said Harry, shortly.

"More nice than wise," said Uncle Luke. "Always were. There, be quick. I want to see your master."

"To see my master," thought Harry, with a strange feeling of exasperation in his breast as he looked up at Crampton.

Crampton was looking up at him with eyes which said very clearly, "Well, why don't you go?"

"They'll make me an errand boy next," said the young man to himself, as after twisting his locket round and round like a firework, he swung himself down, "and want me to clean the knives and boots and shoes."

"Tell him I'm in a hurry," said Uncle Luke, as Harry reached the door which led into the private house along a passage built and covered with glass, by one side of what was originally a garden.

"Ah," said Uncle Luke, going closer to old Crampton's desk, and taking down from where it rested on two brass hooks the heavy ebony ruler. "Nice bit o' wood that."

"Yes, sir," said the old clerk, in the fidgety way of a workman who objects to have his tools touched.

"Pretty weighty," continued Uncle Luke, balancing it in his hand. "Give a man a pretty good topper that, eh?"

"Yes, Mr. Luke Vine.—I should like to give him one with it," thought Crampton.

"Do for a constable's staff, or to kill burglars, eh?"

"Capitally, sir."

"Hah! You don't get burglars here, though, do you?"

"No, sir; never had any yet."

"Good job too," said Uncle Luke, putting the ruler back in its place, greatly to Crampton's relief. "Rather an awkward cub to lick into shape, my nephew, eh?"

"Rather, sir."

"Well, you must lick away, Crampton, not with that ruler though," he chuckled. "Time something was made of him—not a bad sort of boy: but spoiled."

"I shall do my best, Mr. Luke Vine," said

Crampton dryly; "but I must tell you candidly, sir, he's too much of the gentleman for us, and he feels it."

"Bah!"

"Not at all the sort of young man I should have selected for a clerk."

"Never mind; make the best of him."

"Mr. Van Heldre is coming sir," said Harry coldly, as he re-entered the office.

"Bah! I didn't tell you to bring him here. I want to go in there."

As Luke Vine spoke, he rose and moved to the door.

"Be a good boy," he said, turning with a peculiar smile at his nephew. "I daresay you'll get on."

"Oh!" muttered Harry, as he retook his place at his desk; "how I should like to tell you, Uncle Luke, just what I think."

The door closed behind the old man, who had nearly reached the end of the long passage, when he met Van Heldre.

"Ah, Luke Vine, I was just coming."

"Go back," said the visitor, making a stab at the merchant with his stick. "Brought you something. Where's Mrs. Van Heldre?"

"In the breakfast-room. Come along."

Van Heldre clapped the old man on the shoulder, and led him into the room where Mrs. Van Heldre was seated at work.

"Ah, Mr. Luke Vine," she cried, "who'd have thought of seeing you?"

"Not you. How are you? Where's the girl?"

"Gone up to your brother's."

"Humph! to gad about and idle with Louie, I suppose. Here, I've brought you some fish. Caught it at daylight this morning. Ring for a dish."

"It's very kind and thoughtful of you, Luke Vine," said Mrs. Van Heldre, with her pink face dimpling as she rang the bell, and then trotted to the door which she opened, and cried, "Bring in a large dish, Esther! I always like to save the servants' legs if I can," she continued as she returned to her seat, while Van Heldre stood with his hands in his pockets, waiting. He knew his visitor.

Just then a neat-looking maid-servant entered with a large blue dish, and stood holding it by the door gazing at the quaint-looking old man, sitting with the basket between his legs, and his heavy stick resting across his knees.

"Put it down and go."

The girl placed the dish on the table hurriedly, and left the room.

"See if she has gone."

"No fear," said Van Heldre, obeying, to

humour his visitor. "I don't think my servants listen at doors."

"Don't trust 'em, or anybody else," said Uncle Luke with a grim look, as he opened his basket wide. "Going to trust her?"

"Well, I'm sure, Mr. Luke Vine!" cried Mrs. Van Heldre, "I believe you learn up rude things to say."

"He can't help it," said Van Heldre laughing. "Yes," he continued, with a droll look at his wife, which took her frown away, "I think we'll trust her, Luke, my lad—as far as the fish is concerned."

"Eh! What?" said Uncle Luke, snatching his hands from his basket. "What do you mean?"

"That the dish is waiting for the bit of conger."

"Let it wait," said the old man snappishly. "You're too clever Van—too clever. Look here: how are you getting on with that boy?"

"Oh, slowly. Rome was not built in a day."

"No," chuckled the old man, "no. Work away, and make him a useful member of society—like his aunt, eh, Mrs. Van."

"Useful!" cried Mrs. Van. "Ah."

Then old Luke chuckled and drew the fish from the basket.

"Fine one, ain't it?" he said.

"A beauty," cried Mrs. Van Heldre ecstatically.

"Pshah!" ejaculated Uncle Luke, "Ma'am, you don't care for it a bit; but there's more than I want, and it will help keep your servants."

"It would, Luke," said Van Heldre laughing as the fish was laid in the dish, "but they will not touch it. Well?"

"Eh? What do you mean by well?" snorted the old man with a suspicious look.

"Out with it."

"Out with what?"

"What you have brought."

The two men gazed in each other's faces, the merchant looking half amused, the visitor annoyed; but his dry countenance softened into a smile and he turned to Mrs. Van Heldre. "Artful!" he said dryly. "Don't you find him too cunning to get on with?"

"I should think not indeed," said Mrs. Van Heldre indignantly.

"Might have known you'd say that," sneered Uncle Luke. "What a weak, foolish woman you are!"

"Yes, I am, thank goodness! I wish you'd have a little more of my foolishness in you, Mr. Luke Vine. There, I beg your pardon. What have you got there, shrimps?"

"Yes," said Uncle Luke grimly, as he brought a brown paper parcel from the bottom of his basket, where it had lain under the wet piece of conger, whose stain was on the cover, "some nice crisp fresh shrimps. Here, Van—catch."

He threw the packet to his brother's old friend and comrade, by whom it was deftly caught, while Mrs. Van Heldre looked on in a puzzled way.

"Put 'em in your safe till I find another investment for 'em. Came down by post this morning, and I don't like having 'em at home. Out fishing so much."

"How much is there?" said Van Heldre, opening the fishy brown paper, and taking therefrom sundry crisp new Bank of England notes.

"Five hundred and fifty," said Uncle Luke. "Count 'em over."

This was already being done, Van Heldre having moistened a finger and begun handling the notes in regular bank-clerk style.

"All right; five fifty," he said.

"And he said they were shrimps," said Mrs. Van Heldre.

"Eh? I did?" said Uncle Luke with a grim look and a twinkle of the eye. "Nonsense, it must have been you."

"Look here, Luke Vine," said Van Heldre; "is it any use to try and teach you at your time of life?"

"Not a bit: so don't try."

"But why expose yourself to all this trouble and risk? Why didn't your broker send you a cheque?"

"Because I wouldn't let him."

"Why not have a banking account, and do all your money transactions in an ordinary way?"

"Because I like to do things in my own way. I don't trust bankers, nor anybody else."

"Except my husband," said Mrs. Van Heldre, beaming.

"Nonsense, ma'am, I don't trust him a bit. You do as I tell you, Van. Put those notes in your safe till I ask you for them. I had that bit of money in a company I doubted, so I sold out. I shall put it in something else soon."

"You're a queer fellow, Luke."

"Eh? I'm not the only one of my family, am I? What's to become of brother George when that young scapegrace has ruined him? What's to become of Louie, when we're all dead and buried, and out of all this worry and care? What's to become of my mad sister, who squandered her money on a

French scamp, and made what she calls her heart bankrupt?"

"Nearly done questioning?" said Van Heldre, doubling the notes longwise.

"No, I haven't, and don't play with that money as if it was your wife's curl-papers."

Van Heldre shrugged his shoulders, and placed the notes in his pocket.

"And as I was saying when your husband interrupted me so rudely, Mrs. Van Heldre, what's to become of that boy by-and-by? Money's useful sometimes, though I don't want it myself."

"Ah! you needn't look at me, Mr. Luke Vine. It's of no use for you to pretend to be a cynic with me."

"Never pretend anything, ma'am," said Uncle Luke rising; "and don't be rude. I did mean to come in and have some conger-pie to-night; now I won't."

"No, you didn't mean to do anything of the sort, Luke Vine," said Mrs. Van Heldre tartly; "I know you better than that. If I've asked you to come and have a bit of dinner with us like a Christian once I've asked you five hundred times, and one might just as well ask the hard rock."

"Just as well, ma'am; just as well. There, I'm going. Take care of that money, Van. I shall think out a decent investment one of these days."

"When you want it there it is," said Van Heldre quietly.

"Hope it will be. And now look here: I want to know a little more about the Count."

"The Count?" said Mrs. Van Heldre.

"My nephew, ma'am. And I hope you feel highly honoured at having so distinguished a personage in your husband's service."

"What does he mean, dear?"

"Mean, ma'am? Why, you know how his aunt has stuffed his head full of nonsense about French estates."

"Oh! that, and the old title," cried Mrs. Van Heldre. "There, don't say any more about it, for if there is anything that worries me, it's all that talk about French descents."

"Why, hang it, ma'am, you don't think your husband is a Frenchman, and that my sister, who has made it all the study of her life, is wrong?"

"I don't know and I don't care whether my husband's a Dutchman or a double Dutchman by birth; all I know is he's a very good husband to me and a good father to his child; and I thank God, Mr. Luke Vine, every night that things are just as they are; so that's all I've got to say."

"Tut—tut! tut—tut! This is all very dreadful, Van," said Uncle Luke, fastening his basket, and examining his old straw hat to see which was the best side to wear in front; "I can't stand any more of this. Here, do you want a bit of advice?"

"Yes, if it's good."

"Ah! I was forgetting about the Count. Keep the curb tight and keep him in use."

"I shall do both, Luke, for George's sake," said Van Heldre warmly.

"Good, lad!—I mean, more fool you!" said Uncle Luke, stamping out after ignoring extended hands and giving each a nod. "That's all."

He left the room, closing the door after him as loudly as he could without the shock being considered a bang; and directly after the front door was served in the same way, and they saw him pass the window.

"Odd fish, Luke," said Van Heldre.

"Odd! I sometimes think he's half mad."

"Nonsense, my dear; no more mad than Hamlet. Here he is again."

For the old man had come back, and was tapping the window-frame with his stick.

"What's the matter?" said Van Heldre, throwing open the window, when Uncle Luke thrust in the basket he carried and his stick, resting his arms on the window-sill.

"Don't keep that piece of conger in this hot room all the morning," he said, pointing with his stick.

"Why, goodness me, Luke Vine, how can you talk like that?" cried Mrs. Van Heldre indignantly.

"Easy enough, ma'am. Forgot my bit of advice," said Uncle Luke, speaking to his old friend, but talking at Mrs. Van Heldre.

"What is it?"

"Send that girl of yours to a boarding-school."

"Bless my heart, Luke Vine, what for?" cried the lady of the house. "Why, she finished two years ago."

"To keep her out of the way of George Vine's stupid boy, and because her mother's spoiling her. Morning."

CHAPTER XIII.—TO REAP THE WIND.

LATE dinner was nearly over—at least late according to the ideas of the West Country family, who sat down now directly Harry returned from his office work. Aunt Marguerite, after a week in her bedroom, had come down that day, the trouble with Liza exciting her; and that maiden had rather an unpleasant time as she waited at table, looking red-eyed and tearful, for Aunt Mar-

guerite watched her with painful, basilisk-like glare all through the meal, the consequence being a series of mishaps and blunders, ending with the spilling of a glass dish of clotted cream.

With old-fashioned politeness, Aunt Marguerite tried to take Pradelle's attention from the accident.

"Are you going for a walk this evening, Mr. Pradelle?"

"Yes," he said; "I dare say we shall smoke a cigar together after the labours of the day."

Aunt Marguerite sighed and looked pained.

"Tobacco! Yes, Mr. Pradelle," she sighed; and she continued, in a low tone, "Do pray try to use your influence on poor Henri, to coax him from these bad pursuits."

Harry was talking cynically to his sister and Madelaine, who had been pressed by Vine to stay, a message having been sent down to the Van Heldres to that effect.

"The old story," he said to himself; and then, as he caught his sister's eye after she had gazed uneasily in the direction of her aunt; "yes, she's talking about me. Surely you don't mind that."

He, too, glanced now in Aunt Marguerite's direction, as Pradelle talked to her in a slow, impressive tone.

"Ah! no," said Aunt Marguerite, in a playful whisper, "nothing of the kind. A little boy and girl badinage in the past. Look for yourself, Mr. Pradelle; there is no warmth there! My nephew cannot marry a Dutch doll."

"Lovers' tiff, perhaps," said Pradelle.

"No, no," said Aunt Marguerite, shaking her head confidently. "Harry is a little wild and changeable, but he pays great heed to my words and advice. Still I want your help, Mr. Pradelle. Human nature is weak. Harry must win back his French estates."

"Hear that, Louie?" said Harry, for Aunt Marguerite had slightly raised her voice.

"Yes, I heard," said Louise quietly.

"Aunt is sick of seeing her nephew engaged in a beggarly trade."

"For which Mr. Henry Vine seems much too good," said Madelaine to herself, as she darted an indignant glance at the young man. "Oh, Harry, what a weak, foolish boy you are! I don't love you a bit. It was all a mistake."

"I hate business," continued Harry, as he encountered her eyes fixed upon him.

"Yes," said Louise coldly, as an angry feeling of annoyance shot through her on her

friend's behalf. "Harry has no higher ambition than to lead a lap-dog kind of life in attendance upon Aunt Marguerite, and listening to her stories of middle-aged chivalry."

"Thank goodness!" said Harry, as they rose from the table. "No, no, aunt, I don't want any coffee. I should stifle if I stopped here much longer."

Aunt Marguerite frowned as the young man declined the invitation to come to her side.

"Only be called a lap-dog again. Here, Vic, let's go and have a cigar down by the sea."

"Certainly," said Pradelle, smiling at all in turn.

"Yes, the room is warm," said the host, who had hardly spoken all through the dinner, being deep in thought upon one of his last discoveries.

Harry gave his sister a contemptuous look, which she returned with one half sorrowful, half pitying, from which he turned to glance at Madelaine, who was standing by her friend.

Aunt Marguerite smiled, for there was certainly the germ of an incurable rupture between these two, and she turned away her head to hide her triumph.

"She will never forgive him for speaking as he did about the beggarly trade." Then crossing with a graceful old-world carriage, she laid her hand on Madelaine's arm.

"Come into the drawing-room, my dear," she said, smiling, and to Madelaine it seemed that her bright, malicious-looking eyes were full of triumph. "You and I will have a good hard fight over genealogies, till you confess that I am right, and that your father and you have no claim to Huguenot descent."

"Oh no, Miss Vine," said the girl, laughing, "my father must fight his own battle. As for me, I give up. Perhaps you are right, and I am only a Dutch girl after all."

"Oh, I wish we were back in London!" cried Harry as they strolled along towards the cliff walk.

"Ah, this is a dead-and-alive place, and no mistake," said Pradelle.

"Why don't you leave it, then?" said Harry sulkily. "You are free."

"No, I am not. I don't like to see a friend going to the bad; and besides I have your aunt's commission to try and save you from sinking down into a miserable tradesman."

"Why don't you save me, then?"

"That's just like you. Look here, sink all cowardice, and go up to the old boy like a Trojan. Plenty of money, hasn't he?"

"I suppose so. I don't know."

"He's sure to have."

"But he's such an old porcupine."

"Never mind. Suppose you do get a few pricks, what of that? Think of the future."

"But that venture must be all over now."

"What of that? You get the money and I can find a dozen ways of investing it. Look here, Harry, you profess to be my friend, and to have confidence in my judgment, and yet you won't trust me."

"I trusted you over several things, and see how I lost."

"Come, that's unkind. A man can't always win. There, never look back, look forward. Show some fight, and make one good plunge to get out of that miserable shop-boy sort of life."

"Come along, then."

"You'll go up and ask him?"

"Yes, if you'll back me up."

"Back you up, lad? I should think I will. Lead on, I'll follow thee."

"We'll do it sensibly, then. If you speak before Uncle Luke in that theatrical way we shall come down faster than we go up."

"I'll talk to the old man like a young Solomon, and he shall say that never did youth choose more wisely for his friend than Harry Vine, otherwise Henri, Comte des Vignes."

"Look here," said Harry peevishly—"otherwise Comte des Vignes." Why don't you say *alias* at once? Why, if the old man heard that he'd want to know how long it was since you were in a police court. Here, you'd better stay down here."

"All right, my dear fellow. Anything to help you on."

"No; I'd rather you came too."

There was a pause in a niche of the rocks, and then, after the scratching of a match, the young men went up the cliff path, smoking furiously, as they prepared themselves for the attack.

CHAPTER XIV.—DIOGENES IN HIS TUB.

UNCLE LUKE was in very good spirits. He had rid himself of his incubus, as he called the sum of money, and though he would not own it, he always felt better when he had had a little converse with his fellow-creatures. His lonely life was very miserable, and the more so that he insisted upon its being the highest form of happiness to exist in hermit fashion, as the old saints proved.

The desolate hut in its rocky niche looked miserable when he climbed up back on his re-

turn from Van Heldre's, so he stopped by the granite wall and smiled.

"Finest prospect in all Cornwall," he said, half aloud; "freshest air. Should like to blow up Leslie's works, though."

The door was locked, but it yielded to the heavy key which secured it against visitors, though they were very rare upon that rocky shelf.

He was the more surprised then, after his frugal mid-day meal, by a sharp rapping at the door, and on going he stared angrily at the two sturdy sailor-dressed pedlars, who were resting their packs on the low granite wall.

"Can we sell a bit o' 'bacco, or a pound o' tea, master?" said the man who had won over Liza to the purchase of his coloured silk.

"Bang!"

That was Uncle Luke's answer as the man spoke to him and his fellow swept the interior of the cottage with one quick glance.

"Steal as soon as sell any day," grumbled Uncle Luke. "Tobacco and tea, indeed!"

Outside one of the men gave his companion a wink and a laugh, as he shouldered his pack, while the other chuckled and followed his example.

Meanwhile Uncle Luke had seated himself at his rough deal table, and written a long business letter to his lawyer in London.

This missive he read over twice, made an addition to the paragraph dealing most particularly with the mortgage on which he had been invited to lend, and then carefully folded the square post paper he used in old-fashioned letter shape, tucking one end into the other from objects of economy, so as to dispense with envelopes, but necessitating all the same the use of sealing-wax and a light.

However, it pleased him to think that he was saving, and he lit a very thin candle, took the stick of red wax from a drawer, a curious old-fashioned signet gold ring bearing the family crest from a nail where it hung over the fireplace, and then, sitting down as if to some very important piece of business, he burned his wax, laid on a liberal quantity, and then impressed the seal. This done, the ring was hung once more upon its nail, and the old man stood gazing at it and thinking. The next minute he took down the ring, and slipped it on one of his fingers, and worked it up and down, trying it on another finger, and then going back to the first.

"Used to fit too tightly," he said; "now one's fingers are little more than bone."

He held up the ring to the light, his white hand looking very thin and wasted, and the

worn gold glistened and the old engraved blood-stone showed its design almost as clearly as when it was first cut.

"'Roy et Foy!'" muttered the old man, reading the motto beneath the crest. "Bit of vanity. Margaret asked where it was, last time I saw her. Let's see; I lost you twice, once when I wore you as I was fishing off the pier, and once on the black rock you slipped off my bony finger, and each time the sea washed you into a crack."

He smiled as he gazed at the ring, and there was a pleasant, handsome trace of what he had been as a young man in his refined features.

"Please the young dog—old family ring," he muttered. "Might sell it and make a pound. No, he may have it when I'm gone. Can't be so very long."

He hung the ring upon the nail once more, and spent the rest of the afternoon gazing out to sea, sometimes running over the past, but more often looking out for the glistening and flashing of the sea beneath where a flock of gulls were hovering over some shoal of fish.

It was quite evening when there was a staid, heavy step and the click of nailed boots as the old fishwoman came toiling up the cliff path, her basket on her back, and the band which supported it across her brow.

"Any fish to sell, Master Vine?" she said in a sing-song tone. "I looked down the pier, but you weren't there."

"How could I be there when I'm up here, Poll Perrow?"

"Ah, to be sure; how could you?" said the old woman, trying to nod her head, but without performing the feat, on account of her basket. "Got any fish to sell?"

"No. Yes," said the old man.

"That's right. I want some to-night. Will you go and fetch it?"

"Yes. Stop there," said Uncle Luke sourly, as he saw a chance of making a few pence, and wondered whether he would get enough from his customer.

"Mind my sitting down inside, Master Luke Vine, sir? It's hot, and I'm tired; and it's a long way up here."

"Why do you come, then?"

"Wanted to say a few words to you about my gal when we've done our bit o' trade."

"Come in and sit down, then," said the old man gruffly. And his visitor slipped the leather band from her forehead, set her basket on the granite wall, and went into the kitchen-like room, wiping her brow as

she seated herself in the old rush-bottomed chair.

"I'll fetch it here," said Uncle Luke, and he went round to the back, to return directly with the second half of the conger.

"There," said the old man eagerly, "how much for that?"

"Oh, I can't buy half a conger, Mr. Luke Vine, sir; and I don't know as I'd have took it if it had been whole."

"Then be off, and don't come bothering me," grunted the old man snappishly.

"Don't be cross, master; you've no call to be. You never have no gashly troubles to worry you."

"No, nor don't mean to have. What's the matter now?"

"My gal!"

"Serve you right. No business to have married. You never saw me make such a fool of myself."

"No, master, never; but when you've got gals you must do your best for 'em."

"Humph! what's the matter?"

Poll Perrow looked slowly round the ill-furnished, untidy place.

"You want a woman here, Master Luke Vine, sir," she said at last.

"Don't talk nonsense!"

"It aren't nonsense, Master Luke Vine, and you know it. You want your bed made proper, and your washing done, and your place scrubbed. Now why don't you let my gal come up every morning to do these things?"

"Look here," said Uncle Luke, "what is it you mean?"

"She's got into a scrape at Mr. Vine's, sir—something about some money being missing—and I suppose she'll have to come home, so I want to get her something to do."

"Oh, she isn't honest enough for my brother's house, but she's honest enough for mine."

"Oh, the gal's honest enough. It's all a mistake. But I can't afford to keep her at home, so, seeing as we'd had dealings together, I thought you'd oblige me and take her here."

"Seeing as we'd had dealings together!" grumbled Uncle Luke.

"Everything is so untidy like, sir," said the old fish-dealer, looking round. "Down at your brother's there's everything a gentleman could wish for, but as to your place—why, there: it's worse than mine."

"Look here, Poll Perrow," said the old eccentricity fiercely, "this is my place, and I do in it just as I like. I don't want your

girl to come and tidy my place, and I don't want you to come and bother me, so be off. There's a letter; take it down and post it for me: and there's a penny for your trouble."

"Thank ye, master. Penny saved is a penny got; but Mr. George Vine would have given me sixpence—I'm not sure he wouldn't have given me a shilling. Miss Louise would."

Uncle Luke was already pointing at the door, towards which the woman moved unwillingly.

"Let me come up to-morrow and ask you, Mr. Luke, sir. Perhaps you'll be in a better temper then."

"Better temper!" he cried wrathfully. "I'm always in a better temper. Because I refuse to ruin myself by having your great, idle girl to eat me out of house and home, I'm not in a good temper, eh? There, be off! or I shall say something unpleasant."

"I'm a-going, sir. It's all because I wouldn't buy half a fish, as I should have had thrown on my hands, and been obliged to eat myself. Look here, sir," cried the woman, as she adjusted the strap of her basket, "if I buy the bit of fish will you take the poor gal then?"

"No!" cried Uncle Luke, slamming the door, as the woman stood with her basket once more upon her back.

"Humph!" exclaimed the old woman, as she thrust the penny in her pocket, and then hesitated as to where she should place the letter.

While she was considering, the little window was opened and Uncle Luke's head appeared.

"Mind you don't lose that letter."

"Never you fear about that," said the old woman; and as if from a bright inspiration she pitched it over her head into her basket, and then trudged away.

"She'll lose that letter as sure as fate," grunted Uncle Luke. "Well, there's nothing in it to mind. Now I suppose I can have a little peace, and—who's this?"

He leaned a little farther out of his window, so as to bring a curve of the cliff path well into view.

"My beautiful nephew and that parasite. Going up to Leslie, I suppose—to smoke. Waste and debauchery—smoking."

He shut the window sharply, and settled himself down with his back to it, determined not to see his nephew pass; but five minutes later there was a sharp rapping at the door.

"Uncle Luke! Uncle!"

The old man made no reply.

"Here, Uncle Luke. I know you're at home; the old woman said so."

"Hang that old woman!" grumbled Uncle Luke; and in response to a fresh call he rose, and opened his door with a snatch.

"Now, then, what is it? I'm just going to bed."

"Bed at this time of the day?" cried Harry cheerfully. "Why you couldn't go to sleep if you did go."

"Why not?" snapped the old man; "you can in the mornings—over the ledger."

Harry winced, but he turned off the malicious remark with a laugh.

"Uncle loves his joke, Pradelle," he said. "Come, uncle, I don't often visit you; ask us in."

"No, you don't often visit me, Harry," said the old man, looking at him searchingly; "and when you do come it's because you want something."

Harry winced again, for the old man's words cut deeply.

"Oh, nonsense, uncle! Pradelle and I were having a stroll, and we thought we'd drop in here and smoke a cigar with you."

"Very kind," said the old man, looking meaningfully from one to the other. "Missed meeting the girls, or have they snubbed you and sent you about your business?"

"Have a cigar, uncle?" said Harry, holding out his case. "I tell you we came on purpose to see you."

"Humph!" said Uncle Luke, taking the handsome morocco cigar case, and turning it over and over with great interest. "How much did that cost?"

"Don't remember now; fifteen shillings I think."

"Ah," said Uncle Luke, pressing the snap and opening it. "One, two, three, four; how much do these cigars cost?"

"Only fourpence, uncle; can't afford better ones."

"And a cigar lasts—how long?"

"Oh, I make one last three-quarters of an hour, because I smoke very slowly. Try one."

"No, thankye; can't afford such luxuries, my boy," said the old man, shutting the case with a snap, and returning it. "That case and the cigars there cost nearly a pound. Your income must be rising fast."

Harry and Pradelle exchanged glances. The reception did not promise well for a loan.

"Cigar does you good sometimes."

"Harry," said the old man, laughing and pointing at the case.

"What's the matter, uncle?" said Harry eagerly; "want one?"

"No, no. Why didn't you have it put on there?"

"What?"

"Crest and motto, and your title—Comte des Vignes. You might lose it, and then people would know where to take it."

"Don't chaff a fellow, uncle," said Harry, colouring. "Here, we may come and sit down, mayn't we?"

"Oh, certainly, if your friend will condescend to take a seat in my homely place."

"Only too happy, Mr. Luke Vine."

"Are you now? Shouldn't have thought it," sneered the old man. "No wine to offer you, sir; no brandy and soda; that's the stuff young men drink now, isn't it?"

"Don't name it, my dear sir; don't name it," said Pradelle, with an attempt at heartiness that made the old man half close his eyes. "Harry and I only came up for a stroll. Besides we've just dined."

"Have you? That's a good job, because I've only a bit of conger in the house, and that isn't cooked. Come in and sit down, sir. You, Harry: you'll have to sit down on that old oak chest."

"Anywhere will do for me, uncle. May we smoke?"

"Oh, yes, as fast as you like; it's too slow a poison for you to die up here."

"Hope so," said Harry, whose mission and the climb had made him very warm.

"Now, then," said Uncle Luke, fixing his eyes on Pradelle—like gimlets, as that gentleman observed on the way back; "what is it?"

"Eh? I beg pardon; the business here is Harry's."

"Be fair, Vic," said Harry, shortly; "the business appertains to both."

"Does it really?" said Uncle Luke, with a mock display of interest.

"Yes, uncle," said the nephew, uneasily, as he sat twiddling the gold locket attached to his chain, and his voice sounded husky; "it relates to both."

"Really!" said Uncle Luke, with provoking solemnity, as he looked from one to the other. "Well, I was young myself once. Now, look here; can I make a shrewd guess at what you want?"

"I'll be bound to say you could, sir," said Pradelle, in despite of an angry look from Harry, who knew his uncle better, and foresaw a trap.

"Then I'll guess," said the old man, smiling pleasantly; "you want some money."

"Yes, uncle, you're right," said Harry, as cautiously as a fencer preparing for a thrust from an expert handler of the foils.

"Hah! I thought I was. Well, young men always were so. Want a little money to spend, eh?"

"Well, uncle, I——"

"Wait a minute, my boy," said the old man, seriously; "let me see. I don't want to disappoint you and your friend as you've come all this way. Your father wouldn't let you have any, I suppose?"

"Haven't asked him, sir."

"That's right, Harry," said the old man earnestly; "don't, my boy, don't. George always was close with his money. Well, I'll see what I can do. How much do you want to spend—a shilling?"

"Hang it all, uncle!" cried Harry angrily, and nearly tearing off his locket, "don't talk to me as if I were a little boy. I want a hundred pounds."

"Yes, sir, a hundred pounds," said Pradelle.

"A hundred, eh? A hundred pounds. Do you, now?" said Uncle Luke, without seeming in the slightest degree surprised.

"The fact is, uncle, my friend Pradelle here is always hearing of openings for making a little money by speculations, and we have a chance now that would make large returns for our venture."

"Hum! hah!" ejaculated Uncle Luke, as he looked at Pradelle in a quiet, almost appealing way. "Let me see, Mr. Pradelle. You are a man of property, are you not?"

"Well, sir, hardly that," said Pradelle nonchalantly; and he rose, placed his elbows on the rough chimney-piece, and leaned back with his legs crossed as he looked down at Uncle Luke. "My little bit of an estate brings me in a very small income."

"Estate here?"

"No, no; in France, near Marseilles."

"That's awkward; a long way off."

"Go on," said Pradelle with his eyes, as he glanced at Harry.

"No good. Making fun of us," said Harry's return look; and the old man's eyes glistened.

"Hundred pounds. Speculation, of course?"

"Hardly fair to call it speculation, it is so safe," said Pradelle, in face of a frown from his friend.

"Hum! A hundred pounds—a hundred pounds," said Uncle Luke thoughtfully.

"It's a good deal of money."

"Oh, dear me, no, sir," said Pradelle. "In business matters a mere trifle."

"Ah! you see I'm not a business man. Why don't you lend it to my nephew, Mr. Pradelle?"

"I—I'm—well—er—really, I— The fact is, sir, every shilling I have is locked up."

"Then I should advise you to lose the key, Mr. Pradelle," chuckled the old man, "or you may be tempted to spend it."

"You're playing with us, uncle," cried Harry. "Look here, will you lend me a hundred? I promise you faithfully I'll pay it to you back."

"Oh! of course, of course, my dear boy."

"Then you'll lend it to me."

"Lend you a hundred? My dear boy, I haven't a hundred pounds to lend you. And see how happy I am without!"

"Well, then, fifty, uncle. I'll make that do."

"Come, I like that, Harry," cried the old man, fixing Pradelle with his eye. "There's something frank and generous about it. It's brave, too; isn't it, sir?"

"Yes, sir. Harry's as frank and good-hearted a lad as ever stepped."

"Thank you, Mr. Pradelle. It's very good of you to say so."

"Come along, Vic," said Harry.

"Don't hurry, my dear boy. So you have an estate in France, have you, Mr. Pradelle?"

"Yes, sir."

"Humph; so has Harry—at least he will have some day, I suppose. Yes, he is going to get it out of the usurper's hands—usurper is the word, isn't it, Harry?"

Harry gave a kick out with one leg.

"Yes, usurper is the word. He's going to get the estate some day, Mr. Pradelle; and then he is going to be a Count. Of course he will have to give up being Mr. Van Heldre's clerk then."

"Look here, uncle," cried the young man hotly; "if you will not lend me the money, you needn't insult me before my friend."

"Insult you, my dear boy? Not I. What a peppery fellow you are! Now your aunt will tell you that this is your fine old French aristocratic blood effervescing; but it can't be good for you."

"Come along, Vic," said Harry.

"Oh, of course," said Pradelle. "I'm sorry, though. Fifty pounds isn't much, sir; perhaps you'll think it over."

"Eh? think it over. Of course I shall. Sorry I can't oblige you, gentlemen. Good evening."

"Grinning at us all the time—a miserable old miser!" said Harry, as they began to

walk back. "He'd have done it if you hadn't made such a mess of it, Vic, with your free-and-easy way."

"It's precious vexatious, Harry; but take care, or you'll sling that locket out to sea," said Pradelle, after they had been walking for about ten minutes. "You'll have to think about my proposal. You can't go on like this."

"No," said Harry fiercely; "I can't go on like this, and I'll have the money somehow."

"Bravo! That's spoken like a man who means business. Harry, if you keep to that tone, we shall make a huge fortune apiece. How will you get the money?"

"I'll ask Duncan Leslie for it. He can't refuse me. I should like to see him say 'No.' He must and he shall."

"Then have a hundred, dear lad. Don't be content with fifty."

"I will not, you may depend upon that," cried Harry, "and——"

He stopped short, and turned white, then red, and took half-a-dozen strides forward towards where Madelaine Van Heldre was seated upon one of the stone resting-places in a niche in the cliff—the very one where Duncan Leslie had had his unpleasant conversation with Aunt Marguerite.

The presence of his sister's companion, in spite of their being slightly at odds, might have been considered pleasant to Harry Vine; and at any other time it would have been, but in this instance, she was bending slightly forward, and listening to Duncan Leslie, who was standing with his back to the young men.

Only a minute before, and Harry Vine had determined that with the power given by Leslie's evident attachment to his sister, he would make that gentleman open his cashbox or write a cheque on the Penzance bank for a hundred pounds.

The scene before him altered Harry Vine's ideas, and sent the blood surging up to his brain.

He stepped right up to Madelaine, giving Leslie a furious glance as that gentleman turned, and without the slightest preface, exclaimed—

"Look here, Madelaine, it's time you were at home. Come along with me."

Madelaine flushed as she rose; and her lips parted as if to speak, but Leslie interposed.

"Excuse me, Miss Van Heldre, I do not think you need reply to such a remark as that."

"Who are you!" roared Harry, bursting into a fit of passion that was schoolboy-like in its heat and folly. "Say another word, sir, and I'll pitch you off the cliff into the sea."

"Here, steady, old fellow, steady!" whispered Pradelle; and he laid his hand on his companion's arm.

"You mind your own business, Vic; and as for you——"

He stopped, for he could say no more. Leslie had quite ignored his presence, turning his back and offering his arm to Madelaine.

"Shall I walk home with you, Miss Van Heldre?" he said.

For answer and without so much as looking at Harry Vine, Madelaine took the offered arm, and Pradelle tightened his hold as the couple walked away.

The grasp was needless, for Harry's rage was evaporating fast, and giving place to a desolate sensation of despair.

"Look here," said Pradelle; "you've kicked that over. You can't ask him now."

"No," said Harry, gazing at the departing figures, and trying to call up something about the fair daughters of France; "no, I can't ask him now."

"Then look here, old fellow, I can't stand by and see you thrown over by everybody like this. You know what your prospects are on your own relative's showing, not mine; and you know what can be done if we have the money. You are not fit for this place, and I say you shall get out of it. Now then, you know how it can be done. Just a loan for a few weeks. Will you, or will you not?"

Harry turned upon him a face that was ghastly pale. "But if," he whispered hoarsely, "if we should fail?"

"Fail? You shan't fail."

"One hundred," said Harry, hoarsely.

"Well, I suppose so. We'll make that do. Now then, I'm not going to waste time. Is it yes or no?"

Harry Vine felt a peculiar humming in the head, his mouth was hot and dry, and his lips felt parched. He looked Pradelle in the face, as if pleading to be let off, but there was only a cunning, insistent smile to meet him there, and once more the question came in a sharp whisper,

"Yes or no?"

"Yes," said Harry; and as soon as he had said that word, it was as if a black cloud had gathered about his life.

LIFE AND DEATH.

Short Sunday Readings for March.

By MARCUS DODS, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Isaiah xxxviii. ; Heb. ii. 9—18.

LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE—HEZEKIAH.

IT is a grave moment for any man when he is told that the disease which is on him is mortal and incurable ; that his life is done, that nothing can now be added, nothing altered, nothing amended ; that in a brief and perhaps definite time he shall be lying in the grave. It was said by a great moralist, regarding the unwonted mental vigour shown by a man under sentence of death, that when a man knows he is to die in a fortnight it concentrates his mind wonderfully. The recognised approach of death puts to flight a number of vain hopes, imaginings, and expectations which have only served to blind us. When death is clear in view, there is no more hope that this or that work which has long been postponed will be overtaken. We cannot any longer cajole ourselves with ideas of what may yet be done. All is done. We see now our life as it really has been ; the actual, not any longer glorified by the possible shining through it. Every man naturally supposes he will do better in time to come—at least he has much need to do so. But commonly we credit our present with this loan from the future, and judge ourselves by our purposes and hopes rather than by our actual achievements ; and so go contentedly on, until at last we also reach our limit, and the final voice goes forth concerning us, and we have to go, leaving, instead of fulfilled hopes, the results of irresolution, indolence, and earthliness.

Hezekiah, not a man of robust character, when it was announced to him, "Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live," turned his face to the wall and prayed and wept sore. His teeth, he tells us, chattered through fear, and he could only moan in inarticulate sounds like the mourning of a dove. Possibly in this trepidation there was a mixture of feelings more respectable than a nervous and selfish shrinking from death. When he says, "I am deprived of the residue of my years. Like a weaver I have cut off my life," we see that his disturbance of mind was at least partly occasioned by the abrupt termination of his hopes. Born at a time of critical importance to his nation, his reign had been counted on as a turning

point in the fortunes of the people. For some years already he had toiled to introduce a better state of things, and now it appeared as if all this labour were to be left incomplete. He had as yet no heir, no strong vigorous hand to which he could commit his incomplete work.

Possibly, then, Hezekiah longed for a respite that he might finish his work. Sometimes death comes with striking seasonableness. It seems to wait till the man's work is accomplished ; as in the case of the great English critic, Mill, who spent thirty years on his edition of the New Testament, and died a fortnight after its publication. Or as in the case of the Venerable Bede, whom death overtook just as he was completing his translation of the Gospel. "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master," said the boy who was writing for him. "Write it quickly," said the dying man. "It is finished now," said the little scribe at last. "You speak truth," said the master, "all is finished now ;" and with a "Glory to God" on his lips passed quietly away.

But with whatever modifications, there is certainly discernible in Hezekiah's language the gloomy view of the grave prevalent under the Old Testament. It was all darkness to him ; death was the dark sorrowful end of all things. "I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living. For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee ; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." There was no risen Christ on the further side of the river waiting to welcome His people as they passed through its chill, sullen waters. We are happily brought up to look upon this life as the mere birthplace of our true and lasting existence. We are taught to look upon it as a way to an end, a road not a dwelling-place, an inn not a home. Such thoughts were beyond the reach of Hezekiah. He could but say with Job : "There is hope for a tree, if it be cut down that it will sprout again and that the tender branches thereof will not cease. . . . But man dieth and wasteth away ; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ? As the waters fail from the sea and as the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not ; till the heavens be no more, they shall not wake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

SECOND SUNDAY.

Psalm xc. ; Philipians i. 19-30.

LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE—PAUL.

It is reviving to turn from the timidity and gloom of Hezekiah, even to the barbarian Clovis, who when dying cried out, "What is this mighty death that pulls down the strength of the greatest kings?" Better still is it to turn to the noble fortitude and philosophic calm of Socrates, who when his judges pronounced sentence of death upon him, said, "You, my judges, should cherish good hope on the subject of death, and remain firmly convinced of this one thing, that for a good man, no event can be evil, whether he lives or dies, seeing that his concerns are never disregarded by God. Nor does that which now happens to me happen without purpose on God's part, for I am persuaded that it is better for me to die and have done with the things of this world. And now it is time that we separate. I go to die, you remain to live, but which of us is going the better way, God alone knows."

Best of all is it to listen to the still higher note sounded by Paul, who while awaiting his doom, can say, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." His reasons for desiring death and his reasons for desiring life are equally honourable to him and equally instructive to us. If we were asked our reasons for desiring life, we should probably say that (1), in the first place, this life is but once. It may be, doubtless it is, far better to be on the "immortal side" of death, to live unencumbered by a body which is often unfit for the work we wish it to do, and always demands attentions that waste time; it is better to live uncramped by time, to live where we need do nothing hurriedly, but can perfectly complete one thing before we pass to another. It is of course better to live as pure spirits, with no fretting and paltry but necessary trivialities to attend to, but merely to live out the true and proper desires of man. No doubt in every respect the life that results from this, and comes after it as that which this life has been leading on and up to, must be a higher and better life. Still we cling to this life, because it is it we now have and we can have it but once. If we leave it we can never return to it. There are experiences proper to this life, and which we can have only in it. There is a growth to be made, a kind of knowledge to be gained,

friendships to be formed, risks to be run, pursuits to be followed which belong exclusively to this life. And therefore, while admitting that life eternal must in the nature of things be better, we still cleave to the present.

And (2) even although we are mentally convinced that a life resulting from the moral struggle of this, and coming after it as its reward, is sure to be better, there is yet so much in this life which draws out our attachment and our ambitions, that we have always a sneaking doubt whether after all this life is not as good as or possibly better than any other. It is our first taste of life, our first love, and it has very decided charms of its own. It was meant to elicit keen emotion, and it does so. There is no part of our nature which it does not stir, and strain, and sift. We know that this world suits us; we can only out of our knowledge of it build for ourselves a shadowy home in the clouds. Our heaven is a mere reflection, often vague and shifting, sometimes quite blotted out, of the solid reality of this life. The joys of this life we know, and they suit us. The exquisite and ever-changing beauty of nature, the fragrant breath of summer mornings, the interest of human life and enterprise, and their reproduction in art and literature, the joys of friendship and domestic life, the excitement of business and of affairs, and the occasional delight of release from toil—all that we here know is blended into a whole which so suits the healthy and well-circumstanced man that he does not wish to conceive, and cannot, though he would, conceive a happier state.

But these were not the thoughts which weighed with Paul. Paul was getting old, and the hardships he had endured were beginning to tell on him. No man can be frequently scourged, imprisoned, starved, stoned, half-drowned, traduced, without being considerably broken not only in body but in spirit. Mere natural buoyancy will scarcely survive the exciting and perilous scenes, the personal hazards and privations and sicknesses and abuse, the sad disappointments and anxieties which made up the life of Paul. He had no home on earth from which it would be hard to part. He had attached friends; but also relentless enemies. His life had been one of public service rather than of domestic enjoyment, not deeply rooted in one place but diffused over many lands and societies. He had often tasted the bitterness of death; had been, as he himself phrases it, "in deaths oft." No one

could have wondered had he now decidedly declared for relief and repose. But as the mother who has nothing to expect from life for herself will cleave to it for her child's sake, so Paul was willing to live if he could be of any service on earth. The essential charm of life yet remained with Paul. He might possibly still be of use. Probably he had never had a self-indulgent view of life. He was naturally of that order of men who care nothing for comforts, but find their joy in action, in moulding and guiding their fellow-men. And to the last, when not so fit as once he had been to cope with heavy responsibilities or endure sharp suffering, he was still satisfied, if it were God's will, to be spent for others. Whether he saw some special piece of work he could do, or merely thought he could help in rooting the religion of Christ more firmly in the world, we do not know; but nothing more plainly reveals the indomitable, sane, and noble spirit of the man than this readiness to forget himself and plunge again into the hardships of life.

We are sometimes in an equipoise between life and death because neither has any attraction. Paul, broken as he was, saw the essential attractiveness of both. In his case the scales were evenly balanced because they were equally weighted; in our case they balance because they are not weighted at all. There are always some persons who have lost all love of life and yet shrink from death. Life has no longer the zest and charm it once had; the sparkle is gone, it is flat and insipid, or even repulsive. They may not know what has induced this state of spirit, or they may know only too distinctly. In any case Paul's spirit must seem to them most enviable. Thus to put aside one's own sorrows and anxieties and to esteem himself as nothing, and to find the strongest incentive in the needs of his fellows is human nature at its best. But as in Paul's day so in our own, there is much to inspire an unselfish nature with a strong desire to live and to do some small share of the world's most needed work. However a man is gifted, whether for active enterprises or for thought, or for charity, there lies around him a world of opportunity. So far behind are we socially, morally, intellectually, that one might be forgiven if he supposed the world was made but yesterday and nothing had yet been done. Does no ambition fire us to help the despairing, starving, sinking people around us? If a few years more be added to our life, would we not eagerly strive to put something right,

to correct some abuse, to slay some monster, to sweep out some little corner, to waken some soul here or there to see and rejoice in the growing light?

THIRD SUNDAY.

Psalm cxvi.; Philipians i. 19-30.

SOURCE OF EQUANIMITY.

The secret of Paul's readiness either to die or live lay in what he tersely announces in the words, "To me to live is Christ." The whole of life was to Paul the fulfilment of Christ's will. He had so cordially and profoundly entered into Christ's view of the world, and of life, and of man, that he had no other purpose in life than the realisation of Christ's purpose with man. He was absolutely convinced that this was the right view to take of life. He saw distinctly the happy condition which would result were Christ's purposes carried out; and, in loyalty to Christ, to his fellows, and to his own convictions, he devoted himself to the fulfilment of these purposes. This evoked all his mighty energies; on this he could spend and be spent; in this he ever found renewal of motive. He lived not only in no violent disagreement with the will of Christ, but that will possessed him and lay at the root of all he did.

The phrase itself, "To me to live is Christ," offers no difficulty, because we constantly see men so exclusively devoting themselves to one object or pursuit that it is naturally said that for them, "to live is that one pursuit." Of Garibaldi it might have been said that to him to live was Italy. Darwin might have said, "to me to live is science." Many a man, if candid, might say, "to me to live is money," or "to me to live is pleasure," on this or that my whole desire is centred, on it all my energies are spent. I live by it and for it; success there is success for me; failure there means for me total failure. Now of course if any man chose his career by the light of reason, and not following example, fashion, or individual prejudice, he would necessarily choose Christ. Christ offers the only entirely satisfactory career. Many men come to believe this after making trial of other courses. The wise man will choose it without making trial of others. The work Christ came to do is the most important work of the world, which embraces every other needful work. Ship-building is itself a comprehensive work, which embraces a variety of manufactures, industries, and arts; work in iron, steel,

copper, wood, glass, porcelain, cloth, and countless industries besides, must be seen to if ship-building is to prosper. But ship-building itself is only one essential of commerce, and is subordinate to it and dependent upon it; and commerce, again, is subordinate to the maintenance of human life and human welfare. And if the lower and subordinate work does not own and consider its relation to the higher, the crash will inevitably come. Ship-building that is not conducted with relation to the actual requirements of commerce, but solely with regard to itself, ends in disaster. Now Christ's work is supreme, and to it all the works in which human energies are rightfully engaged are subordinate, and those works only which hold a true and warrantable relation to the work of Christ can prosper. Christ has a career for every man, and a career in which all that is good in us is evoked, and in which no strength is wasted. Paul's life moves the world still because to him to live was Christ.

It is easy, then, to imagine with what impassioned desire Paul would thirst for personal intercourse with Christ, who had so filled and possessed his whole being. To be with Christ was for him the sum and substance of all joy. This was the great and moving hope that drew him to the unseen world. There he would be in the conscious presence of that Person in whom he lived. No stronger motive exists for our going to any particular locality. The locality may be remote, unhealthy, inconvenient, unknown to us, but if there be in it but one person to whom we are strongly attached, that is enough to determine our choice of it as our residence temporarily or permanently. Without this personal element the most attractive localities have little interest. The highest function of scenery is to stimulate the faculties of the persons around you, so that you see them at their best. Paul had no fantastic ideas of heaven. Often must his thought have beaten against the curtain of the unseen, as it seemed already lifting to give him entrance, but to him the one definite certainty was that in passing into the unseen he would be with Christ.

That we do not long for death is not discreditable to our spiritual state. There are circumstances which make death preferable to life, but the normal choice of a healthy man should be for life. Indeed the healthy mind can only desire death as the gate to a fuller life. All we should require of ourselves is to look forward to death with equanimity. And it is remarkable how many persons,

though they have shrunk from death, and feared it, and allowed it to darken their horizon all through life, do, when it comes, meet it as a friend, and allow its cold arms to go about them as if they were sure its mission was kindly. The river that has flowed dark, sullen, threatening, disappears as soon as the foot touches it, and lets them go over dryshod. We can easily rack our heart by thinking of possible pains; we can empty life of all its gladness by gloomily brooding on the certain and speedy end of its joys. We can become pessimists and look only at the dark side of things, reminding ourselves that life is but a breath, that no joy can be prolonged, no work finished. But surely it is wiser to believe that this life is but a preparation, and that what is prepared for is better than what prepares for it. Surely it is wiser to accept, not without hopefulness, the common lot, and to believe that the fitness of things, and the harmony and beauty, and useful arrangements we see in all things around us, are illustrated in death also, and that as life fits us, so also will death satisfy our craving for fitter, freer, more perfect life than now we have. Surely it is well to say, with some confidence,

"If my bark sinks, 'tis to another sea."

And if we learn to live for Christ we shall certainly attain to Paul's equanimity. If Christ is the true heart of our life here, He will be our sustaining hope which gives life to the world beyond. If He is all in all to us here, He will be so there, not excluding but intensifying other affections. A man's love for his wife does not prevent him loving his children; it deepens his love for them. So the love of Christ deepens and enlarges the soul, and opens in it new capacities of love. Besides, there is nothing Christ so rejoices in as our love for one another, and nothing He is so sure to provide for in the life to come. And He will Himself teach us to love Him rightly, so to love Him that it will be the truest joy to be with Him. One day we shall know, if we do not know it already, that He can kindle in us a love no other can.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Psalm lxxiii.; Philipians ii. 1-13.

SALVATION A PROCESS.

When a drowning man is with difficulty dragged to the shore and laid gasping on the sand, the bystanders shout, "He's saved! he's saved!" but the surgeon that presses through the crowd will not as yet so confi-

dently guarantee his recovery. We are all pretty much in the condition of the half-drowned man; we are rescued, dragged to the bank, but there we lie with little sign of life; an occasional gasp, a flutter of the eyelid that stirs hope regarding us in the breast of the sanguine, these are the evidences of vitality we show. As yet, drenched and stupefied as we are with the element out of which we are rescued, we cannot command our energies for efficient work in the new life. Salvation, like convalescence, is a process, and a process subject to relapses, and requiring care. There is a day when the doctor pronounces his patient "out of danger;" but after that what watchfulness is needed, what sheltering from draughts, what guarding against fatigue, what restrictions in diet! Unless the patient "works out" the cure begun, the acute attack may leave a chronic weakness or disease, or may make the patient an invalid for life. Your physician may create within you the germ of a healthy appetite and impart to you a tone which makes it possible for you to walk; but if you moodily refuse food and persist in staying in bed, no skill on earth can carry your cure to perfectness. The physician may work in your healthy capacities, but if you do not co-operate with him and work out your own salvation, you must remain a weak and dying creature.

How few of us nurse spiritual convalescence into spiritual robustness! Not, to be in perfect health, but only to be "out of danger," seems enough for us spiritually. We crave not the abundant life that rejoices to run a race, that glories in difficulties, that "overleaps a wall," but merely the frailty of the valetudinarian who can walk out in sunny weather, who "observes the clouds," who is dismayed if work be expected, who is not dead but might almost as well be so. Other work we are ashamed of leaving half done, but that which is of more importance than all besides, which alone crowns and completes all other work and sheds a satisfaction and meaning if not a glory round all life, we leave half done and for ever in suspense. To begin and not to finish is the extreme exhibition of imbecility. In various parts of the country unfinished castles and mansions are shown and are known as this man or that man's "folly." They are monumental follies on which no inscription is needed. The builder of a half-finished mansion may escape the shame of it by absence from its neighbourhood, but we carry with us in every company our half-

finished character, a stumbling-block to others and a shame to ourselves.

Salvation is a process of which the beginning is acceptance of Christ, and the end conformity to His character. No man is saved in the fullest sense of the word until he is of the very mind and spirit of Christ. And to attain this we are dependent on God throughout. He "works in us both to will and to do." He reveals His son in us, producing within our own heart a sense of the perfectness of Christ. He makes us ashamed of selfishness and worldliness; He teaches us to recognise the baseness and folly of living for pleasure and for gain; He gives us power to do better than we have done. So that even when we fail, we are conscious that we might have done better. We are conscious that strength is given us, but it remains for us to use that strength. God can show us our duty, and give us power and inclination to do it, but He cannot do it for us. He can attract us towards a Christ-like life, but it is we ourselves who must actually cherish Christ-like thoughts and adopt Christ-like ways. God cannot take our place and do for us and in our stead all the heavy work of facing temptation, controlling appetite, regulating the life, and cherishing the Christian ideal. God cannot be saved for us, cannot for us acquire habits of purity and self-sacrifice, cannot with broken heart confess the wrong we have done, cannot slowly strive upwards through all the interval that separates us from perfect holiness.

But in all this work we have not only God's sympathy, but His effective co-operation. "This is God's will, even your sanctification." If anywhere we may expect to find running in full stream the whole energy of the Divine life, it is here. God calls us to work out our own salvation, because it is possible, and because nothing on which we can spend our time, our thought, our strength is so certain of ample remuneration. God does not trifle with us. He bids us care for holiness and work out our salvation, just as He bids the sun rise and the earth revolve, because these things are needful to carry the world on to good and happy results. What He bids us to do in co-operation with Him is as necessary, and will as certainly have its due and proportioned effect. Sow your seed and you have a harvest. Do not sow your seed, and you cannot have a harvest. Sow now to the spirit, and as certainly and as truly in accordance with unchangeable laws, you will of the spirit reap that inconceivably abundant harvest, life everlasting.

FIFTH SUNDAY.

Psalm lxxvi.; Philippians ii. 1-13.

INDIVIDUALITY OF SALVATION.

To persons who had first been introduced to the truth by a man of Paul's marked and impressive character, it cannot but have seemed a perilous moment when they were separated from him and left to themselves. Before Paul had appeared in their city, the Philippians had never dreamt of such a glory on the earth, and such a heaven in the human heart as he told them of. While in contact with his earnest, ardent, and commanding nature, they found it easy to believe; and every time they met or heard him they felt themselves quickened afresh, and nearer God than before. He seemed always full of life for them as well as for himself, working in them energy of will and power to do good far beyond what was once possible to them. But when Paul left them, might it not all seem as a pleasant dream? Would not the hard facts of the commonplace world resume their sway? How, without Paul's presence and instructions, should they complete the work that was begun in them?

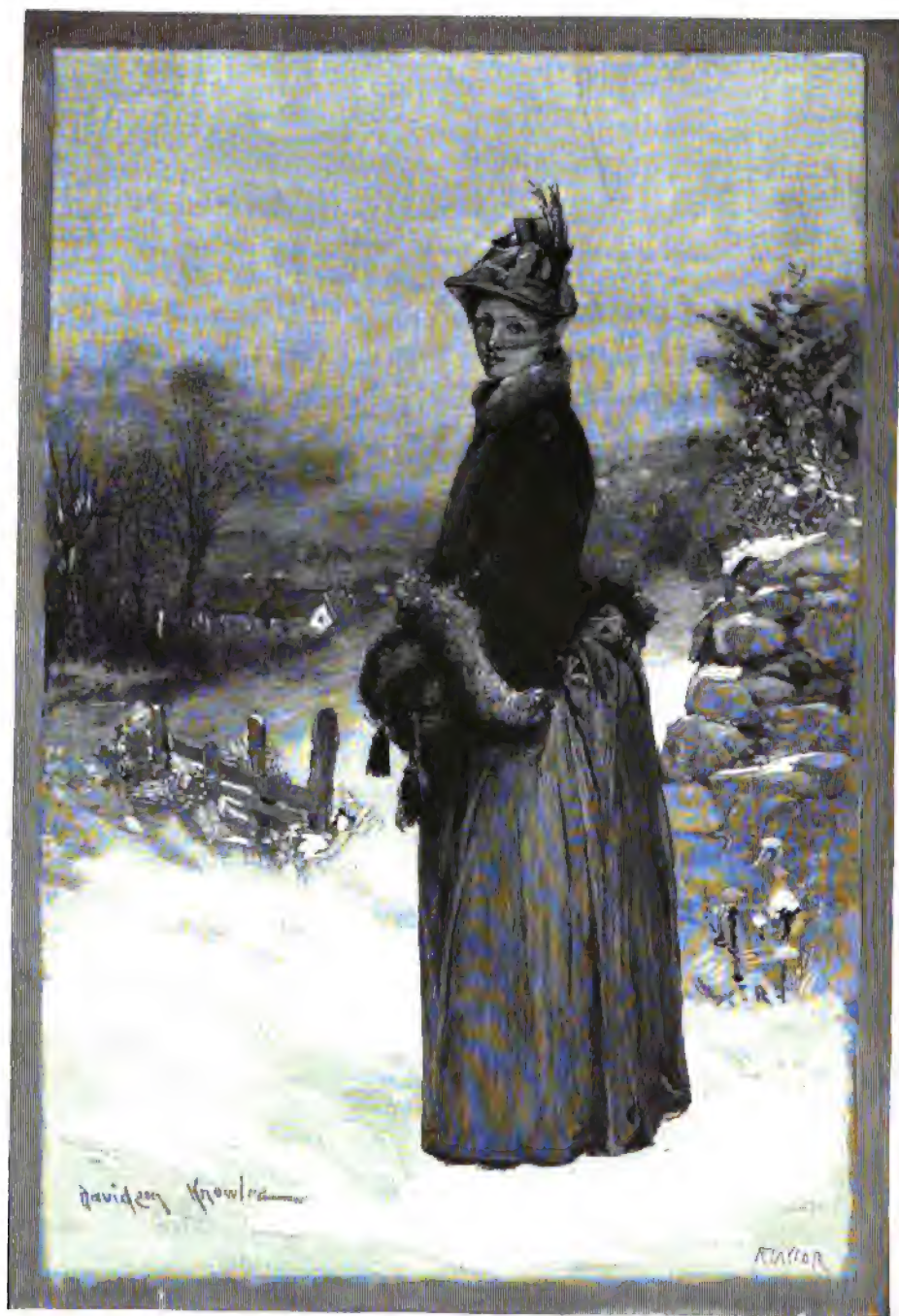
We all feel as if for the completion of our salvation we can scarcely receive too many hints. Sometimes we are reduced almost to despair, as we find ourselves fixed as helplessly as a cart that has lost its wheel; and most anxiously we wonder whether some book or some oral instruction might not set us again in a way of progress. In Paul's day there were no books he could send to his converts, and in a place like Philippi it was scarcely to be expected that any one of much Christian experience would be met with. But this state of matters does not seem alarming to Paul. "As in my presence," he says, "so much more in my absence, work out *your own* salvation, for it is not I, nor any man who comes and goes, that can efficiently aid you, but it is God that works in you both to will and to do."

In proportion as we believe that God does somehow work in us, shall we feel ourselves independent of human teaching, and understand that our experience and growth are to be our own. Each man's salvation is wrought out with material and on lines different from every other man's; and it is sustained and forwarded by impulses mightier than man can impart. By a way that no man has ever trodden before God will lead each of us to salvation, through a series of incidents, a

grouping of circumstances, an arrangement of time and place and friends peculiar to the individual; through thoughts and feelings, and work and experience, which may be similar to other men's, but which are not a mere repetition of any previous experience. The peculiarity that hangs about each man's life, and that impresses on his mind the consciousness of his individuality, attaches most of all to his spiritual experience. A mere imitation of any other person's experience, or an endeavour to reproduce in ourselves his peculiarities, is to distrust our own growth. "Ye are *God's* husbandry." Much help may be derived from men. Paul may plant and Apollos may water, and greatly indebted we are to both, but it is only God who gives the increase.

We must then be bold and honest to live out our own life, to work out our own salvation, to acquire and believe in our own experience. No one can take our place and be saved for us. We cannot shift our responsibility. For ourselves we must determine our eternal destiny.

Whoso thus works out his own salvation will necessarily do so "with fear and trembling." The responsibility and the sacredness of the work cannot but give him many anxious thoughts. The young officer who is entrusted by his general with the working out of an essential part of an important plan, is filled with a generous anxiety to execute the wishes of his superior to the letter. Any of us who may be entrusted with work which brings us into connection with persons of importance in the country, feel that we are called upon to do our utmost, to study the idea of the work that we may be able to do our part with spirit, and to catch the point of view of the originator of the plan so as to execute his design in the best manner possible. Were a Phidias or a Michael Angelo, while engaged on a marble already in position and destined to stand the gaze of centuries, to hand his hammer and chisel to a scholar and bid him finish the lip or the brow of the figure, it would be with a trembling heart the young sculptor would commence the work, feeling that he imperilled the fame of his master. He would not do the work with his eyes shut or thinking of something else; he would be all in it, calculating and imagining the result of each blow before he let the mallet fall, filled with fear lest by a hair's breadth the master's design should be marred. Such, says Paul, is the feeling proper to us as we work out the salvation which God directs and empowers us to accomplish.



THE EVENING WALK.

By DAVIDSON KNOWLES.

Gloria obtained possession of the island, and held it successfully against the Miguellites. The Queen made Angra her residence from 1830 to 1833. It is a picturesque little place, and its red-tiled whitewashed houses, striped with blue and yellow, make it bright with colour. The Rua da Sé struck us particularly as the best street we had seen in any of the island-towns.

The most striking object in the neighbourhood of Angra is the peninsula of Monte Brasil. This headland rises from the sea to a height of 550 feet, and contains a most symmetrically-formed crater nearly 300 feet deep. From the signal-station at the summit

a good general view of Terceira is obtained. To the west the land slopes gently down from the great Caldeira of Santa Barbara to the headland of St. Matheo; to the north lies the city snugly sheltered behind the shoulder of the hill; to the east is a long stretch of hill-side parcelled out into fields, and running down to the Pico Verde, in front of which stands the black Cabras Island. Terceira is the chief grain-producing island of the group, and large quantities of wheat and maize are exported to Lisbon and Madeira. It grows very few oranges, but within late years it has rivalled St. Michael's in the cultivation of pine-apples for the English market.



A Bullock Cart.

The women of Angra have a costume which is peculiar to that place. On first landing one is struck with the circumstance of ladies perambulating the streets, even on the finest days, with what appears to be the skirts of their dresses drawn over their heads, in the manner of very careful women at home when out for a picnic on a wet Easter Monday. Further inspection, however, reveals the fact that the article in question has more the character of a cape or mantua gathered in at or fastened round the waist, and sufficiently large to be drawn together at the front so as to expose only the face. Seen from behind and at a little distance, the figure appears to be made up of two black sacks placed one above the other, or one long sack with a sort

of constriction near the middle. We were told that the fashion is dying out; one wonders that so very ugly a dress should have been the mode so long.

There is not much in Terceira to detain a traveller, and we were not sorry to find ourselves once more on the quay, interested and amused spectators of a scene of bustle such as the people of Angra only experience once a fortnight on the departure of the mail. The little jetty is then thronged with a motley crowd taking leave of friends who are about to embark. Excited boatmen tumble over piles of curiously shaped and gorgeously painted articles of baggage. Even the sleepy Custom-house officials are galvanized into a spasmodic activity, much of

which, however, is expended on the little boys whose piscatorial efforts to lure the unsuspecting grapão, playing round the end of the sea-wall, interfere with the approach to the steps. A few of the passengers are departing for the "continent;" by far the greater number are going for a month or two

to one of the adjacent islands. The leaving is heartrending; strong men hug and kiss each other and shed tears as if the parting was eternal. It has been truly said of them that, "it is a gesticulating sympathetic people, and has a heart and wears it on its sleeve."

(To be concluded next month.)

THE CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSIVENESS OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

BY THE REV. A. W. WILLIAMSON, M.A.

IN the Second Epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul institutes a comparison between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ, and lays down certain principles which are very suggestive when we apply them to other fields of life and thought. The Gospel of Christ necessarily absorbs and supersedes the Law of Moses. It takes up into itself all the essential truths of the earlier system, and rejects much that was only temporary and accidental. Now in the Mosaic system the temporary and accidental elements were often very striking and impressive, so that when the change from Judaism to Christianity took place there must have seemed to many a loss of glory and power. That halo of divine mystery which appealed to the untrained religious instincts had disappeared. But, as the Apostle points out to his readers, it was essentially temporary, and, even while it lasted, it was as nothing compared with the glory of spiritual truth. For, if that which is done away, if that which merely subserved a higher end was glorious, much more the end itself, much more that which is permanent, "much more that which remaineth is glorious."

This is the principle which St. Paul lays down as explaining the essential glory of the Christian faith. The spiritual alone is permanent, all else is transient. It is this principle which we may trace through the whole history of revelation, finding in it the best guide to the development of religious truth. The revelation becomes more and more distinct as the material surroundings become less and less extraordinary. The glory of the inner grows and expands while the glory of the outer wanes, till at last we rise to the light of a spiritual hope, in which the prophets seem to realise that the foreshadowings of the earlier ritual must take end, disappearing even as the light of the stars

merges and disappears in the light of the sun.

And yet there is a dim notion in many minds that in those earlier manifestations recorded for us we get nearer to a true vision of God. It is not really so. It is a delusion to suppose that any physical manifestation, any appearance whatever in material form, can bring us nearer to Him who is a Spirit, and who can only be seen by the pure in heart. Even though we had stood amid the chaos of existence and heard the fiat of Omnipotence, though we had seen the very finger that wrote on the tables of stone and the thick cloud that shrouded the divine majesty; nay, more, though we had lived in Nazareth and had held daily converse with Him who was the express image of the Father; though we had followed Him through all the years of His wandering; though we had heard His words of divine wisdom and seen His works of mighty power, we might still be farther from the true vision of God than the little child who has learned to say, "Our Father which art in heaven."

And so it was that Jesus spoke to His disciples just before He left this earth certain strange and almost paradoxical words, of which they could make nothing, but the meaning of which they were afterwards enabled to realise, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Conscious of their complete dependence upon Him they found it difficult to realise how his absence would be an advantage. But what was the result? Is it not the fact that from that time forward they seemed to have become new men? Their long communion with Christ began to bear fruit. The glory of His bodily presence being withdrawn, there remained to them a greater glory. His Spirit seemed to enter and inspire them. The words which He

had spoken became luminous with meaning, and though only a portion of them has been recorded for us, when we remember the influence they have exerted on the minds and hearts of men, how they have been the basis of national life as of individual progress, we are enabled to say, even in regard to the actual presence of Christ on earth, "If that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

And now when we come to consider the history of the Christian Church in the light of all the controversies of the past, how does this principle stand? Is the Christianity of to-day an emasculated creed, or can we claim after the long conflict that that which remaineth is more glorious?

Throughout the centuries that have passed since St. Paul wrote his Epistles to the Corinthians, we know that the Christian faith has been brought into contact with every phase of human opinion, according as that opinion has been modified by the advance of knowledge, by a deeper inquiry into the secrets of nature, or a more searching investigation into the mind of man. Embraced as a spiritual reality by men who were unable to harmonize it with many outstanding facts in nature and life, it has often been defended on very illogical grounds. It has been bound up with much that it does not necessarily imply. But though this has in many cases led to its rejection, the general result of the conflict has undoubtedly been to strengthen and purify those doctrines of the faith which had become to many a mere form of words. Indeed, the key to Christian history seems to lie in the living and progressive change which has been continuously wrought in Christian doctrine. In the history of the Church one doctrine after another rose into importance, and seemed for a time to dwarf the rest. In the face of all opposition there it stood, stern and unbending. But by-and-by, as the phase of opinion and feeling which called it into prominence passed away, it took its due rank with other truths, neither displacing nor displaced. In the fourth century, for instance, the heresy of Arius threatened to overwhelm the basis of the Christian faith, by denying the divinity and co-eternity of Jesus Christ; but by the eloquence of a single man, whose solitary strength became proverbial, the central truth of Christianity was preserved. A time came, however, when it was just as necessary to assert and maintain the other side of that truth, the real humanity of Jesus. So has risen into view, with a clearness never

greater than in our own day, the simple human Life of Christ, and while the old theology with its harder and harsher features has disappeared, there is hope of a new, not essentially different, but warmer and more humane. Already we are beginning to feel its influence. Where, we might ask, is that cold hard Calvinism which within living memory laid its iron grip on the glowing fervour of religious truth? In its day it was certainly a "glorious birth." It preserved for us, as perhaps it would have been impossible otherwise to preserve through ages of profligacy and indifference, some of the central truths of the faith. But the casket in which the treasure was stored sought to transfer to its contents some of its own character. Time passed, however, and the conditions of the struggle altered. The necessity for guarding that aspect of truth which constituted the strength of Calvinism, the supreme sovereignty of God, was met by the necessity for unfolding some other aspects of the truth, which were at least of equal importance. And so it has come about that the outstanding Calvinistic doctrine, which in its earliest form was expressed in most uncompromising terms, is now beginning to take its place in the full harmony of truth. If the old doctrine has lost some of the features which seemed to be its glory and strength, may we not ask, looking to its growing acceptance in a deeper sense, as modified by other and equally strong principles, if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious?

These are some illustrations of the principle laid down by St. Paul in the progress of religious truth, but it does not always so clearly emerge. Sometimes it would seem as if the only remainder after the discussions of centuries were to be a superstition worse than Paganism, an unbelief hard and hopeless. But on the whole it may be said, with a late eminent writer, "it is because there is hardly any one form of Christian truth which has been held 'always everywhere and by everybody,' that we seem to see how it may at last assimilate to itself all the good and all the truth which the world contains and which though not in it are yet of it. So far as it has survived the conflicts of eighteen centuries, it has been not by adhering rigidly to the past, but by casting off its worse and grosser elements, and taking up in each age something of that higher element which each age had to give." And thus it remains true that the deepest and highest

realities have come out of the conflict unscathed. A deeper sense of individual liberty, a more intelligent faith in God, a clearer consciousness of immortality, these are the treasures, stripped of all that was partial and false, which remain to us after the assaults of unbelief. But above all, the purest result that has come to us, what we have already indicated as the source of all true religious thought and life, revealing to us the capacity of the human soul, the universal love of God, the supreme importance of charity, truth, and humility, is the growing sense of the spiritual presence of Jesus Christ, on whom the eyes of men are more keenly turned than at any time since the day when His bodily presence disappeared from the gaze of His disciples and He passed into the heavens. May we not therefore say, looking to the present position of the Christian Church, though she once presented that beautiful spectacle of unbroken unity for which all good men must earnestly pray, that there remains to us a better treasure than external unity, even the light of freedom, of toleration, of justice, the spirit of Christ supreme above all forms and symbols, finding its way to the inmost recesses of the soul, and meeting all the demands of human life? Yes, let the glories of the past bulk as largely as they may in the shaping eye of imagination, they cannot rob the present of that which they themselves do not possess, its intimate and living union with the pressing spiritual needs of men.

It is the sigh and the dream of many pious souls to get away back to the early years of the Christian Church, as if thus they would escape what they consider the failings and flaws in modern life; but it is all a delusion. The faith and purity of childhood are glorious possessions, but with advancing years there is a sure disappearance of much that was lovely in the child which in the man would seem to be out of place—that simple artlessness which wins and attracts, that sense of wonder and yet unquestioning rest, that constant flow of joy, all that makes childhood bright and beautiful. Yet who would dare regret the passing away of childhood when it opens on a manhood of earnest endeavour, and culminates in an honourable old age? No trace may be seen in the deep eyes and furrowed brow telling of care and sorrow silently

borne, no trace may be seen of the face of the child, no line may betray the identity, but the continuity is unbroken, and though the characteristics which marked the child have disappeared, that which was essential in them remains, being transmuted in the living process of growth which has guided the soul from the beginning of its days to the end. So when we pass from the history of religious truth in the Church at large to its more practical bearing on our own lives, we shall find in these reflections a deep practical lesson. For the course of human existence is in general a painful progress, if we look at it only on one side.

From the day of our birth there lie in us the seeds of decay, and the glories of our life are already beginning to fade when we recognise their presence. The brightness of childhood gives place to the chequered hopes of youth and the deep struggles of manhood. Sorrows meet us everywhere, our friends are taken from us, our strength is shaken; and so we are thrown back on the Everlasting Strength, back on the true glory of life.

So we are taught the lesson which runs through all religious history. We cannot have the fruit and still retain the blossom. We cannot drink the pure springs at the river's source, and at the same time sail on her broad bosom swelling from a thousand streams. We cannot have the freshness of youth and the wisdom of age. Let us not mourn therefore over a vanished time and dreams of early days, let not memory play false with us by surrounding the past with a charm she never wore, but rather let us believe that in the present moment, which alone is ours, in the circumstances amid which we are cast, in the work laid to our hands, in these and through these the true glory of life is to be found, if found at all.

Let us remember that the more secret and the more silent God's dealings with us, the more direct and personal they are. And so though life in all that made it glorious may seem to wane, yet, if we be faithful to His light, we shall find the inner brightness glowing, and even in the hour of death we shall be enabled to say, looking to the light that is beyond, "if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.—MY AUNT'S BÊTE NOIRE.

DUNCAN LESLIE was a sturdy, manly young fellow in his way, but he had arrived at a weak period. He thought over his position, and what life would become had he a wife at home he really loved; and in spite of various displays of reserve, and the sneers, hints, and lastly the plain declaration that Louise was to marry some French gentleman of good family and position, Duncan found himself declaring that his ideas were folly one hour, and the next he was vowing that he would not give up, but that he would win in spite of all the Frenchmen on the face of the earth.

"I must have a walk," he used to say. "If I stop poring over books now, I shall be quite thick-headed to-morrow. A man must study his health."

So Duncan Leslie studied his health, and started off that evening in a different direction to the Vines'; and then, in spite of himself, began to make a curve, one which grew smaller and smaller as he walked thoughtfully on.

"I don't see why I should not call," he said to himself. "There's no harm in that. Wish I had found some curious sea anemone; I could go and ask the old man what it was—and have her sweet clear eyes reading me through and through. I should feel that I had lowered myself in her sight."

"No," he said, emphatically; "I'll be straightforward and manly over it if I can."

"Hang that old woman! She doesn't like me. There's a peculiarly malicious look in her eyes whenever we meet. Sneering fashion, something like her old brother, only he seems honest and she does not. I'd give something to know whether Louise cares for that French fellow. If she doesn't, why should she be condemned to a life of misery? Could I make her any happier?"

"I'll go home now."

"No, I—I will not; I'll call."

These questions had been scattered over Duncan Leslie's walk, and the making up of his mind displayed in the last words was three-quarters of an hour after the first.

"I'm no better than a weak boy," he said, as he strode along manfully now. "I make mountains of molehills. What can be more natural and neighbourly than for me to drop

in, as I am going to do, for a chat with old Vine?"

There was still that peculiar feeling of consciousness, though, to trouble him, as he knocked, and was admitted by Liza, whose eyelids were nearly as red as the ribbon she had bought.

The next minute he was in the pleasant homely drawing-room, feeling a glow of love and pride, and ready to do battle with any De Ligny in France for the possession of the prize whose soft warm hand rested for a few moments in his.

"Ah, Miss Van Heldre," he said, as he shook hands with her in turn, and his face lit up and a feeling of satisfaction thrilled him, for there was something in matter-of-fact Madelaine that gave him confidence.

Aunt Marguerite's eyes twinkled with satisfaction, as she saw the cordial greeting, and built up a future of her own materials.

"Miss Marguerite," said the young man ceremoniously, as he touched the extended hand, manipulated so that he should only grasp the tips; and, as he saluted, Leslie could not help thinking philosophically upon the different sensations following the touch of a hand.

A growing chill was coming over the visit, and Leslie was beginning to feel as awkward as a sturdy well-grown young tree might, if suddenly transplanted from a warm corner to a situation facing an iceberg, when the old naturalist handed a chair for his visitor.

"Glad to see you, Leslie," he said; "sit down."

"You will take some tea, Mr. Leslie?"

Hah! The moment before the young man had felt ready to beat an ignominious retreat, but as soon as the voice of Louise Vine rang in his ears with that simple homely question, he looked up manfully, declared that he would take some tea, and in spite of himself glanced at Aunt Marguerite's tightening lips, his eyes seeming to say, "Now, then, march out a brigade of De Lignys if you like."

"And sugar, Mr. Leslie?"

"And sugar," he said, for he was ready to accept any sweets she would give.

Then he took the cup of tea, looked in the eyes that met his very frankly and pleasantly, and then his own rested upon a quaint-

looking cornelian locket, which was evidently French.

There was nothing to an ordinary looker-on in that piece of jewellery, but somehow it troubled Duncan Leslie: and as he turned to speak to Aunt Marguerite, he felt that she had read his thoughts, and her lips had relaxed into a smile.

"Well, George, if you do not mind Mr. Leslie hearing, I do not," said Aunt Marguerite. "I must reiterate that the poor boy is growing every day more despondent and unhappy."

"Nonsense, Margaret!"

"Ah, you may say nonsense, my good brother, but I understand his nature better than you. Yes, my dear," she continued, "such a trade as that carried on by Mr. Van Heldre is not a suitable avocation for your son."

"Hah!" sighed Vine.

"Now, you are a tradesman, Mr. Leslie—" continued Aunt Marguerite.

"Eh? I, a tradesman?" said Leslie, looking at her wonderingly. "Yes, of course: I suppose so; I trade in copper and tin."

"Yes, a tradesman, Mr. Leslie; but you have your perceptions, you have seen, and you know my nephew. Now, answer me honestly, is Mr. Van Heldre's business suitable to a young man with such an ancestry as Henri's?"

Louise watched him wonderingly, and her lips parted as she hung upon his words.

"Well, really, madam," he began.

"Ah," she said, "you shrink. His French ancestors would have scorned such a pursuit."

"Oh, no," said Leslie, "I do not shrink; and as to that, I think it would have been very stupid of his French ancestors. Trading in tin is a very ancient and honourable business. Let me see, it was the Phœnicians, was it not, who used to come to our ports for the metal in question. They were not above trading in tin and Tyrian dye."

Aunt Marguerite turned up her eyes.

"And a metal is a metal. For my part, it seems quite as good a pursuit to trade in tin as in silver or gold."

Aunt Marguerite gave the young man a pitying, contemptuous look, which made Louise bite her lip.

"Aunt, dear," she said hurriedly, "let me give you some more tea."

"I was not discussing tea, my dear, but your brother's future; and pray, my dear child," she continued, turning suddenly upon Madelaine with an irritating smile, "pray

do not think I am disparaging your worthy father and his business affairs."

"Oh, no, Miss Vine."

"Miss Marguerite Vine, my child, if you will be so good. Oh, by the way, has your father heard any news of his ship?"

"Not yet, Miss Marguerite," said Madelaine quietly.

"Dear me, I am very sorry. It would be so serious a loss for him, Mr. Leslie, if the ship did not come safe to port."

"Yes, of course," said Leslie; "but I should suppose, Miss Van Heldre, that your father is well insured."

"Yes," said Madelaine quietly.

"There, never mind about Van Heldre's ship," said Vine pleasantly. "Don't croak like a Cassandra, Margaret; and as to Harry, a year or two in a good solid business will not do him any harm, eh, Leslie?"

"I should say it would do him a world of good."

"My nephew is not to be judged in the same light as a young man who is to be brought up as a tradesman," said Aunt Marguerite, with dignity.

"Only a tradesman's son, my dear."

"The descendant of a long line of ennobled gentry, George; a fact you always will forget," said Aunt Marguerite, rising and leaving the room, giving Leslie, who opened the door, a *Minuet de la Cour* courtesy on the threshold, and then rustling across the hall.

Her brother took it all as a matter of course. Once that Marguerite had ceased speaking the matter dropped, to make way for something far more important in the naturalist's eyes—the contents of one of his glass aquaria; but Louise, to remove the cloud her aunt had left behind, hastily kept the ball rolling.

"Don't think any more about aunt's remarks, Madelaine. Harry is a good fellow, but he would be discontented anywhere sometimes."

"I do not think he would be discontented now," she replied, "if his aunt would leave him alone."

"It is very foolish of him to think of what she says."

"Of course it is irksome to him at first," continued Madelaine; "but my father is not exacting. It is the hours at the desk that trouble your brother most."

"I wish I could see him contented," sighed Louise. "I'd give anything to see him settle down."

A very simple wish, which went right to

Duncan Leslie's heart, and set him thinking so deeply that for the rest of his visit he was silent, and almost constrained—a state which Madelaine noted as she rose.

"Must you go so soon, dear?" said Louise consciously, for a terrible thought crossed her mind, and sent the blood surging to her cheeks—Madelaine was scheming to leave her and the visitor alone.

"Yes; they will be expecting me back," said Madelaine, smiling as she grasped her friend's thoughts; and then to herself, "Oh, you stupid fellow!"

For Leslie rose at once.

"And I must be going too. Let's see, I am walking your way, Miss Van Heldre. May I see you home?"

"I——"

"Yes, do, Mr. Leslie," said Louise quietly.

"Ah! I will," he said hastily. "I want a chat with your father, too."

Madelaine would have avoided the escort, but she could only have done this at the expense of making a fuss; so merely said "Very well;" and went off with Louise to put on her hat and mantle, leaving Leslie alone with his host, who was seated by the window with a watchmaker's glass in his eye, making use of the remaining light for the study of some wonderful marine form.

"She would give anything to see her brother settled down," said Leslie to himself, over and over again. "Well, why not?"

Five minutes later he and Madelaine were going along the main street, with Louise watching them from behind her father's chair, and wondering why she did not feel so happy as she did half an hour before; and Aunt Marguerite gazing from her open window.

"Ah!" said the old lady; "that's better. Birds of a feather do flock together, after all."

But the flocking pair had no such thoughts as those with which they were given credit, for directly they were outside Duncan Leslie set Madelaine's heart beating by his first words.

"Look here," he said, "I want to take you into my counsel, Miss Van Heldre, because you have so much sound common sense."

"Is that meant for a compliment, Mr. Leslie?"

"No; I never pay compliments. Look here," he said bluntly, "you take an interest in Harry Vine."

Madelaine was silent.

"That means yes," said Leslie. "Now to

be perfectly plain with you, Miss Van Heldre, so do I; and I want to serve him if I can."

"Yes?" said Madelaine, growing more deeply interested.

"Yes, it is—as the sailors say. Now it's very plain that he is not contented where he is."

"I'm afraid not."

"What do you say to this—I will not be a sham—I want to serve him for reasons which I dare say you guess; reasons of which I am not in the least ashamed. Now what do you think of this? How would he be with me?"

Madelaine flushed with pleasure.

"I cannot say. Is this a sudden resolve?"

"Quite. I never thought of such a thing till I went there."

"Then take time to think it over, Mr. Leslie."

"Good advice: but it is a thing that requires very little thought. I cannot say what arrangements I should make—that would require consideration, but I should not tie him to a desk. He would have the overlooking of a lot of men, and I should try to make him as happy as I could."

"Oh, Mr. Leslie!" said Madelaine, rather excitedly.

"Pray do not think I am slighting your father, or looking down upon what he has done, which, speaking as a blunt man, is very self-sacrificing."

"As it would be on your part."

"On mine? Oh, no," said Leslie frankly.

"When a man has such an *arrière pensée* as I have, there is no self-sacrifice. There, you see I am perfectly plain."

"And I esteem you all the more for it."

The conversation extended, and in quite a long discussion everything was forgotten but the subject in hand, till Leslie said:—

"There, you had better sit down and rest for a few minutes. You are quite out of breath."

Madelaine looked startled, for she had been so intent upon their conversation that she had not heeded their going up the cliff walk.

"Sit down," said Leslie; and she obeyed.

"Get your breath, and we'll walk back to your house together; but what do you think of it all?"

"I cannot help thinking that it would for many reasons be better."

"So do I," said Leslie, "in spite of the risk."

"Risk?"

"Yes. Suppose I get into an imbroglio with Master Harry? He's as peppery as can be. How then?"

"You will be firm and forbearing," said Madelaine gravely. "I have no fear."

"Well, I have. I know myself better than you know me," said Leslie, placing a foot on the seat and resting his arm on his knee, as he spoke thoughtfully. "I am a very hot-headed kind of Highlander by descent, and there's no knowing what might happen. Now one more question. Shall I open fire on your father to-night?"

"That requires more consideration," said Madelaine. "We will talk that over as we go back. Here is Harry," she said quickly, as that gentleman suddenly burst upon them; and the walk back to Van Heldre's was accomplished without the discussion.

"I'm afraid I've made a very great mistake, Miss Van Heldre," said Leslie, as they neared the house.

"Don't say that," she replied. "It was most unfortunate."

"But you will soon set that right?" he added, after a pause.

"I don't know," said Madelaine quietly. "You will come in?"

"No: not this evening. We had better both have a grand think before anything is said."

"Yes," said Madelaine; and they parted at the door—to think.

"Why, John," said Mrs. Van Heldre, turning from the window to gaze in her husband's face, "did you see that?"

"Yes," said Van Heldre shortly; "quite plainly."

"But what does it mean?"

"Human nature."

"But I thought, dear——"

"So did I, and now I think quite differently."

"Well, really, I must speak to Madelaine: it is so——"

"Silence!" said Van Heldre sternly. "Madelaine is not a child now. Wait, wife, and she will speak to us."

CHAPTER XVI.—IN A WEST COAST GALE.

"THAT project is knocked over as if it were a card house," said Duncan Leslie, as he reached home, and sat thinking of Louise and her brother.

He looked out to see that in a very short time the total aspect of the sea had changed. The sky had become overcast, and in the dim light the white horses of the Atlantic were displaying their manes.

"Very awkward run for the harbour to-night," he said, as he returned to his seat. "Can't be pleasant to be a shipowner. I wonder whether Miss Marguerite Vine would consider that a more honourable way of making money?"

"Yes, a tradesman, I suppose. Well, why not? Better than being a descendant of some feudal gentleman whose sole idea of right was might."

"My word!" he exclaimed; "what a sudden gale to have sprung up. Heavy consumption of coal in the furnaces to-night. How this wind will make them roar."

He faced round to the window and sat listening as the wind shrieked, and howled, and beat at the panes, every now and then sending the raindrops pattering almost as loudly as hail. "Hope it will not blow down my chimney on the top yonder. Hah! I ought to be glad that I have no ship to trouble me on a night like this."

"No," he said firmly just as the wind had hurled itself with redoubled fury against the house; "no, she does not give me a second thought. But I take heart of grace, for I can feel that she has never had that gentle little heart troubled by such thoughts. The Frenchman has not won her, and he never shall if I can help it. It's a fair race for both of us, and only one can win."

"My word! What a night!"

He walked to the window and looked out at the sombre sky, and listened to the roar of the rumbling billows before closing his case-ment and ringing.

"Is all fastened?" he said to the servant. "You need not sit up.—I don't believe a dog would be out to-night, let alone a human being."

He was wrong; for just as he spoke a dark figure encased in oilskins was sturdily making its way down the cliff path to the town. It was hard work, and in places on the exposed cliff-side even dangerous, for the wind seemed to pounce upon the figure and try to tear it off; but after a few moments' pause the walk was continued, the town reached, and the wind-swept streets traversed without a soul being passed.

The figure passed on by the wharves and warehouses, and sheltered now from the wind made good way till, some distance ahead, a door was opened, a broad patch of light shone out on the wet cobble stones, Crampton's voice said, "Good night," and the figure drew back into a deep doorway, and waited.

The old clerk had been to the principal inn, where, once a week, he visited his club, and drank one glass of Hollands and water, and smoked one pipe, talking mostly to one friend, to whom if urged he would relate one old story.

This was his one dissipation; and afterwards he performed one regular duty which took him close up to the watching figure which remained there almost breathless till Crampton had performed his regular duty and gone home.

It was ten minutes or a quarter of an hour before he passed that watching figure, which seemed to have sunk away in the darkness that grew more dense as the gale increased.

Morning at last, a slowly breaking dawn, and with it the various sea-going men slowly leaving their homes, to direct their steps in a long procession towards one point where the high cliff face formed a shelter from the south-west wind, and the great billows which rolled heavily in beneath the leaden sky. These came on with the regularity of machinery, to charge the cliffs at which they leaped with a hiss and a roar, and a boom like thunder, followed by a peculiar rattling, grumbling sound, as if the peal of thunder had been broken up into heavy pieces which were rolling over each other back toward the sea.

They were not pieces of thunder but huge boulders, which had been rolled over and over for generations to batter the cliffs, and then fall back down an inclined plane.

Quite a crowd had gathered on the broad, glistening patch of rugged granite, as soon as the day broke, and this crowd was ever augmenting, till quite a phalanx of oil-skin coats and tarpaulin hats presented its face to the thundering sea, while men shouted to each other, and swept the lead-coloured horizon with heavy glasses, or the naked hand-shaded eye, in search of some vessel trying to make the harbour, or in distress.

"She bites, this morning," said one old fisherman, shaking the spray from his dripping face after looking round the corner of a mass of sheltering rock.

"Ay, mate, and it aren't in me to tell you how glad I am my boot's up the harbour with her nose fast to a buoy," said another.

"There'll be widders and orphans in some ports 'fore nightfall."

"And thank the Lord that won't be in Hakemouth."

"I dunno so much about that," growled a

heavy-looking man, with a fringe of white hair round his face. "Every boat that sails out of this harbour arn't in port."

"That it is. Why, what's yer thinking about?"

"'Bout Van Heldre's brig, my lad."

"Ah," chorused half-a-dozen voices, "we didn't think o' she."

"Been doo days and days," said the white-fringed old fisherman; "and if she's out yonder, I say, Lord ha' mercy on 'em all, Amen."

"Not had such a storm this time o' year since the Cape mail were wrecked off the Long Chain."

"Ah, and that warn't so bad as this. Bound to say the brig has put into Mount's Bay."

"And not a nice place either with the wind this how. Well, my lads, I say, there's blessings and blessings, and we ought all to be werry thankful as we arn't ship-owners with wessels out yonder."

This was from the first man who had spoken; but his words were not received with much favour, and as in a lull of the wind one of the men had to use a glass, he growled out,

"Well, I dunno 'bout sending one's ship to sea in such a storm, but I don't see as it's such a very great blessing not to have one of your own, speshly if she happened to be a brig like Mast' Van Heldre's!"

"Hold your row," said a man beside him, as he drove his elbow into his ribs, and gave a side jerk of his head.

The man thus adjured turned sharply, and saw close to him a sturdy-looking figure clothed from head to foot in black mackintosh, which glistened as it dripped with the showery spray.

"Ugly day, my lads."

"Ay, ay, sir; much snugger in port than out yonder."

Boom! came a heavy blow from a wave, and the offing seemed to be obscured now by the drifting spray.

Van Heldre focussed a heavy binocular, and gazed out to sea long and carefully.

"Any one been up to the look-out?" he said, as he lowered his glass.

"Two on us tried it, sir," said one of the men, "but the wind's offle up yonder, and you can't see nothing."

"Going to try it, sir?" said another of the group.

Van Heldre nodded; and he was on his way to a roughly-formed flight of granite steps which led up to the ruins of the old castle which had once defended the mouth

of the harbour, when another mackintosh-clothed figure came up.

"Ah, Mr. Leslie," said Van Heldre, looking at the new-comer searchingly.

"Good morning," was the reply, "or I should say bad morning. There'll be some mischief after this."

Van Heldre nodded, for conversation was painful, and passed on.

"Going up yonder?" shouted Leslie.

There was another nod, and under the circumstances, not pausing to ask permission, Leslie followed the old merchant, climbing the rough stone steps, and holding on tightly by the rail.

"Best look out, master," shouted one of the group. "Soon as you get atop roosh acrost and kneel down behind the old parry-putt."

It was a difficult climb and full of risk, for as they went higher they were more exposed, till as they reached the rough top which formed a platform, the wind seemed to rush at them as interlopers which it strove to sweep off and out to sea.

Van Heldre stood, glass in hand, holding on by a block of granite, his mackintosh tightly pressed to his figure in front, and filling out behind till it had a balloon-like aspect that seemed grotesque.

"I daresay I look as bad," Leslie muttered, as, taking the rough fisherman's advice, he bent down and crept under the shelter of the ancient parapet, a dwarf breastwork, with traces of the old crude bastions just visible, and here, to some extent, he was screened from the violence of the wind, and signed to Van Heldre to join him.

Leslie placed his hands to his mouth, and shouted through them,

"Hadn't you better come here, sir?"

For the position seemed terribly insecure. They were on the summit of the rocky headland, with the sides going on three sides sheer down to the shore, on two of which sides the sea kept hurling huge waves of water, which seemed to make the rock quiver to its foundations. One side of the platform was protected by the old breastwork; on the opposite the stones had crumbled away or fallen, and here there was a swift slope of about thirty feet to the cliff edge.

It was at the top of this slope that Van Heldre stood gazing out to sea.

Leslie, as he watched him, felt a curious premonition of danger, and gathered himself together involuntarily, ready for a spring.

The danger he anticipated was not long in

making its demand upon him, for all at once there was a tremendous gust, as if an atmospheric wave had risen up to spring at the man standing on high as if daring the fury of the tempest; and in spite of Van Heldre's sturdy frame he completely lost his balance. He staggered for a moment, and, but for his presence of mind in throwing himself down, he would have been swept headlong down the swift slope to destruction.

As it was he managed to cling to the rocks, as the wind swept furiously over, and checked his downward progress for the moment. This would have been of little avail, for, buffeted by the wind, he was gliding slowly down, and but for Leslie's quickly rendered aid, it would only have been a matter of moments before he had been hurled down upon the rocks below.

Even as he staggered, Leslie mastered the peculiar feeling of inertia which attacked him, and, creeping rapidly over the intervening space, made a dash at the fluttering overcoat, caught it, twisted it rapidly, and held on.

Then for a space neither moved, for it was as if the storm was raging with redoubled fury at the chance of its victim being snatched away.

The lull seemed as if it would never come; and when it did Leslie felt afraid to stir lest the fragile material by which he supported his companion should give way. In a few moments, however, he was himself, and shouting so as to make his voice plainly heard—for, close as he was, his words seemed to be swept away as uttered—he uttered a few short clear orders, which were not obeyed.

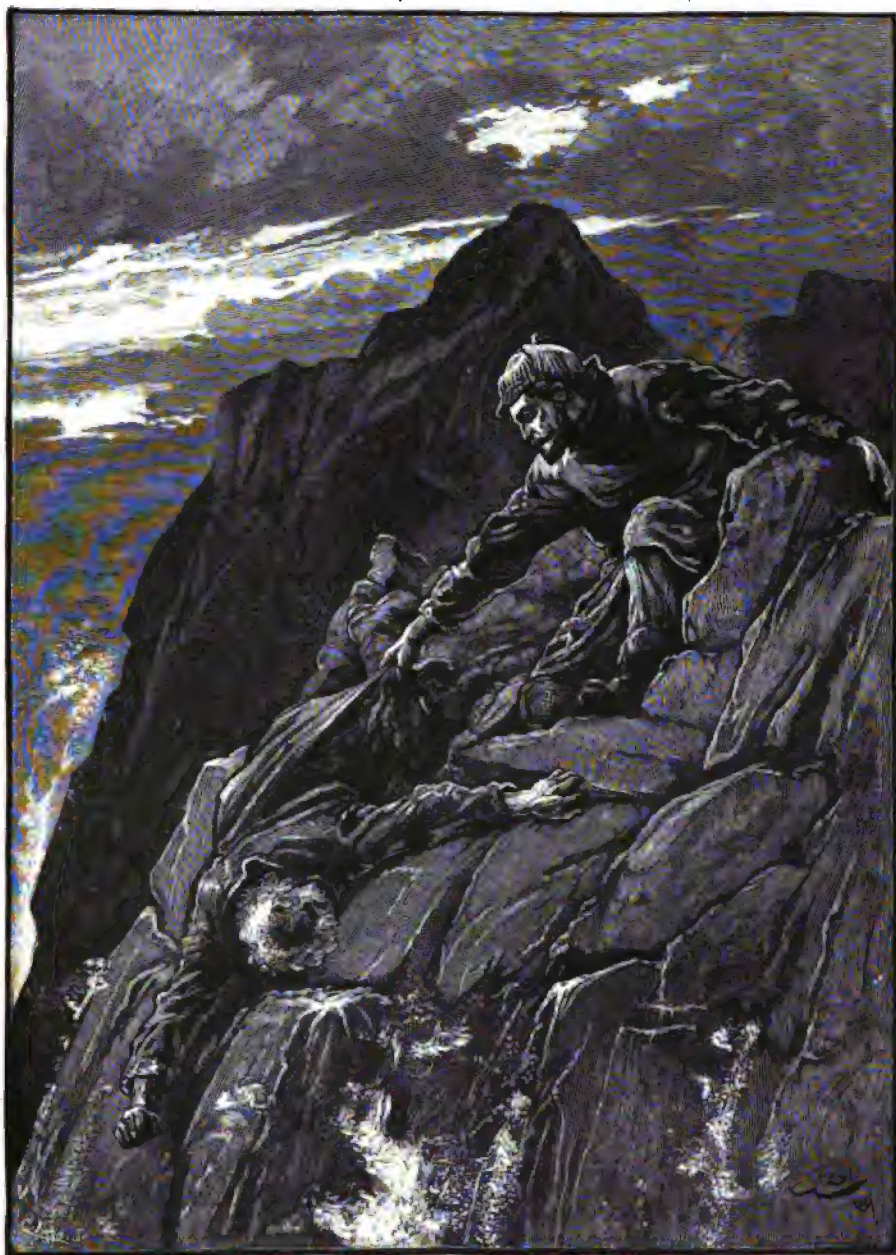
"Do you hear?" he cried again, "Mr. Van Heldre—quick!"

Still there was no reply by voice or action, and it seemed as if the weight upon Leslie's wrists was growing heavier moment by moment. He yelled to him now, to act; and what seemed to be a terrible time elapsed before Van Heldre said hoarsely—

"One moment: better now. I felt paralyzed."

There was another terrible pause, during which the storm beat upon them, the waves thundered at the base of the rock, and even at that height there came a rain of spray which had run up the face of the rock and swept over to where they lay.

"Now, quick!" said Van Heldre, as he lay face downward, spread-eagled, as a sailor would term it, against the face of the sloping granite.



"Lealie . . . made a dash at the fluttering overcoat, caught it, twisted it rapidly, and held on."

What followed seemed to be a struggling scramble, a tremendous effort, and then with the wind shrieking round them, Van Heldre reached the level, and crept slowly to the shelter of the parapet.

"Great heavens!" panted Leslie, as he lay there exhausted, and gazed wildly at his companion. "What an escape!"

There was no reply. Leslie thought that Van Heldre had fainted, for his eyes were nearly closed, and his face seemed to be drawn. Then he realised that his lips were moving slowly, as if in prayer.

"Hah!" the rescued man said at last, his words faintly heard in the tempest's din. "Thank God! For their sake—for their sake."

Then, holding out his hand, he pressed Leslie's in a firm strong grip.

"Leslie," he said, with his lips close to his companion's ear, "you have saved my life."

Neither spoke much after that, but they crouched there—in turn using the glass.

Once Van Heldre grasped his companion's arm and pointed out to sea.

"A ship?" cried Leslie.

"No. Come down now."

Waiting till the wind had dropped for the moment, they reached the rough flight of steps, and on returning to the level found that the crowd had greatly increased; and among them Leslie saw Harry Vine and his companion.

"Can't see un, sir, can you?" shouted one of the men.

Van Heldre shook his head.

"I thought you wouldn't, sir," shouted another. "Capt'n Musker's too good a sailor to try and make this port in such a storm."

"Ay," shouted another. "She's safe behind the harbour wall at Penzance."

"I pray she may be," said Van Heldre. "Come up to my place and have some breakfast, Leslie, but not a word mind about the slip. I'll tell that my way."

"Then I decline to come," said Leslie, and after a hearty grip of the hand they parted.

"I thought he meant Vine's girl," said Van Heldre, as he walked along the wharves street, "but there is no accounting for these things."

"I ought to explain to him how it was I came to be walking with Miss Van Heldre," said Leslie to himself. "Good morning."

He had suddenly found himself face to face with Harry, who walked by, arm in arm with Pradelle, frowning and without a word,

when just as they passed a corner the wind came with a tremendous burst, and but for Leslie's hand Harry Vine must have gone over into the harbour.

It was but the business of a moment, and Harry seemed to shake off the hand which held him with a tremendous grip and passed on.

"Might have said thank you," said Leslie smiling. "I seem to be doing quite a business in saving people this morning, only they are of the wrong sex—there is no heroism. Hallo, Mr. Luke Vine. Come down to look at the storm?"

"Couldn't I have seen it better up at home?" shouted the old man. "Ugh! what a wind. Thought I was going to be blown off the cliff. I see your chimney still stands, worse luck. Going home?"

"No, no. One feels so much unsettled at such a time."

"Don't go home then. Stop with me."

Leslie looked at the quaint old man in rather an amused way, and then stopped with him to watch the tumbling billows off the point where his companion so often fished.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE NEWS.

THE day wore on with the storm now lulling slightly, now increasing in violence till it seemed as if the great rolling banks of green water must end by conquering in their attack, and sweeping away first the rough pier, and then the little twin towns on either side of the estuary. Nothing was visible seawards, but in a maritime place the attention of all is centred upon the expected, and in the full belief that sooner or later there would be a wreck, all masculine Hakemouth gathered in sheltered places to be on the watch.

Van Heldre and Leslie came into contact again that afternoon, and after a long look seaward, the merchant took the young man's arm.

"Come on to my place," he said quietly. "You'll come too, Luke Vine?"

"I? No, no," said the old fellow, shaking his head. "I want to stop and watch the sea go down."

His refusal was loud and demonstrative, but somehow there was a suggestion in it of a request to be asked again.

"Nonsense!" said Van Heldre. "You may as well come and take shelter for a while. You will not refuse, Leslie?"

"Thanks all the same, but I hope you will excuse me too," replied Leslie with his lips,

but with an intense desire to go, for there was a possibility of Louise being at the house with Madelaine.

"I shall feel vexed if you refuse," said Van Heldre quietly. "Come along, Luke, and dine with us. I'm depressed and worried to-day; be a bit neighbourly if you can."

"Oh, I'll come," said the old man; "but it serves you right. Why can't you be content as I am, instead of venturing hundreds and hundreds of pounds in ships on the sea? Here, come along, Leslie, and let's eat and drink all we can to help him, the extravagant spendthrift."

Van Heldre smiled, and they went along to the house together.

"The boy in yonder at work?" said Uncle Luke, giving a wag of his head toward the office.

"Yes," said Van Heldre, and ushered his visitors in, the closed door seeming directly after to shut out the din and confusion of the wind-swept street.

"There, throw your mackintoshes on that chair," said Van Heldre; and hardly had Leslie got rid of his than Mrs. Van Heldre was in the hall, her short plump arms were round Leslie's neck, and she kissed him heartily.

"God bless you!" she whispered with a sob; and before Leslie had well recovered from his surprise and confusion, Madelaine was holding one of his hands in both of hers, and looking tearfully in his face in a way which spoke volumes.

"Ah, it's nice to be young and good-looking, and well off," said Uncle Luke. "Nobody gives me such a welcome."

"How can you say that," said Madelaine, with a laugh. "Come, Uncle Luke, and we're very glad to see you."

As she spoke she put her hands on his shoulders, and kissed his wrinkled cheek.

"Hah! that's like old times, Maddy," said the grim-looking visitor, softening a little. "Why didn't you keep a nice plump little girl, same as you used to be?"

Madelaine gave him a smile and nod, but left the old man with her father, and followed her mother and Leslie into the dining-room.

"So that's to be it, is it, Van, eh?"

"I don't know," was the reply. "It's all very sudden and a surprise to me."

"Angled for it, haven't you?"

"Angled? No."

"She has then. My dear boy, son of my heart, the very man for my darling, eh?" chuckled Uncle Luke.

"Be quiet, you sham cynic," said Van Heldre dreamily. "Don't banter me, Luke, I'm sorely ill at ease."

"About money, eh?" cried Uncle Luke eagerly.

"Money? No! I was thinking about those poor fellows out at sea."

"In your brig, eh? Ah, 'tis sad. But that money—quite safe, eh?"

"Oh yes, safe enough."

"Oh, do come, papa dear," said Madelaine, reappearing at the door. "Dinner is waiting."

"Yes, yes, we're coming, my dear," said Van Heldre, laying his hand affectionately on Uncle Luke's shoulder, and they were soon after seated round the table, with the elder visitor showing at times quite another side of his character.

No allusion was made to the adventure of the morning, but Leslie felt in the gentle tenderness displayed towards him by mother and daughter that much had been said, and that he had won a very warm place in their regard. In fact, in word and look, Mrs. Van Heldre seemed to be giving him a home in her motherly heart, which was rather embarrassing, and would have been more so, but for Madelaine's frank, pleasant way of meeting his gaze, every action seemed to be sisterly and affectionate but nothing more.

So Leslie read them, but so did not the elders at the table.

By mutual consent no allusion was made to the missing brig, and it seemed to Leslie that the thoughts of mother and daughter were directed principally to one point, that of diverting Van Heldre from his troublesome thoughts.

"Ah, I was hungry," said Uncle Luke, when the repast was about half over. "Very pleasant meal, only wanted one thing to make it perfect."

"Why, my dear Luke Vine, why didn't you speak? What is it? oh, pray say."

"Society," said Uncle Luke, after pausing for a moment to turn towards the window, a gust having given it a tremendous shake. "I say if I find my place blown away, can you find me a dry shed or a dog kennel or something, Leslie?"

"Don't talk such stuff, Luke Vine," cried Mrs. Van Heldre. "Don't take any notice of him, Mr. Leslie, he's a rich old miser and nothing else. Now Luke Vine, what do you mean?"

"Said what I meant, society. Why didn't you ask my sister to dinner? She'd have set us all right, eh, Madelaine?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Madelaine, smiling.

"But I do," cried her mother; "she'd have set us all by the ears with her nonsense. You are a strange pair."

"We are—we are. Nice sherry this, Van."

"Glad you like it," said Van Heldre, with his eyes turned towards the window, as if he expected news.

"How a woman can be so full of pride and so useless puzzles me."

"Mamma!" whispered Madelaine, with an imploring look.

"Let her talk, my dear," said Uncle Luke, "it doesn't hurt any one. Don't talk nonsense, Van's wife. What use could you make of her? She is like the thistle that grows up behind my place, a good-looking prickly plant, with a ball of down for a head. Let her be; you always get the worst of it. The more you excite her the more that head of hers sends out floating downy seeds to settle here and there and do mischief. She has spoiled my nephew Harry, and nearly spoiled my niece."

"Don't you believe it, Mr. Leslie," cried Madelaine, with a long earnest look in her eyes.

"Quite true, Miss Impudence," continued Uncle Luke. "Always was a war between me and the useless plants."

"Well, I can't sit here silent and listen to such heresy," cried Mrs. Van Heldre, shaking her head. "Surely, Luke Vine, you don't call yourself a useful plant."

"Bless my soul, ma'am, then I suppose I'm a weed!"

"Not you," said Van Heldre, forcing a show of interest in the conversation.

"Yes, old fellow, I am," said Uncle Luke, holding his sherry up to the light, and sipping it as if he found real enjoyment therein. "I suppose I am only a weed, not a thistle, like Margaret up yonder, but a tough-rooted, stringy, matter-of-fact old nettle, who comes up quietly in his own corner, and injures no one so long as people let him alone."

"No, no, no, no!" said Madelaine emphatically.

"Quite right, Miss Van Heldre," said Leslie.

"Hear, hear!" cried Van Heldre.

"Stir me up, then, and see," cried the old man grimly. "More than one person has found out before now how I can sting, and—hallo! what's wrong? You here?"

There had been a quick step in the long passage, and, without ceremony, the door

was thrown open, Harry Vine entering, to stand in the gathering gloom hatless and excited.

He was about to speak, Van Heldre having sprung to his feet, when the young man's eyes alighted on Leslie and Madelaine seated side by side at the table, and the flash of anger which mounted to his brain drove everything else away.

"What is it?" cried Van Heldre hoarsely. "Do you hear!—speak!"

"There is a brig on the Conger Rock," said Harry quickly, as if roused to a recollection of that which he had come to say.

"Yes, sir," cried another voice, as old Crampton suddenly appeared. "And the man has just run up to the office with the news, for—"

"Well, man, speak out," said Van Heldre, whose florid face was mottled with patches of ghastly white.

"They think it's ours."

"I felt it coming," groaned Van Heldre, as he rushed into the hall, Leslie following quickly.

As he hurriedly threw on his waterproof a hand caught his, and turning, it was to see Madelaine looking up imploringly in his eyes.

"My father, Mr. Leslie. Keep him out of danger, pray!"

"Trust me. I'll do my best," said the young man quickly; and then he awoke to the fact that Harry Vine was beside him, white with anger, an anger which seemed to make him dumb.

The next minute the whole party were struggling down the street against the hurricane-like wind, to learn from a dozen voices, eager to tender the bad news, that the mist of spray had been so thick that in the early gloom of evening the vessel had approached quite unseen till she was close in, and directly after she had struck on the dangerous rock, in a wild attempt to reach the harbour, a task next to impossible in such a storm.

CHAPTER XVIII.—HARRY VINE SHOWS HIS BRIGHT SIDE.

THE wreck of a ship on the threshold of the home where every occupant is known, is a scene of excitement beyond the reach of pen to adequately describe; and as the two young men reached the mouth of the harbour, following closely upon Van Heldre, their own petty animosity was forgotten in the face of the terrible disaster.

The night was coming fast, and a light had been hoisted in the rigging of the vessel,

now hard on the dangerous rock—the long arc of a circle described by the dim star allowing plainly to those on shore the precarious position of the unfortunate crew.

The sides of the harbour were crowded, in spite of the tremendous storm of wind and spray; and, as Leslie followed the ship-owner, he noted the horror and despair in many a spray-wet face.

As Van Heldre approached and was recognised there was a cheer given by those who seemed to take it for granted that the owner would at once devise a way to save the vessel from her perilous position; and rescue the crew whose lives were dear to many gathered in agony around, to see, as it were, their dear ones die.

Steps had already been taken, however, and as the little party from Van Heldre's reached the harbour it was to see the lifeboat launched, and a crew of sturdy fellows in their places, ready to do battle with the waves.

It seemed to be a terrible task to row right out from the comparatively calm harbour, whose long rocky point acted as a breakwater, to where the great billows came rolling in, each looking as if it would engulf a score of such frail craft as that which, after a little of the hesitation of preparation, and amidst a tremendous burst of cheering, was rowed out into the middle of the estuary, and then straight away for the mouth.

But they were not all cheers which followed the boat. Close by where Leslie stood, with a choking sensation of emotion in his breast, a woman uttered a wild shriek as the boat went off, and her hands were outstretched towards one of the oilskin-cased men, who sat in his place tugging stolidly at his oar.

That one cry, heard above the roaring of the wind, the hiss of the spray, and the heavy thunder of the waves, acted like a signal to let loose the pent-up agony of a score of hearts; and wives, mothers, sisters, all joined in that one wild cry, "Come back!"

The answer was a hoarse "Give way!" from the coxswain; and the crew turned their eyes determinedly from the harbour wall and tugged at their oars.

The progress of the boat was followed as far as was possible by the crowd; and when they could go no farther, every sheltered spot was seized upon as a coign of vantage from which to watch the saving of the doomed crew.

Leslie was standing close to the harbour wall, sheltering his face with his hands as

he watched the lifeboat fast nearing the mouth of the harbour, where the tug of war would commence, when he felt a hand laid upon his arm.

He turned sharply, to find Madelaine at his elbow, her hood drawn over her head and tightly secured beneath her chin.

He hardly saw her face, though, for close beside her stood another closely-hooded figure, whose face was streaming with the spray, while strand after strand of her dark hair had been torn from its place by the wind, and refused to be controlled.

"Miss Van Heldre! Miss Vine!"

"Yes. Where is my father?"

"Here; talking to this coastguardsman."

"And I thought we had lost him," murmured Madelaine.

"But is it wise of you two ladies?" said Leslie, as he grasped Louise's hand for a moment. "The storm is too terrible."

"We could not rest indoors," said Louise.

"My father is down here, is he not?"

"I have not seen him. You want some better shelter."

"No, no; don't think of us," said Louise excitedly; "but if you can help in any way——"

"You know I will," said Leslie earnestly.

"Here, what are you two girls doing?" said a quick, angry voice. "Louy, I'm sure this is no place for you."

Harry spoke to his sister, but his eyes were fixed upon those of Leslie, who, however, declined his challenge, as it seemed, to quarrel, and glanced at the young man's companion.

At that moment the brothers Vine came up, and there was no farther excuse for Harry's fault-finding objections.

"Can't you young fellows do anything to help?" said Uncle Luke.

"I wish you would tell us what to do, Mr. Vine," said Leslie coldly.

Just then Van Heldre turned to, and joined them.

"He is afraid the distance is too far," he said dreamily, as if in answer to a question.

"For the boat, Mr. Van Heldre?" cried Louise.

"No, no; for the rocket apparatus. Ah! Vine," he continued, as he saw his old friend, "how helpless we are in such a storm!"

No more was said. It was no time for words. The members of the two families stood together in a group watching the progress of the boat, and even Aunt Marguerite's cold and sluggish blood was moved enough to draw her to the window, through whose

spray and salt-blurred panes she could dimly see the tossing light of the brig.

It was indeed no time for words, and even the very breath was held, to be allowed to escape in a low hiss of exultation as the lifeboat was seen to rise suddenly and swiftly up a great bank of water, stand out upon its summit for a few moments, and then plunge down out of sight as the wave came on, deluged the point, and roared and tumbled over in the mouth of the harbour.

It was plain enough now; the lifeboat was beyond the protection of the point; and its progress was watched as it rose and fell, slowly growing more distant, and at times invisible for minutes together.

At such times the excitement seemed beyond bearing. The boat, all felt, must have been swamped, and those on board left tossing in the boiling sea. The catastrophe of the wreck of the brig seemed to be swallowed up now in one that was greater; and as Leslie glanced round once, it was to see Louise and Madelaine clinging together, wild-eyed and pale.

"There she is!" shouted a voice; and the lifeboat was seen to slowly rise again, as a hoarse cheer arose—the pent-up excitement of the moment.

It seemed an interminable length of time before the life-saving vessel reached the brig, and what followed during the next half-hour could only be guessed at. So dark had it become that now only the tossing light on board the doomed merchantman could be seen, rising and falling slowly with rhythmical regularity, as if those on board were waving to those they loved a sad farewell.

Then at last a faint spark was seen for a few moments before it disappeared. Again it shone for a while and again disappeared.

"One of the lanterns in the lifeboat."

"Coming back," said Van Heldre hoarsely.

"With the crew, sir?" cried Leslie.

"Hah!" exclaimed Van Heldre slowly; "that we must see."

Another long time of suspense and horror. A dozen times over that boat's light seemed to have gone for ever, but only to reappear; and at last, in the darkness it was seen, after a few minutes' tremendous tossing, to become steady.

The lifeboat was in the harbour once again, and a ringing burst of cheers, that seemed smothered directly after by the roar of the storm, greeted the crew as they rowed up to the landing-place, utterly exhausted, but bringing with them two half-dead members of the brig's crew.

"All we could get to stir," said the sturdy coxswain, "and we could not get aboard."

"How many are there?"

"Seven, sir—in main-top. Half dead."

"You should have stayed and brought them off," cried Leslie frantically, for he did not realise the difficulties of the task the men had had to fulfil.

"Who goes next?" cried Van Heldre, as the half-drowned men were borne, under the direction of the doctor, to the nearest inn.

"No one can't go again, sir," said the old coxswain sternly. "It arn't to be done."

"A crew must go again," cried Van Heldre. "We cannot stand here and let them perish before our eyes. Here, my lads!" he roared. "Volunteers!"

"Mr. Leslie! My father," whispered Madelaine; but the young mine-owner was already on his way to where Van Heldre stood.

"Do you hear?" roared the latter. "Do as you would be done by. Volunteers!"

Not a man stirred, the peril was too great.

"It's no good, master," said the old coxswain; "they're gone, poor lads, by now."

"No," cried Leslie excitedly; "the light is there still."

"Ay," said the coxswain, "a lamp 'll burn some time longer than a man's life. Here, master, I'll go again, if you can get a crew."

"Volunteers!" shouted Van Heldre, but there was only a confused babble of voices, as women clung to their men and held back those who would have yielded.

"Are you men!" roared Leslie excitedly; and Madelaine felt her arm grasped tightly.

"I say, are you men, to stand there and see those poor fellows perish before your eyes!"

"It's throwing lives away," cried a shrill woman's voice.

"Ay, go yoursen," shouted a man angrily.

"I'm going," roared Leslie. "Only a landsman. Now then, is there never a sailor who will come?"

There was a panting, spasmodic cry at Madelaine's ear, one which she echoed, as Harry Vine stepped up to Leslie's side.

"Here's another landsman," he cried excitedly. "Now, Pradelle, come on!"

There was no response from his companion, who drew back.

"No, no," panted Madelaine. "Louy—help me—they must not go."

Her words were drowned in a tremendous cheer, for Van Heldre, without a word, had stepped into the life-boat, followed by the two young men.

Example is said to be better than precept.

It was so here, for, with a rush, twenty of the sturdy Hakemouth fishers made for the boat, and the crew was not only made up, but a dozen men begged Van Heldre and the two young men to come out and let others take their places.

"No," said Leslie through his set teeth; "not if I never see shore again, Henry Vine."

"Is that brag to Hector over me, or British pluck?" said Harry.

"Don't know, my lad. Are you going ashore?"

"Let's wait and see," muttered Harry, as he tied on the life-preserver handed to him.

"Harry, my boy!"

The young man looked up and saw his father on the harbour wall.

"Hallo! Father!" he said sadly.

"You are too young and weak. Let some strong man go."

"I can pull an oar as well as most of them, father," he shouted; and then to himself: "And if I don't get back—well—I suppose I'm not much good."

"Let him go," said Uncle Luke, as he held back his brother. "Hang the boy, he has stuff in him after all."

A busy scene of confusion for a few minutes, and then once more a cheer arose, as the life-boat, well manned, parted the waters of the harbour, and the lanthorns forward and astern shone with a dull glare as that first great wave was reached, up which the boat glided, and then plunged down and disappeared.

One long hour of intense agony, but not for those in the boat. The energy called forth, the tremendous struggle, the excitement to which every spirit was wrought, kept off agony or fear. It was like being in the supreme moments of a battle-charge, when in the wild whirl there is no room for dread, and a man's spirit carries him through to the end.

The agony was on shore, where women clung together no longer weeping, but straining their eyes seaward for the dancing lights which dimly crept up each billow, and then disappeared, as if never to appear again.

"Madeline!"

"Louise!"

All that was said as the two girls clasped each other and watched the dim lanthorns far at sea.

"Ah!"

Then a loud groan.

"I knowed it couldn't be long."

Then another deep murmur, whose strange

intensity had made it dominate the shrieks, roars, and thunder of the storm.

The light, which had been slowly waving up and down in the rigging of the brig, had disappeared, and it told to all the sad tale—that the mast had gone, and with it those who had been clinging in the top.

But the two dim lanthorns in the lifeboat went on and on, the thunder of the surf on the wreck guiding them. As the crew toiled away, the landmen sufficiently accustomed to the use of the oar could pretty well hold their own, till, in utter despair and hopelessness, after hovering hours about the place where the wreck should have been, the lifeboat's head was laid for the harbour-lights; and after a fierce battle to avoid being driven beyond, the gallant little crew reached the shelter given by the long low point, but several had almost to be lifted to the wharf.

A few jagged and torn timbers, and a couple of bodies cast up among the rocks, a couple of miles to the east, were all the traces of Van Heldre's handsome brig, which had gone to pieces in the darkness before the lifeboat, on its second journey, was half-way there.

CHAPTER XIX.—A BAD NIGHT'S WORK.

"Oh, yes, you're a very brave fellow, no doubt," said Pradelle. "Everybody says so. Perhaps if I could have handled an oar as well as you did I should have come too. But, look here, Harry Vine; all these fine words butter no parsnips. You are no better off than you were before, and you gave me your promise."

It was quite true: fine words buttered no parsnips. Aunt Marguerite had called him her gallant young hero; Louise had kissed him affectionately; his father had shaken hands very warmly; Uncle Luke had given him a nod, and Van Heldre had said a few kindly words, while there was always a smile for him among the fishermen who hung about the harbour. But that was all; he was still Van Heldre's clerk, and with a dislike to his position, which had become intensified since Madeline had grown cold, and her intimacy with Leslie had seemed to increase.

"Look here," said Pradelle; "it's time I was off."

"Why? What for?" said Harry, as they sat among the rocks.

"Because I feel as if I were being made a fool."

"Why, every one is as civil to you as can be. My father——"

"Oh, yes; the old man's right enough."



THE VOTIVE OFFERING.

A Normandy Picture.

BY W. J. HENNESSY.

A SNOW IDYLL.

By WILLIAM BLACK, AUTHOR OF "A PRINCESS OF THULE," "MADCAP VIOLET," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—AN AIDER AND ABETTOR.

SUNDAY morning came and brought him a message from Miss Anne: would Mr. Durham be so kind as to come along to her room for a few minutes—she wished to beg a favour from him? Mr. Durham obeyed the summons with the most joyful alacrity: the favour was already granted, no matter what it might be.

He found Miss Anne, as usual, propped up on the sofa; Miss Ennerby had risen from her book and gone to the window.

"Now, Mr. Durham," the quasi-invalid said, after morning greetings had been exchanged, "I know we take up far too much of your time—I am always reproaching myself with it—and then selfishly forgetting the very next minute. However, to-day is different; to-day you can't go either painting or fishing; and so I am going to ask you to do me a favour. Miss Ennerby hasn't been out of the house since she came up, and of course that's very bad for her, never to be out in the fresh air. I fancy she is afraid of this wild place, and daren't venture away from the inn by herself. Mr. Durham, would you be so kind as to take her out and show her something of the neighbourhood?"

"I shall be delighted," said he forthwith.

"Here, Bess," the young lady called. "Put on your things; and Mr. Durham will take you down to the bridge over the Mudal and show you the various roads, so that at any time you may go for a walk without losing yourself on the moor."

"But to leave you alone, Miss Anne——?" said 'Bess,' by way of mild protest.

"I want to be left alone," the young lady rejoined, peremptorily; and that settled the matter: Miss Ennerby departed to get her bonnet and ulster, while Sydney went to wait for her at the door of the inn.

At first, when these two set forth, 'Bess' seemed a little bit shy; and a kind of occult, demure amusement appeared to hover about her face, as if she were conscious that this good-looking and pleasant-tempered young man would much rather be walking with the mistress than with the maid. But Sydney paid no heed to such things; he was rejoiced to have an opportunity of a long and confidential chat with one who was so intimately acquainted with Miss Anne; for it need hardly be said that that was the topic they

simultaneously hit on, before they had left the inn-door a dozen yards behind them. And what did he not hear of Miss Anne's gentleness and kindness, her tolerance of other people's irascibility, her good humour in travelling, her thoughtfulness and consideration for those around her, her indomitable cheerfulness and courage? They walked away down to the Mudal—over the hard, crisp snow—on this brilliant sunlit morning—and still 'Bess' was talking of Miss Anne, who seemed to be to her much more of a friend than an employer; they came to the point at which the roads diverge to Betty-Hill, to Tongue, and to Durness, and still Miss Anne, and her sweet temper, and her generous disposition, and all her other wonderful qualities were being eulogised; as they turned to skirt the shores of Loch Naver, this faithful and loyal companion, admirer, and panegyrist was true to her self-imposed task. But here something wholly unexpected intervened. Sydney happened to glance up towards the north.

"Miss Ennerby," said he, "you'd better pull the hood of your ulster over your head: we shall be catching it presently."

The world seemed to darken around them. Then came a few whirling flakes; the wind rose and still rose; presently the snow came driving on in blinding gusts and squalls, until they could see no further than a few yards from where they were standing. They did not attempt to move; for it had sometimes been difficult to make out the road, on which there was not a single foot-track; they merely stood with their backs to the hurricane from the north, knowing that it would not be of long duration. And then, gradually, the landscape appeared to widen out; the heavens grew clearer; quite suddenly, through the still-flying flakes, they beheld a far hill-slope shining a golden-white against the pale azure sky; and then again the horizon extended still further and further and further until all the old familiar landmarks were visible—the rounded summit of Ben Loyal, the distant peaks and shoulders of Ben Hope and Ben Hea. The warm sunlight was abroad again; the air was sweet and keen; out there the wide waters of Loch Naver were shining a brilliant blue.

"I never knew that snow was black," she said.

"Turner knew it," said he. "Don't you

remember 'Hannibal crossing the Alps?' But when once the black snow-clouds have passed over, look how they change—look at them over there—where Ben Clebrig has got hold of them, and is twisting them about and mixing up sunlight with them—I wonder who except Turner would dare to paint *that*."

"But you showed Miss Hague a beautiful snow-piece the other afternoon," his companion said. "Wasn't that painted here?—I thought I recognised the mountains."

"Oh, yes," he made answer; but he never would have any talk about his own work; he immediately shifted the conversation by calling her attention to a heron that had just risen from the edge of the loch, his long legs still dangling in the air.

There was, however, one subject on which he was eager and anxious to approach Miss Ennerby; though a certain fear of betraying himself bade him refrain. Miss Anne wore no engagement-ring: what conclusion might be drawn from that? And at last, in a roundabout way, he managed to get the information he desired.

"I suppose," said he, in an off-hand kind of fashion, "that a girl so accomplished, and pretty, and amiable as Miss Hague is, must have had many admirers?"

"Plenty," said Miss Anne's friend, with a bit of a laugh.

The answer was not to his liking; but 'Bess' continued, with a smile in her clear grey eyes—

"There were two gentlemen on the steamer we came home in—they were friends, who had been away tiger-shooting in India, and they were coming home too—well, they both of them paid Miss Anne a good deal of attention; and at last it came to an open quarrel between them. I think it was something about sitting next her at dinner. At all events, they never spoke to each other after we left Port Said; and they parted at Plymouth without a word."

"Fools!" said he, abruptly.

"The second officer was about as bad as any of them," continued Miss Ennerby, complacently, and little thinking what deadly wounds she was dealing. "When he was on duty on the bridge, and when he saw her walking up and down the deck with anybody else, he used to glare at them until I wondered whether he wouldn't try to run us on to a rock somewhere and smash the vessel to bits. The night we had the concert and ball—coming along the Mediterranean—I had to get her to promise me that she

wouldn't dance with any one—not with any one of them: I thought there would be pistol-shooting on deck next morning before we were out of our cabins. I'm sure it was none of her fault. She did nothing to encourage them. But a pretty woman on board ship always makes mischief among the men."

"Oh, of course," said he, rather breathlessly, "of course she was not responsible—no doubt Miss Hague had some one else to think of—I suppose she is engaged——?"

"Oh, no, she is not," said Miss Ennerby, who knew well enough what had prompted this question.

"Oh, she is not engaged!" he repeated, quickly.

And then it was that 'Bess,' who was really a kind and sympathetic person, as well as a shrewd and sagacious young woman, and who had seen quite clearly how affairs were tending at the inn, proceeded to drop a few words of warning.

"No, she is not engaged; and she is not likely to be, until some great opportunity presents itself, that is, if her papa has his way. I suppose, Mr. Durham," she continued, venturing to glance at the young man, "if you had much talk with Mr. Hague when he was here, I dare say you noticed what a fondness he has for people who are well known—who are talked about—distinguished in any way; and of course he has a father's estimate of the value of his daughter; and I have no doubt he means Miss Anne, if she marries at all, to marry some very well-connected or prominent person. His other daughter married the Chief Justice of the Arawayan Islands; and although that means banishment, with not much of a salary thrown in, still she's Lady Hendrick. I suppose you've heard Mr. Hague talk about Sir Thomas?" she asked, with a demure smile.

"Yes, I have; though I was not aware of the relationship," said he; but, alas! his mind was running on other things—he was thinking of the noble or distinguished person for whom Miss Anne was destined, and wondering what were her own views on that matter.

Presently his companion said—

"I think we ought to turn now, Mr. Durham; we must be a long way from the inn. Don't you find the glare of the sunlight on the snow very bewildering? Sometimes, if I look long at it, it seems to me quite pink; and then, if I shut my eyes, my eyelids are of the most brilliant grass-green."

"Some of the shepherds about here are compelled to wear snow-spectacles," said he; but he was still thinking of the resplendent suitor who was coming along to carry off Miss Anne.

However, there was compensation for him, and a relief from these gloomy fancies, when he returned to the inn; for of course, when he had to deliver up his charge, he went with her into the room where Miss Hague was reading; and Miss Hague was so good as to ask him to be seated, while 'Bess' related her adventures of the morning. And then, as it chanced, there was a tap at the door; and here was Nelly bringing in the luncheon-things. This naturally was the signal for his departure; and yet it must have seemed hard to all three of them that he should be ordered out just after he had devoted the whole morning to taking Miss Hague's friend and companion for a long walk. As he rose to go, Miss Anne glanced quickly towards 'Bess'—who was discreetly blind and oblivious—and then towards the young man himself.

"Mr. Durham," said she, without further hesitation, "won't you stay and have lunch with us?"

"If I may," he said; and then, before he knew where he was, Nelly had whipped along and brought back additional knives and plates and forks, and behold! here he was established at the head of this small table, the master of the feast, as it were. And when he had carved for his two companions, little, indeed, was the care he bestowed upon himself. He could eat cold beef and pickles any day in the week when he was alone; this occasion was far too precious to be wasted on food and drink. Even that resplendent and overbearing suitor who was coming to carry off this precious prize was for the moment forgotten. There were these three, a familiar and gay and friendly little party, cut off from all the rest of the universe by the snow, shut in by themselves, with no one to interfere with them, or put cold restraint upon their mutual confidences. And Miss Anne was so kind as to bewail his lone and solitary condition, which, she said, was far worse than her own, especially since 'Bess' had arrived.

"Women are used to idle hours," said she, "and don't mind, if they have a book. But a man wants a definite occupation; and it must be so hard on you not to find anything suitable for your work——"

"I am going to have a definite occupation anyway to-morrow," said he. "Whatever

the weather is, I must try the loch for a salmon. You haven't had fish for dinner for three days."

"Who told you that?"

"Nelly."

"Nelly mustn't reveal state secrets."

"I suppose she knows I am thankful to hear the sound of a human voice up in this place," said he (which may or may not have been a hint). "Oh, but I'm not so very lonely now, I have secured a companion—a young collie—Gypsy, I call him—and as he is a strayed wanderer from somewhere or other, I have adopted him and taken possession of him. And Gyp is very grateful, I think. I have been watching and studying him ever since I came here; and anything more pathetic you can't imagine than the piteous efforts that dog made to get himself recognised as a legitimate dog. When a shepherd called at the inn and left his collies outside, Gyp would go up and make almost slavish appeals to be admitted of their company; and he generally won their friendship, for he is a kindly and affectionate beast; and then when the shepherd came out, away went Gyp at his heels, like the others, and very proud of the post. Of course, as soon as the shepherd discovered the interloper, there was a growl and the threat of a kick, and back came Gyp to the inn, downcast and sorrowful. Then again, when the mail-car was running, Gyp was all eagerness and business when it was setting out—pretending that he was part and parcel of the whole equipage—very excited he used to get, running about in front of the horses, and greeting every passenger by a wag of his tail; then, when the car left, away he would go after it, trotting busily through the snow, and looking up for a word of encouragement. He never got it, of course. He would go for half a mile or more; and, if no one spoke to him, he would gradually lag behind, and at last turn and come away home in the deepest sadness. A clever dog, too," continued the young man, who was all for talking and none for eating on this joyous occasion. "I've often seen him gather the fowls in the farmyard together, just as a sheep-dog gathers sheep; and when he had got them collected in a perfect circle—whether it was instinct or imitation, I don't know—he would look to the inn and wag his tail; as plainly as possible he was saying, 'Now just see this—could any collie get sheep together better than that?—and yet you won't employ me for anything.' I'm afraid if Mrs. Murray had caught him, though, he would have

'had a stone or a peat shied at him—for, of course, he kept the fowls from feeding."

Now if Gyp was in anyway indebted to his master for having adopted him he amply repaid the obligation this afternoon, for he was the means of getting Mr. Durham invited to five-o'clock tea. Luncheon over, these three people chatted and chatted (it seemed so snug and comfortable for them to be together in this remote little place, isolated from the rest of the country by these great breadths of snow) until some chance suggestion was made that the piteously-petitioning collie should be produced. And then, when Gyp had been brought along to the parlour, and much be-petted, that also helped to pass the time; until here was Nelly with the tea-things! Of course Sydney was asked to stay; and of course he stayed; he could have wished it to snow for ever, and that the Arts Club might know him no more.

But larger events were to follow. When dusk and the bringing in of the lamps drove him (for very shame's sake) from this beloved apartment, what must 'Bess' do but get up and say—

"Mr. Durham, do I understand from you that you occupy the public-room of the inn?"

"Yes," said he, "I do at present."

"Don't you think it would be more comfortable, seeing that we are wrecked on this desolate island, if we all dined together?" she asked. "Would you mind our invading your premises? Nelly and I could carry Miss Hague in—of course there's a sofa. Wouldn't it be more sensible?—if you didn't mind the intrusion."

Now this was distinctly wrong on the part of Miss Ennerby, if she was aware of Mr. Hague's intentions with regard to the future of his daughter, and if she perceived, as she must have perceived, how matters were tending between these two thus thrown together in this remote wilderness. But the young artist was very amiable and friendly; and besides, he was good-looking, which counts for something; and 'Bess' was a sympathetic kind of creature. As for Sydney Durham, it is to be imagined that he did not treat this proposed intrusion with any kind of resentment. On the contrary, he busied himself in the short interval with all kinds of contrivances to make the so-called public room as bright and cheerful as might be for the reception of Miss Anne. He had a mighty fire built up, regardless of the cost of peats; he had two lamps brought in; he had a small, low table placed by the side of the

sofa. Knowing the shyness of women-folk about ordering wine at an inn, he attended to that also—and he was safe at Inver-mudal. And then he awaited his guest.

No; it was most culpable of 'Bess'—if she had any regard for the designs of Mr. Hague—to have made that suggestion; for the young folk found this initial evening so delightful that thereafter the three of them invariably dined together, to say nothing of the mid-day luncheons and the chess-playing in the afternoon. What had become of the artist's ambition?—what of the salmon-slayer's keen desire? Well, everything was put down to those wild snow-storms that were whirling over Sutherlandshire just at this time; and meanwhile the two young people were getting to know each other—and each other's history, and education, and opinions, and hopes—as intimately as if they had together come on a voyage round the Cape.

CHAPTER VII.—THE CAPTURE OF A KING.

THE wild weather continued. Sometimes, for days together, the whole outer world would be invisible by reason of this universal white smoke, save for a few spectral arms of trees—faint, ghostly, unsubstantial things, half looming through the whirling maze of snow and sleet. The grouse that had paired in the previous month had packed again: occasionally, when the horizon widened out a little, a broad cloud of some two or three hundred of them could be seen whirring across the marshy swamp down by the Mudal. The red-deer had descended from the heights, driven by hunger to the shores of the loch. Once, by the aid of a glass, Miss Anne made out a hind and her calf that were quietly feeding, or trying to feed, within a dozen yards of the Betty-hill road. Sheep that had prematurely been sent up into the high regions had a sorrowful time of it; the twigs of the taller heather, protruding through the snow, was about all the grazing they could get. Spring it nominally was, but it looked more like mid-winter.

Not that it mattered very much to the three English strangers at the inn. Miss Anne was perforce a prisoner, and the other two were quite content to keep her company. Even when a cessation of the snow and a bright morning took Sydney Durham away sketching or salmon-fishing during the day, he was always back for afternoon tea with these two friends. Then he and Miss Anne played chess till dinner-time. Dinner they

had together in the public room; and a very merry and vivacious little party they formed. Thereafter Miss Ennerby generally retired into a book, leaving the two others to a long, rambling chat by the peat fire. Of what did they not talk during these snug and pleasant evenings—having the experiences of two lives to compare? And what an interest each took in the other's adventures; and how anxious they were to find out each other's opinion on even the most trivial subject! It seemed as if these after-dinner hours were never long enough for their confessions and confidences. "Can it be so late as that?" was the usual exclamation when Miss Anne rose to take her leave.

But of course the end of this halcyon period was approaching. One evening as they sate by the fire, like a youthful Darby and Joan ('Bess' was, as usual, plunged in her book), Miss Anne said to him, almost with a touch of sadness—

"It will be strange to look back on all this time. It seems to have been so interesting and pleasant and delightful, in spite of the rough weather. It is quite a new experience for me—living in a distant little inn, and surrounded by nothing but moorlands and hills."

"You mustn't think it is always like this in the spring here," said he, repeating a former warning. "The usual drawback of Sutherlandshire in the spring is the long-continued fine weather—that dries up all the rivers and lowers the lochs."

"I am afraid I shall have to leave," she said, "before I can see Sutherlandshire in beautiful weather."

"You leaving?" he exclaimed. "Why? When? Surely you cannot be so foolish as to think of such a thing! There's nothing you should give such an abundance of time to as a bad sprain, if you want a thorough recovery."

"Mr. Durham," she said, with a good-humoured smile, "you don't think I have remained here all this while merely on account of a sprain? You see that I can get about a little; Dr. Douglas told me last week that I could go south at any time, provided I took a little care."

"Why run any risk?" said he warmly. "What is the advantage?"

"Well, I am not called upon to make the experiment just at present," she continued. "The fact is, my father has still a fancy for trying the salmon-fishing, if only he could get those affairs in Lisbon satisfactorily settled. One day he writes telling me that

I may look forward to leaving almost at once, the next he says I am to remain, just in case he may be able to come here for a fortnight. Of course he knows that Bess is with me; and that it is of no consequence how long I have to stay. I am sure I am in no hurry to leave; I have found being shut up in the snow-storm delightful; but it is all owing to you, Mr. Durham, and your kindness."

He paid no heed to the pretty compliment: his startled thoughts were far away.

"I hope, Miss Anne," said he after a minute's silence, "that when I come to London you will let me call and see you sometimes."

She lowered her eyes quickly, and there was some embarrassment in her answer.

"We have no regular house in London," she said evasively. "Before we came here we were staying for some time with my uncle, down near Bristol."

"Yes, but you must be coming to London occasionally," he responded, "especially if your father is going to take a house there. And you will stay at a hotel, of course."

"Yes," she said, "that is how we have done hitherto. But papa was not quite satisfied with the last one; he talked of making a change. No doubt," she added, still with her eyes cast down, "you will see papa in London, and he will tell you where we are."

Long after Miss Anne had left that night, Sydney sat before the fire, pondering over the curious reserve with which she had met his proposal that he should come and see her in London. Did she wish the familiar and intimate friendship that had been, assiduously cultivated here in these wilds to revert to a mere distant acquaintance in the south? Nay, she must have known that he was cherishing other and far more daring hopes. Was this a hint to him that dreams that might be toyed with in these romantic solitudes must be excluded from the busy world to which they were both about to return? And then he recurred to Miss Ennerby's warnings as to Mr. Hague's idea of the future of his only unmarried daughter. Was Miss Anne cognisant of his plans?—did she give her assent to them?—was it only gentle consideration that caused her now to intimate to him that henceforth he must find any acquaintanceship between him and her something to be settled and defined by her father?

He did not sleep much that night; and when the morning broke fair and blue-skied,

with a new feeling of warmth in the air, that also seemed to confirm his fears. Here was the end of the snow-time approaching; and here the end of the happy days and weeks that he and she had spent together, isolated from all the rest of the world. After breakfast he went down to the loch. It was a clear, calm, voiceless day; the water so smooth that the broad reflections of the snow were broken only by the ripples caused by the boat and the oars—ripples that flashed a sudden blue across the shining white. But he was not thinking much of either painting or of fishing; he was thinking only of Miss Anne's going away, and of the abrupt conclusion of the simple little idyll of friendship—or more than friendship?—that had sung itself into existence in these still solitudes. How could he let her go without speaking?—without hinting to her of the tender aspirations he had formed? At one time, indeed, he had been vain enough to fancy that she herself might be looking forward to some such confession. At any rate, she could hardly rebuke him, or be offended by his untoward boldness; for surely it was nothing but the natural result of the marked encouragement (which might, alas! have only been prompted by kindness) that she had bestowed on him during all those happy hours and days.

At lunch-time he was still in the same perturbed frame of mind, notwithstanding that a beautiful, clean-run, silvery fish of fourteen pounds weight lay beside him on the snow. Was he to peril his chances by a premature avowal? Or, on the other hand, was he to let her slip away from him—to be lost in the crowd of London—to have their close companionship in the far north become a thing of memory only, and not a binding tie? Sometimes he thought he would confide in 'Bess,' and beg for her good offices of intermediation; and then again he would put that aside as a cowardly makeshift. The main thing before his eyes was that Mr. Hague, whose plans seemed to be of the most inchoate description, might at any moment suddenly summon Miss Anne away to the south; and this parting might be nothing more than a formal "Good-bye" at the door of the inn, whatever longing, or regret, or wistful hopes might be in their hearts.

That afternoon, as Sydney presented himself in Miss Anne's apartment, he seemed unusually grave and preoccupied, while she, on the other hand, was particularly merry, for she had just given 'Bess' a most merciless beating at draughts, and the defeated

player was pretending to be very much annoyed. Of course, when the tea-things had been removed, and the chessmen put on the board, Miss Anne adopted a more serious demeanour, for chess is not a thing to be trifled with; and these two had found themselves so well matched that the contest was keen. Sydney now paid Miss Anne's skill the compliment of playing his very best; even that did not always avail him.

But on this particular occasion Miss Anne's skill was hardly called into requisition; her opponent manœuvred so badly. At the outset, or near the outset, he made a wrong guess as to her aim, and therefore got more and more confused, until it seemed that destruction was marching down upon him, from which he could only save himself by the sacrifice of his queen. At this moment Miss Ennerby came over from the window-table at which she was sitting.

"May I borrow your ink-bottle, Miss Anne?" she said.

"Yes, dear, you will find it in my dressing-case upstairs," was the reply; and therewith 'Bess' left the room, quietly shutting the door behind her.

And at the same second a frantic thrill of anxiety shot through Sydney's heart: he was about to dare all: the opportunity might never return.

"Miss Anne," said he rather breathlessly, "you spoke last night of going away, and I spoke of the possibility of seeing you in London; of course—you knew—I meant more than that——"

There was something in the tone of his voice that startled her—she looked up in surprise—then instantly lowered her eyes again: her fingers tightened themselves on the pawn she was about to move.

"Of course, I meant more than that, far more, though I daren't say it then. We have seen a great deal of each other here, and got to know each other very well; and I have been bold enough to look forward to something more than even your friendship, delightful as that has been. And I could not let you go away south without saying a word to you—dear Anne, tell me that I haven't spoken too soon—tell me that you have already guessed——"

"Oh, Mr. Durham," said she, looking up with troubled eyes, and the fingers that held the pawn were all trembling. "I—I did guess—and I was afraid—and I wish you had not spoken to me. Yes, I was afraid; I thought after I went away, after we were separated, it would be better; you would

forget our being so long together and so much with each other. And I hope we shall always be friends—always—always.”

“Friends?” said he, almost in a tone of reproach. “And nothing more! Why?”

“I cannot tell you without—without confessing that I have been thinking of it,” said she, in great embarrassment, “and—and—before you spoke a word.”

“But I was sure you knew—I was sure you must know,” he said eagerly. “What has that to do with it? No, dear Anne; tell me why I may not look forward to your becoming my wife—some day—no matter how far off? I don’t care how long I wait for such a prize. Tell me what you fear may come in the way—is it your father?”

“I don’t know what he would say,” she said, rather sadly and hopelessly.

“Is that the only obstacle?” he asked, quickly.

She did not answer; her eyes were downcast.

“Dear,” said he, in tones of earnest entreaty, “we may not have another chance of speaking together. All I want you to say is this, that if your father can be brought to agree, you will not say no. That is all the promise I want—will you give it to me?”

There was no word; her eyes were still downcast.

“Ah, you do not care to say it—will you give me your hand then?” he pleaded.

The trembling fingers released their hold of the pawn, and she was just about timidly to extend her small white hand across the board, when, with a warning cough, the good considerate dragon, ‘Bess,’ opened the door. Miss Anne caught hold of one of the pieces, and made a wild move—she knew not what. Sydney pretended to be studying the game; but he was far too excited and muddled to understand anything about it. Miss Ennerby came up to the table.

“How are you getting on?” said she lightly. “I thought there was danger threatening you, Mr. Durham. But, good gracious, what’s that! Why, you haven’t got a king! Where’s your king gone to, Mr. Durham?”

Poor Miss Anne! Blushing furiously, she had to confess that she had inadvertently snatched away the king instead of the queen, and with nervous haste she proceeded to exchange the pieces; but as Miss Ennerby perceived that the now removed queen had been taken by a solitary pawn, that must have galloped right across the board for the

purpose, the astute young lady went off to her letter-writing without a word.

Mr. Sydney Durham was in a particularly gay and cheerful humour all that evening; and he kept regarding Miss Anne in a very kind and affectionate way, though the young lady never by any accident met his glance. ‘Bess’ was convinced in her own mind that something not unimportant had happened during the ten minutes in which she was assiduously searching for an ink-bottle that was staring her in the face; but she wisely concluded that it was not her business to speak until she was spoken to. She thought it highly probable she would learn quite enough before the night was out.

But as for Sydney, when the two young folks had retired and left him to his solitary reveries, the joy with which he had received Miss Anne’s mute assurance of her regard for him, was succeeded by a good deal of anxious questioning as to why his dear Anne should fear her father’s refusal. Was it the mere timidity of maidenhood; or had Miss Ennerby’s talking about Mr. Hague’s ambitious designs with regard to the future of his daughter been a sort of warning addressed to himself? It was clear that Mr. Hague had never heard of him or of his work, until the arrival of father and daughter at Invermudal; to the elderly gentleman this young artist was merely one of the light-hearted, light-pursed, amusing Bohemian fraternity, whose sketches he would look at some day with a view to the extension of a little friendly patronage. But to give his daughter to this unknown landscape-painter: what would Sir Thomas and Lady Hendrick say?

How sincerely that night did Sydney wish that the Royal Academicians had elected him an Associate! He had never talked slightly of the honour, as young painters are apt to do—until they receive it; on the other hand, he had never coveted it much, except as a compliment paid by one’s fellow-artists; but now, how he wished he could have put the magic letters “A.R.A.” before this ambitious papa as some kind of warranty of his position. How, otherwise, was Mr. Hague to be got to understand? Sydney could not very well sit down and write, “Dear Mr. Agnew, There’s a man whose daughter I am anxious to marry who knows nothing about me and may want to know. Would you mind telling him what the public think of my work, and what price they are willing to pay for my landscapes? Yours sincerely, Sydney Durham.” That could

hardly be expected to form part of the transactions between Mr. Agnew and himself.

CHAPTER VIII.—FINALE.

HELP came to him from another and quite unexpected quarter. The very next morning, as it chanced, Miss Anne received a letter from her papa. She opened it with some trepidation, she hardly knew why; but ere she had finished reading it she was as rose-red as the maiden in the ballad when "Glenogrie sate down." For this was what Mr. Hague had to say to his daughter:—

"MY DEAR ANNE,—I have at last got everything settled about those brats of Mrs. Birrels, and hope to leave on Monday night next, or perhaps Tuesday, reaching you the following evening. Perhaps I have not missed so much, after all, if the weather has been so severe as you say; and I am looking forward to getting a salmon or two as a reward for my trouble and worry on behalf of other people.

"Is Mr. Durham still at Inver-mudal? I sincerely trust he is, for I wish to know more of him—I very much wish to know more of him. How I came to hear something of him in the south was the result of a very odd coincidence. You may remember that I could not accept the invitation of the Fish-mongers' Company which arrived just as we were leaving Inver-mudal? Very well, when I first came back from Lisbon I found I should be in London, after all, on that very evening; and so I consulted our good friend Majoribanks, who eventually got me a renewal of the invitation, and accordingly I went. You may judge of my satisfaction when I found myself placed next —, R.A.; and, of course, when the great man and I had talked a little while, I ventured to tell him of my project of forming a collection of contemporary art. Naturally that was to him an interesting subject, and I need not tell you all the hints he gave me; what I am coming to is that I chanced to ask him if he had ever heard of Mr. Durham. You should have seen his surprise—indeed, I was heartily ashamed of my own ignorance. 'Heard of him?' (indeed, — has rather a crushing way with him). 'My good sir, Sydney Durham is one of the very first of living landscape-painters! Outside the Academy there's nobody to compete with him; and inside the Academy he'll be very soon.' Then he asked me if I was lucky enough to have any of Mr. Durham's work; and I had to confess that I had never even seen it, or thought of asking

to be allowed to see it. And by-and-by when I told him how I had met Mr. Durham in the Highlands he said enough to convince me that we had rather mistaken the young man's position—entirely mistaken it, in fact, for it seems he is quite a well-known figure in society, and has one of the handsomest of the houses that the artists all began building eight or ten years ago. Besides, he is of good family—a nephew of the Bishop of Wycheater, I am told. I could see for myself when at Inver-mudal that Mr. Durham was a very good-humoured person, and I sincerely trust that he was not offended by my rather too familiar and *cavalier* treatment of him, which arose from ignorance of his true position. If he is still there I hope you will pay him every attention in your power, so as to make amends. With a little tact you could let him understand that we quite know who he is; and it would come better from you if you would convey to him that both of us hope that an acquaintanceship begun in that distant little inn may not be broken off when he returns to town. Did he not say something about getting us tickets for the Private View? You must recall the subject, and say we shall be most pleased to go round the Academy with him; then I can ask him to dinner, and in the buying of those pictures I shall be entirely guided by his advice. It is just possible, of course, that, after I left, you saw but little of Mr. Durham; but since Miss Ennerby joined you I hope you did not fail to resume the acquaintance, and that you have shown him every courtesy and consideration."

"Have I?" said Miss Anne to herself, with burning cheeks, and yet with a kind of frightened laugh. "Well, I think I have—perhaps more than papa will care to hear about."

And very quickly she took this letter to her friend and companion, Miss Ennerby, and asked her to read it; for if 'Bess' had begun to suspect that Miss Anne was showing just a little too much favour to the young artist, was not this a kind of justification? Miss Ennerby read the letter through with a perfectly grave face. As she handed it back she would not take any notice of the tell-tale colour still lingering in the young lady's forehead. It was with perfectly demure eyes that she said:—

"Your papa will be quite pleased that you and Mr. Durham have continued friends."

But 'Bess' was a kindly and considerate creature; and that afternoon as the two young folk were as usual at their chess, she

was again called away. It was not an ink-bottle this time ; it was a book.

"Dear me," she exclaimed, "I wonder where I can have left that *Tinted Venus*—it must have been upstairs."

And upstairs she went.

"Do you know —, Mr. Durham?" said Miss Anne, naming the famous Academician whom her father had had the good fortune to meet.

"Oh, yes, very well," he made answer.

"Papa met him the other evening ; and he spoke a good deal about you," she continued.

"I hope he did not say anything against me," he remarked.

"Oh, no, quite the other way," said Miss Anne, pleasantly. "Very much the other way. I would read you what he said, but it might make you vain."

"Well, it would," he confessed, "for I value that man's opinion more than that of any other living painter—and that's the honest truth."

"Papa will be here next Tuesday or Wednesday," she said.

"Oh, indeed," said he, quickly looking up—for he wished to see how she herself regarded this intelligence ; but her eyes were intently fixed on the chess-board, however much or little she saw of the game.

"And—and he hopes to find you here, Mr. Durham—"

"They generally call me Sydney," he observed, just with a touch of reproach, "even mere acquaintances do."

"—and—he hopes that you and I have continued friends since he went away."

"Oh, I can assure him of that," the young man answered, with great cheerfulness : indeed something seemed to say to him that the tone of the letter received that morning was distinctly favourable to his hopes.

"And you are not to forget the engagement about the Private View," Miss Anne resumed, in humble obedience to instructions, "if you can get tickets. And he hopes you will come and dine with us, for he would like to have more advice from you about the buying of the pictures—we shall be at MacKellar's Hotel in Dover Street."

He looked at her scrutinizingly, and yet in a kindly fashion.

"Do you know, dear Anne," said he, "I somehow fancy that since you got that letter this morning you have less fear of what your father will say—isn't that so?"

"I—I don't know—Sydney," she answered, with downcast eyes (and the mention of his Christian name was the result of a tremendous, almost despairing, effort).

"My dearest—" But here there was a loud step outside ; and the door was opened by 'Bess,' ostentatiously bearing in her hand Mr. Anstey's little volume.

"It's your move," said Miss Anne, quickly, to her opponent.

"Oh, is it?" said he. "I don't think so. I was waiting for you"—and therewith he boldly shoved a piece somewhere, but which or whither he probably could not have told.

Now we have been assured that "the course of true love never did run smooth ;" but perhaps the young Lysander's reading and experience were equally limited ; at all events, in our own day instances have undoubtedly occurred ; and here was one. It is to be admitted that when Mr. Hague arrived at Laver-mudal, and was at the very earliest opportunity of private confidence informed by his daughter of what had occurred in his absence, he was considerably taken aback ; for his injunctions to Miss Anne to show every possible favour to the distinguished young artist had not at all contemplated this climax. But Mr. Hague was very fond of his daughter ; and she made some pretty, and shy, and blushing excuses ; and he came to the conclusion that, although he might have had other plans, and might have wished to be consulted earlier, the facts as they stood were not so very deplorable.

"You know, papa, Sydney wanted to speak to you first," Miss Anne continued, after her trembling confession—and when the papa heard her call the young man 'Sydney,' he grew to think that not much time had been wasted while he was away in Portugal—"but I could not let a moment go by without telling you."

"Well, it is all very sudden, Anne," he said, "and I don't know that I should altogether approve ; but of course, as you say, you have had unusual opportunities of studying each other's character and disposition ; and I must confess that everything I heard in London of Mr. Durham was to his credit."

"Dear papa," said Miss Anne, as she put her arms round his neck, and kissed him, and hid her blushing face in his breast. "You have made me so happy—and I was so afraid—"

"Besides," said he, disentangling himself from that embrace as a lover would hardly have done, "he has something to show for himself ; he has won a position ; he has an established reputation. He might have been a very honourable and praiseworthy young man ; but I confess, Anne, I should not have cared to see you marry a mere nobody."

Among other things,—told me that Mr. Durham's chief picture of last year had been bought by the Academy out of the Chantrey Bequest, and I went down specially to South Kensington to see it. A most remarkable work—a most striking work, I call it. I could almost accuse Mr. Durham of having deceived us in not revealing his true position, but that modesty in a young man is to be commended—for its rarity, in fact—"

"Papa," said Miss Anne, with a sudden doubt, "I hope he wasn't laughing at us for not knowing who he was?"

Mr. Hague looked rather uneasy at this suggestion; but directly he said—

"How could he, my dear? You must remember that you at least had heard of him as an artist: or you couldn't have asked him to give me counsel about the buying of pictures. Oh, no. But still, if we made a mistake in not wholly understanding his position, if we have offended his *amour propre*—"

"Oh, papa, Sydney is not like that!" Miss Anne exclaimed. "He is quite, quite different from that—he wouldn't think of such a thing—he is too good-humoured—and—and a little bit sarcastic—he couldn't be pretentious, if he tried—and you may be sure he never thought of being offended—please don't ever mention that to him!"

Mr. Hague took the advice of his daughter, who probably comprehended the situation much more clearly than himself; but none the less did he show himself very amiably disposed towards the young man during the brief interview that shortly took place. Of course he did his duty as a parent; he uttered wise remarks about the danger of precipitancy; he dwelt on the necessity of young people getting to know each other very thoroughly before adventuring on so serious a step as matrimony; and so forth; in all of which Mr. Sydney Durham—who was half-bewildered by the unexpected turn that things had taken—heartily agreed with him. And then the old gentleman, having done his part, and shaken hands with his future son-in-law, went away to his own room to change and get ready for dinner.

When he came down he glanced at the table, which had its ordinary cover on, and then he said—

"Ah, I suppose we dine in the other room, as we did before I left?"

"Yes, papa," said Miss Anne, "we have done that all the way through, ever since Bess came up."

"My dear!" said he, with astonished eyes. "My dear! Do you mean that Miss Ennerby and you have been dining every evening in Mr. Durham's room?"

"Papa, it is the public room!" Miss Anne exclaimed at once. "It is the public room of the inn. I assure you it is quite, quite correct! Sydney told me so. The Duke's agent came through here one morning by the mail, and he breakfasted in that room, so that proves it."

Perhaps Mr. Hague was not entirely convinced; but the matter was past praying for now; and indeed this little confession enabled him to understand better how very intimately those young people had become acquainted in his absence. The little dinner-party in the public room—in the public room, be it understood—was now increased to four; and the conversation was about art. What two of the persons present were really thinking about may have been a very different thing: indeed, there were little stolen glances which could have but little connection with this topic; nevertheless, Mr. Hague continued to propound his views with regard to the pictures he intended to purchase. And he further intimated his intention of commissioning Sir John Millais to paint Miss Anne's portrait; but whether this was to be a wedding-present from the papa-in-law elect he did not say, for Miss Ennerby was at the table, and was not supposed to know of the important events that had happened.

However, Miss Ennerby had not been quite blind to all that had been going on. This same evening Miss Anne summoned the faithful 'Bess' to her room; and thereupon the great secret was confided to her; and many were the congratulations and happy wishes bestowed upon the young lady in return.

"But, you know, dear," said 'Bess,' with a renewed embrace, "that I had a pretty good idea. Do you remember the afternoon that I came down-stairs while you were playing chess, and in passing I looked at the game to see how you were getting on? I noticed something then. I noticed that you had just taken Mr. Durham's king with your pawn."

"Oh, Bess, that was the first time he—he spoke to me—"

"Yes, I thought there was something of that kind," said 'Bess,' "for you know, dear, you don't ordinarily take your opponent's king with a pawn—not *ordinarily*."

VITA IN VULNERE.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF RENAN'S "VIE DE JÉSUS."

BY THE BISHOP OF DERRY.

IN the Indian dawn,
Many a long, voluminous fold,
Vicious blue and smooth light gold,
Thirty feet of essence of hell,
Glides a snake into the grass
From an old tree in the dell.
Hush! and, if thou wilt, behold
Tongue of fate and fang of fire,
Through the woodland and the lawn,
Loathlier than by poets drawn,
Yet possessing the strange spell
That somehow doth of beauty tell.
To the forest higher—higher,
Let the anaconda pass.
Front not thou that fell small eye,
Lest thou die.

In the season's fulness
Out this venomous volume came.
Fineness of serpentine flame,
Tints that glitteringly enthal,
Fit it with the rich surprises
Of the art rhetorical.
Lore it has and epigram,
Many a plausible *perhaps*,
Perfect hatred's perfect coolness,
Poetry sometimes, never dullness;
Doubt well hinted if at all
Light of God on earth doth fall;
Finite scales for infinite maps,
Lofty words for low surmises,
Mean—with beautiful disguises.
Faith! that venomous book pass by,
Lest thou die.

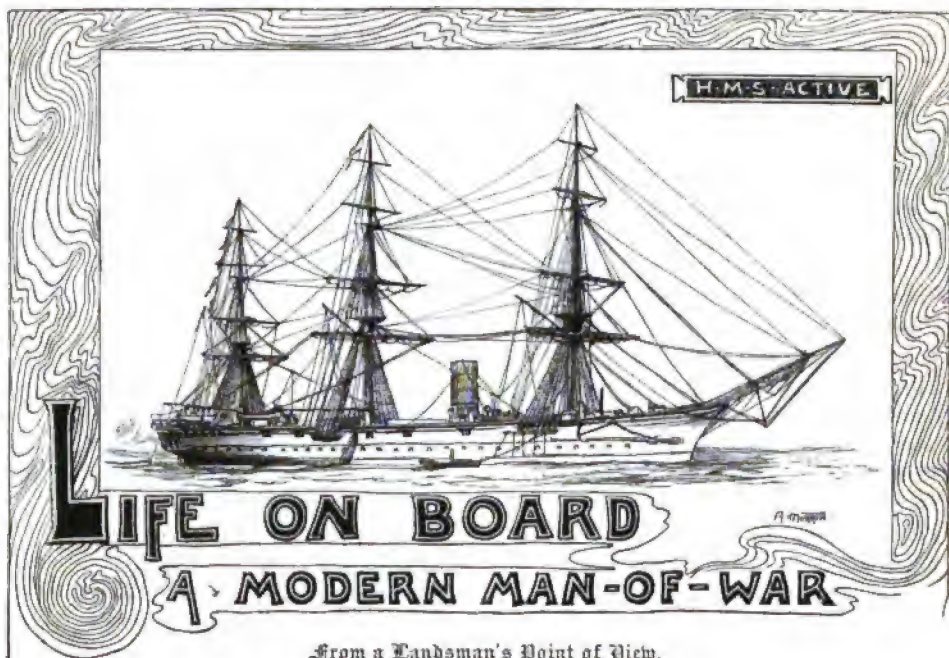
In the Indian morn
Out a gallant boy there went,
Archer of the orient.
Young, at the young day he laugh'd;
Shafts his quiver did contain,
And a death in every shaft.
In his hand his bow was bent,
The long worm raised long back, lit head—
Soon his mother came forlorn;
Dead with small stab as of thorn,

Lay he by the serpent dead,
With an arrow of his craft,
With a sharp and wingèd shaft,
Fasten'd in its evil brain.
What cared she? her hunter lay
Dead that day.*

In his gentle wrath,
One of Christ's young soldiers took
All the peril of that book,
Fear'd not for the fulgent skin,
Slew the serpent of its thought,
Triumph in his Lord did win.
Pen and page of poison! Look;
Strange and terrible surprise;
Something there has frozen breath,
Some fang stricken life's first faith,
Something childlike has pass'd out
With the little stab of doubt,
With the small black stab of death.
Films are o'er those dewy eyes,
Sweet credulity is not.
She who weeps for graces dead
Scarcely can be comforted.
By the book it overthrew,
Faith died too.

Make not weary threne;
Resurrection follows death.
A regenerated faith,
Like the first, but fairer much,
Rises where the first fell down,
Proof to any poison's touch.
Broader brow the Risen hath,
Understands the risk more wholly,
Faces peril fuller seen,
Wider, wiser, more serene,
With a hopeful melancholy.
Mourn not, therefore, overmuch
If the child-faith's death be such.
Sternier faith wins starrier crown.
Gone the boy's free thoughtless laughter,
Man's strong smile shall come thereafter.
For the first faith, fair and bold,
Be consoled!

* The writer read this incident in a volume of travels, whose title he has forgotten.



From a Landsman's Point of View.

By COMMODORE A. H. MARKHAM, R.N., C.B.

With Pictures by A. MORROW.

FIRST PAPER.

I WAS feeling somewhat moped and in want of a little relaxation after a more than usually long and arduous spell of office work in the City, and was debating in my own mind whether or not I should take a run down to the seaside for a couple of days, or perhaps enjoy a short holiday in the country, when I most unexpectedly met an old school-fellow whom I had not seen for years.

Our paths in life, since leaving our Alma Mater, had been vastly divergent; his had been an adventurous one, for he had embraced the sea as his profession, whilst I was still employed in the dingy office in which my business was conducted, and in which I had been installed as a junior clerk at about the same time that my friend had proudly donned the uniform of a midshipman in Her Majesty's Naval Service.

He was now, he informed me, a post-captain (I had a very indistinct idea as to the dignity and importance attached to the rank), and was on his way to Portsmouth to take command of a ship to which he had recently been gazetted.

Ascertaining in the course of conversation that I was meditating on the advisability of taking a brief holiday, he at once very kindly

suggested that I should run down to Portsmouth on the following day, and accompany him on a short cruise round to Portland, whither he was about to take his ship.

There was little hesitation on my part in accepting, with pleasure, the invitation so cordially and so unexpectedly extended to me. "There is nothing," I replied, "that will give me greater enjoyment; but," I continued, as the wind howled dismally through the narrow street in which we were standing, "are you sure it will be only a short trip?" for I am ashamed to confess that I was lamentably ignorant of the geography of my own country, and only had some vague idea that Portland was situated somewhere on the sea-coast, and was resorted to solely by gentlemen who had infringed the laws of the land!

"Oh, yes!" was the cheery reply of my friend, "the trip will only be for a few hours; besides," added he, with a smile, as he rightly translated my hesitation, "you need not be afraid, for with this wind, which seems inclined to last, it will be a smooth-water passage the whole way."

I did not quite comprehend all that this remark was intended to convey, but I had

the greatest faith in my old friend's nautical knowledge and experience, so made no further demur, and went home to make the necessary arrangements for the cruise.

I was especially glad for two reasons that I was able to avail myself of my friend's kind invitation.

In the first place I was so profoundly ignorant of all matters connected with the sea and ships in general, and of the Navy in particular, that I hailed with delight the opportunity that I thought would be afforded me of gaining a little information of a practical nature on nautical and naval affairs, sufficient, at any rate, to enable me to take part in the numerous discussions that we City men used to hold on the efficiency, or otherwise, of our first line of defence. And, secondly, I was delighted to have the chance of making a few sketches illustrative of life on board one of our great battle-ships, which I hoped, accompanied by a brief description from a landsman's point of view, would interest and perhaps amuse the readers of *Good Words*. These were my two principal reasons for accepting the invitation, for I must candidly confess that I am a very bad sailor, and very timid on the water, having never ventured to undertake a longer voyage than one from Chelsea to London Bridge in a Thames steamer!

It is hardly necessary for me to acknowledge that during the few succeeding hours prior to my departure from town the weather-cock on the church steeple in the neighbourhood of my chambers was an object of great solicitude, and one on which I cast many long and wistful glances; but the brazen bird seemed immovable, to my great satisfaction, for I was afraid that if its beak pointed in any other direction it might imply that we should be deprived of the enjoyment of what my friend was pleased to call "a smooth-water passage."

The captain had particularly impressed upon me the necessity of being punctual, so, in accordance with his directions, I found myself at half-past seven the next morning, after an

excessively tedious and uncomfortable railway journey, standing on Southsea Pier, exposed to the full force of a bitterly cold and, what appeared to me, unusually high wind.

It was certainly not a day that I should have selected for braving the perils and dangers of the deep even in a man-of-war, and I felt half inclined to slink away and take refuge in some hotel until after the hour named for the



Getting on board.

departure of my friend's ship. Whatever intention I might have had in this respect was, however, completely frustrated by the appearance of a youthful officer, who, having ascertained my identity, said he had been sent to take me off to the ship, and asked if I was ready. Seeing that flight was now out of the question, I put on a bold face, and, answering in the affirmative, accompanied my juvenile guide to the end of the pier, where I found a small steamboat bobbing about in a most alarming and lively fashion, waiting to take me off to Spithead, where two vessels were pointed out to me, one of which I was informed was my friend's ship—

"A goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with waves and whirlwind wrestle."

She seemed to be capable of doing so, but at the time I felt that I was the person who was wrestling with the waves, for our little boat was as buoyant as a cork, and during the passage off I was being continually thrown violently from one side to the other. She was apparently at one moment intent upon prying into the mysteries of the deep, diving her fore-end under the waves with such fervid energy that I was completely blinded and drenched by the showers of briny spray with which the boat was deluged; at the next moment she would roll over in such a frightful manner that I really thought, so far as I was capable of thinking, that our last hour had come, in spite of the assertions of the young officer in charge of the boat, who kept on assuring me on each occasion when the boat gave an unusual lurch that "it was all right; I need not be afraid." He had "often been off in much worse weather," and "so long as the seas did not extinguish the fires we should get off safely!" After all, this was but a poor consolation, and besides I did not feel quite so assured that the midddy's assertions were to be strictly relied on, and I was not sorry, after what appeared to me to be a perilous and an interminable long passage (although I believe we were not more than half an hour on the way) to find myself alongside my friend's ship with no further harm done than the demolition of a basket full of fresh eggs which were being conveyed off for the officers' mess, and the apparent destruction of a new hat that was being *carefully* carried on board for the first luff, or ship's officer high in rank!

Right glad was I that our voyage had been thus far safely accomplished, for I con-

sidered that having once reached the side of the ship all my troubles and all dangers were at an end; but, alas! I was reckoning without my host, as I soon discovered to my cost, for I speedily found that although it was comparatively easy to reach a man-of-war at anchor at Spithead in boisterous weather, it was by no means a matter of ease to gain access to her!

There was her dark black hull, and there were we alongside of it, pitching about in an excessively disagreeable manner, but I looked in vain for a staircase, or some bridge which I had a vague notion would, by some miraculous means known only to seafaring men, be put out for my accommodation. Neither was there, nor did I see any other contrivance for getting on board but a few cross pieces of wood nailed on the ship for convenience apparently of clambering up the side, the only aid being a twisted piece of rope, which I was subsequently told was called a "man-rope," because it was always attended to by boys!

I looked up despairingly, but instead of meeting with any sympathy or assistance, a gruff voice from some one in the ship bawled out—"Come, bear a hand and clear the boat; pass all that garbage up; the commander says she is to be at once got ready for hoisting in." There was no mistaking the meaning of these words, and also that I was included in the "garbage" referred to! I accordingly "bore a hand," or, at least, I endeavoured to do so, if an attempt to climb up the ship's side was a correct interpretation of the gruff man's voice. My descriptive powers, however, are not sufficient to convey any idea as to the exertions I was compelled to put forth in order to get on board, for it must not be forgotten that the boat I was in was plunging about in a most appalling manner. I will therefore invoke the aid of my pencil, and will endeavour to represent in the accompanying sketch what my first attempt to get on board an English man-of-war was like. It will, however, give my readers no idea as to the state of my feelings and nerves on that momentous occasion. I shudder even now when I think of all I went through.

Once on board, my troubles and my difficulties were soon forgotten in the cordial welcome I received from my friend the captain, who had come to the entrance-way to receive me. I was at once taken by him into a pleasantly, I might almost add luxuriously, furnished apartment, which he informed me was his "diggings," and sat down to a well-supplied breakfast table, to the

good things of which, however, I was scarcely able to do justice in consequence of the general tumultuous state of my mind, caused by all I had gone through since embarking at Southsea Pier!

The meal being ended, I was taken outside for the purpose of seeing the boat, in which I had so recently been a passenger, pulled into the ship.

On leaving the captain's apartments I was conducted up a stairway to what is called the poop, which is much higher than the deck of the ship, where I was told I should the more easily witness the work that was going to be performed. As I ascended and occupied this vantage ground, a tall gentlemanly officer, who I was told was the commander, or chief officer, gave some order in a quick sharp voice. Instantly I heard a shrill whistling, followed by a vociferous shouting, probably a repetition of the officer's orders, but in such harsh discordant tones as to be perfectly unintelligible to me. Indeed it was a matter of surprise and wonderment to me that such hideous sounds could emanate from human throats, and I could not help wondering why such uncouth and fearful noises should be considered necessary for the transmission of orders!

They were, however, apparently most efficacious, for no sooner had the bawling ceased than the deck of the ship became a scene of lively animation. Sailors appeared suddenly from all sorts of unexpected places, the majority making their appearance through what I should feel inclined to call trap-doors, or square holes in the floor, but these apertures, I afterwards found out, were called hatchways.

In the space of a few seconds some three or four hundred sailors, with a due proportion of officers, were assembled on deck. Suddenly a bugle sounded, when every man seemed, as it were, transfixed to stone, so rigid and still did they stand—even the men coming up the ladders seemed to come under the influence of the spell, and remained quiet and immovable. Not a voice, not a sound was to be heard, until the officer who was superintending gave some order, when the bugle sounded a short blast, the charm was dispelled, and the men rushed quickly but quietly to their allotted stations.

In the centre of the ship was a circular pedestal having a brass top, which I was told was a capstan, and around this was congregated a party of about a dozen sailors and ship-boys provided with drums and fifes, the number and size of the first-named instru-

ment seemed to be out of all proportion to the latter!

Another sharp decisive order is given by the officer commanding, when several men spring nimbly into the rigging, up which they clamber like a lot of monkeys, and large ropes and blocks are pulled up by means of smaller ropes, and attached to the mainyard of the ship, which is a great beam secured to the top of the mast and used for setting a sail. These blocks and ropes were the tackles by whose aid the boat was pulled in. Everything being ready, the order was given to "hoist away," when the drums and fifes struck up the lively air of *Nancy Lee*, the men ran away cheerily with the ropes, and the steamboat was pulled up and eventually safely deposited, in order to economise space, in another large boat that was resting on the deck.

Directly the boat was in its proper position, the band ceased playing, the tackles were unhooked, and the men came down the rigging. The whole operation did not occupy more than five minutes.

Directly this evolution was completed, the order was given to raise the anchor, and by nine o'clock, the time originally named, we were *en route* for Portland.

The mode of getting up the anchor, and the quaint and curious orders given in connection with the performance of this duty, strike a landsman as being somewhat whimsical; but then sailors are proverbially full of whimsicalities!

For instance, after the anchor had been dragged off the bottom to the bows of the vessel by some process imperceptible, and doubtless unintelligible to the uninitiated, but which seemed to be due in a great measure to the drum and fife band (in which the first-named instrument bore a preponderating part), and to a great rushing of sailors round the capstan, already alluded to, the order was given to "Cat the anchor," and this was done by pulling the anchor up to a large square piece of wood projecting from the bows of the ship called a "cathoad." The next operation was to "Fish the anchor," and this work is performed by attaching a large iron hook, called a "fish-hook" (why so-called I am at a loss to conceive, for nothing more unlike an ordinary fish-hook can be imagined!) to the anchor, and then pulling it bodily into the ship, where it is secured.

Immediately the operation of getting the anchor up was finished, a bugle call summoned the men to the customary morning

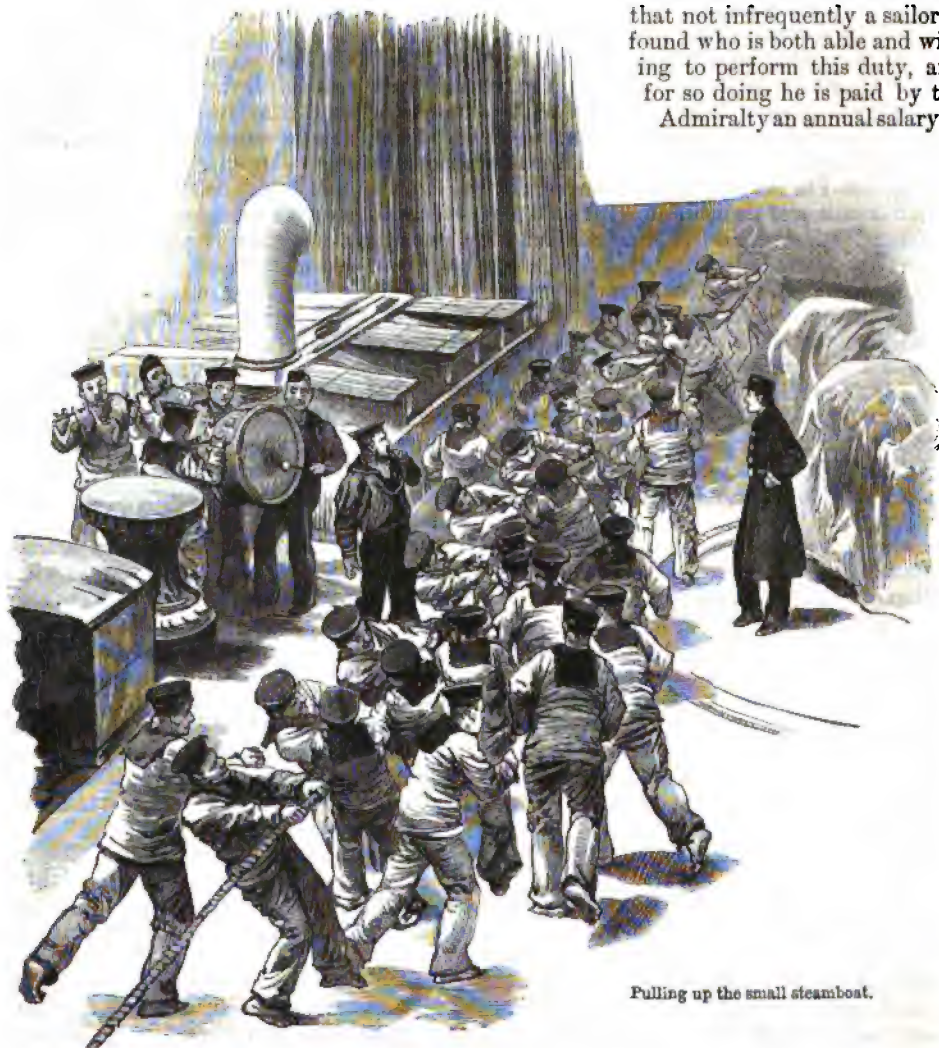
parade, when the sailors came running along the deck to assigned places where they were mustered by their officers and formed two deep into companies of about fifty men in each. What struck me most was the extreme rapidity with which everything is conducted on board a man-of-war; the sailors are not allowed to walk or to saunter to their several stations, but, like the famous Italian regiment of Bersaglieri, they must always move at the double.

After being mustered, the companies were closely inspected by the officers, who reported to the captain that the men for whom they were severally responsible were present. The order was then given to assemble for

prayers, when the men were all congregated on the most spacious part of the deck and there halted.

The next order was "Off caps," when everybody uncovered, and the chaplain read the morning prayers, the sailors repeating the responses in a very reverent and decorous manner. This is always part of the daily routine on a well-conducted man-of-war, and invariably follows the morning parade to which I have just alluded.

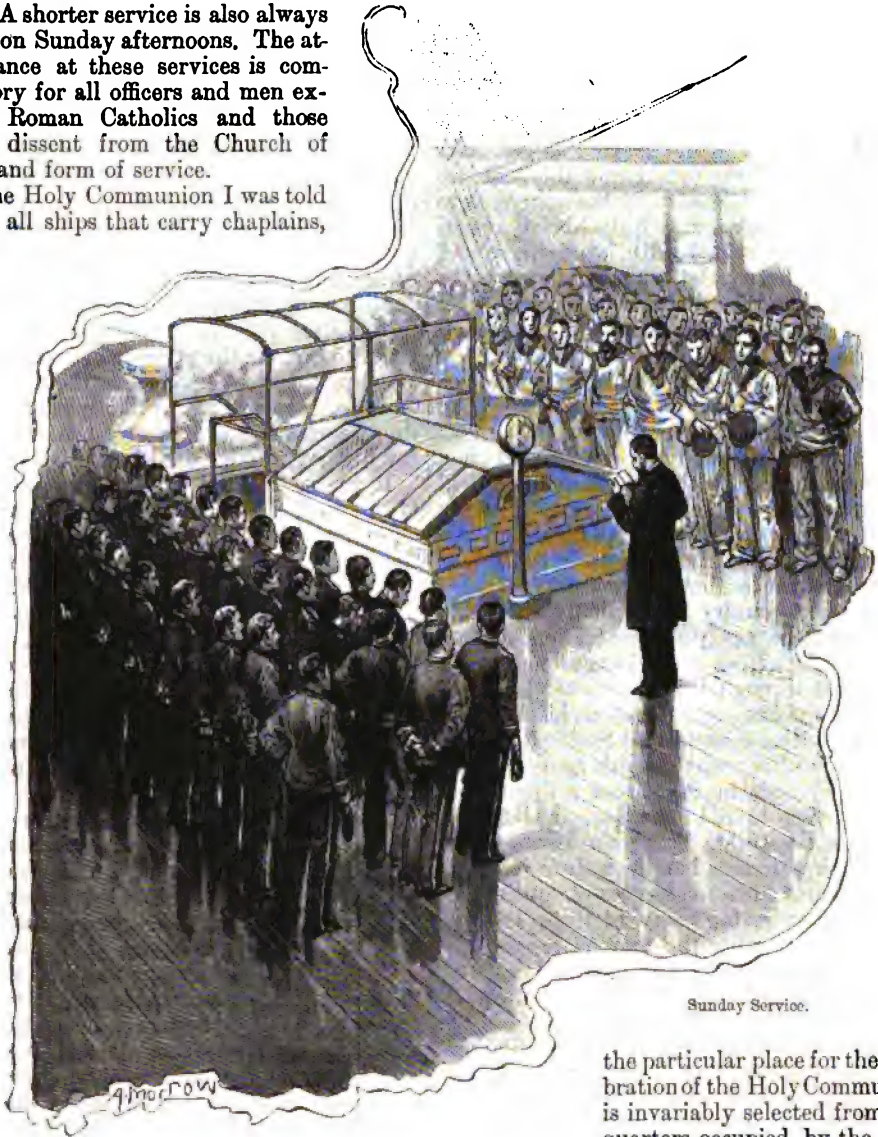
On Sundays Divine Service is performed in the forenoon on what is called the mess-deck (i.e. that portion of the ship in which the men live), when a regular service is held. This service is partly choral, one of the officers usually officiating at the harmonium. I was informed that not infrequently a sailor is found who is both able and willing to perform this duty, and for so doing he is paid by the Admiralty an annual salary of



Pulling up the small steamboat.

£5. A shorter service is also always held on Sunday afternoons. The attendance at these services is compulsory for all officers and men except Roman Catholics and those who dissent from the Church of England form of service.

The Holy Communion I was told is, in all ships that carry chaplains,



Sunday Service.

celebrated on the first Sunday in each month, but, my informant added, it is extremely difficult to prevail upon the men to attend, as their minds are imbued with some curious and indefinable notion that it is a service intended only for the officers, and in spite of the earnest exhortation and pleading of the chaplain they, except in a few isolated instances, abstain from presenting themselves. The impression that it is a service intended solely for the benefit of their superiors is so deeply rooted in their minds that it is almost impossible to eradicate it. In order to do so

the particular place for the celebration of the Holy Communion is invariably selected from the quarters occupied by the men, so as to try and convince them

by going into their own messes that the service is as much for their good as it is for the benefit of the officers. The number of communicants amongst the sailors of the Royal Navy who partake of the Holy Sacrament on board their own ships, I was informed by the chaplain, lamentably small. Let us earnestly pray that matters may speedily improve in this particular respect as in all others appertaining to the spiritual welfare of that gallant and noble profession on whose exertions, and on whose efficiency, the very existence of our country as a nation depends.

(To be concluded next month.)

AN AFGHAN DERVISH IN BUDAPEST.

By ARMINIUS VAMBERY.

"WANDER about in this world, for Allah's world is very large," says the Koran, and the meaning of this sentence is scrupulously followed by the adherents to the Djelali, Kadri, and Nakishbendi orders of Islam. Provided with a pilgrim's staff and a few scanty clothes, they start for the greatest journeys, unaware and careless of any danger which may beset their way, and, what is more remarkable, totally ignorant of the geo- and ethno-graphical conditions of the countries they have to pass through. The information required for the various routes and towns is gathered on the way, and such is the case also with the necessary linguistical acquirements. On entering a new country they pick up a few words, necessary for daily subsistence; these they add to in their gradual advance; but a few weeks' sojourn in another country will usually suffice to obliterate the newly-acquired idiom and to replace it by a fresh one. I knew one dervish who went through this process of change of languages six or eight times in his life, and what struck me most was his having forgotten his own mother tongue, which he used like a foreigner; and, in fact, from a linguistical point of view he did not belong at all to any nation in the world. Strange to say, it is not only their language but even their religious persuasion which undergoes frequently a radical change, for many of them lose, in their contact with the various creeds, the fanaticism or the very spring which actuated their life, and which had induced them to take the pilgrim-staff in their hands.

It is thus that we can explain the certainly striking fact of seeing Mohammedan dervishes, or holy men, as they are designated by the people, wandering about in Hungary and in the neighbouring countries, amidst a population of totally different religion, language, manners, and customs, where they mix up with peasants, artisans, and the lower classes of the country, and are not only tolerated, but even supported by alms and charities voluntarily and profusely given. During the twenty years that I have lived in Hungary, since my return from Central Asia, I have met with dervishes who came to visit the shrine of *Gul Baba*, i.e. the Father of Roses, on the right bank of the Danube, from the most distant countries of Asia. I found amongst them Kashgaris, Yarkendis, Cashmeeris,

Afghans, Hindustanis, Persians, and Arabs, who must have heard of me either in Hungary or in Bosnia, and amongst Mohammedans on the Lower Danube, where my name and former doings are pretty well known; and nothing is more amusing than to see how some of these ragged and dirty-looking adventurers approach me, how they extend towards me their naked, sun-burnt arms, in order to give me the embrace of brotherhood, and how they look upon me as their own kith and kin, disregarding my European features, dress, manners, and locality—I meant to say my library, where I used to receive them.

It would make a highly interesting picture, were I to write a paper on the character, adventures, and appearance of those strange but remarkable Asiatics who called upon me in Budapest whilst on their pilgrimage to the tomb of the *Father of Roses*. They really deserve such a picture, but I shall limit myself to one, who lately visited me, who may be called the most interesting, and this is Mohammed Naim, a native of Kandahar and a member of the Kaker tribe of the Afghan nations. He is a young man of twenty-five years, with fine masculine features, so frequently to be met with amongst the mountaineers beyond the Suleiman range, with an ebony-black, well-shaped beard and sparkling eyes, of a slender but well-proportioned stature, and what is most striking, of an outspoken, free bearing, approaching a little to the usual Afghan haughtiness, in marked contrast to the motley rags hanging down from his *djubbe* (overcoat) and from his *entari* (inner garment). In entering my room, and after bestowing upon me the orthodox salutation, he begins by giving what may be called a *résumé* of his travels, from which I learn that, as a *murid* (disciple) of the Kadri order, he left three years ago his native town for Bokhara, where he stayed a couple of weeks, and after returning *viâ* Herat, he made up his mind to visit India. "Beyond the Oxus," says Naim, "I had opportunity to see Russian unbelievers, now I wanted to know also their English fellow-believers, and I went beyond the Bolan to satisfy my curiosity." Questioned about the comparative value of both these Christian nations, the Afghan dervish wittingly remarked that it is only the black colour of their unbelief in which they do not differ from each

other; but as to their special characteristics he found the Russians, although rude in appearance, not so strong as the English, who are much wiser and consequently stronger. The Russians seemed to him like plucky young men of twenty-five, whilst the Sirkars in Hindustan betray the vigour and earnestness of a man in his fortieth year. As to the future destinies of his own nation, the dervish remarked to me, "The Afghans, a heap of silly, unruly, and uneducated children, can scarcely come into account, when viewed from the menacing attitude taken by Russia and by England; they must fall, and they will fall either to the one or to the other, and I would give preference to the latter for the simple reason, that one benefits more from the rod of a wise master than from the kiss of a foolish one."

Putting aside the political speculations of this religious vagabond, I found a particular interest in his account of the various reasons which brought him from the centre of the Mohammedan world to a purely Christian country. From Hindustan he went to Arabia, from there to Egypt, and across Syria and Asia Minor to Constantinople. From the last-named place he visited Bulgaria and Bosnia, where he first heard of Gul Baba, the saint whose tomb forms the extreme western point of the Moslem world; and in spite of the Christian character of the country, he decided at once to go there, to perform a pilgrimage; or, to use the proper expression, to satisfy his boundless craving for travel and for seeing foreign countries and societies. Judging the world and mankind from the point of view of his fanatic and cruel countrymen, the goodly Afghan was greatly surprised on seeing that the Christians, or those whom he learned to know as the very embodiment of unbelief and wickedness, far from doing him any harm, have richly bestowed upon him all kinds of charities, behaving towards him quite disinterestedly and helping him in every way, although he was unable to speak to them, excepting a few words horribly distorted through his foreign pronunciation. Strange to say, my Afghan guest was so unable to read and to write his own or any other Oriental language, that I had to write down for him in Hungarian single sentences for his daily intercourse with the people of the country. The paper scrap carrying the sentence, "Give me some bread, milk, water, etc.," he stuck in the fore part of his turban, whilst the other bearing the inscription, "Pray give me shelter for the night," he concealed in the posterior part of his head-

dress. Other bits of paper, lifeless interpreters in a foreign country, he concealed in various parts of his tattered garment, and provided with an introduction to the chiefs of villages and towns, the Afghan successfully visited the far outlying districts of Hungary and collected a good sum of money for travelling expenses, at all events far more than what charity in Mohammedan countries would have afforded.

When returning to Budapest, Mohammed Naim called upon me. He related to me the details of his extraordinary adventures, and the impression produced upon him through his dumb intercourse with the people is highly interesting. Judging men and things from an Afghan point of view, he was at a loss to find an explanation for the kind-heartedness shown to him by a nation so utterly different in religion, morals, and habits. He very naturally arrived at the conclusion, that his own countrymen, agitated by an incomprehensible mode of thinking, are rude, cruel, and certainly inferior to the Christians amongst whom he wandered. "My Afghan brethren," he said, "by caring too much for the salvation of men belonging to another creed, are certainly acting against the rules of hospitality and humanity, whilst the Christians, by caring little or nothing for religious differences, really fulfil towards their fellow creatures all the duties of humanity and of social intercourse." This he gladly admitted, but, on the other hand, he staunchly adhered to the superiority of his Mohammedan religion, and curious were the motives with which he tried to justify his opinion. "The Jews," he said, "accept and follow Moses as their prophet; the Christians, by accepting Moses and Jesus, have got two leaders, and are in advance of the Jews; whilst we Mohammedans, by accepting Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, have got three leaders, and are therefore ahead of all as regards spiritual guidance, for a people led by three leaders is certainly less exposed to lose its way, or to stumble on the path which leads to truth." In the course of his further conversation he nevertheless felt himself obliged to confess that the Christian world is in the ascendancy over the Moslem world, and that sooner or later all Islam will be subdued by the overwhelming power of the active, strong, and just men of Europe. The downfall of the Mohammedans he finds inevitable, but he ascribes it rather to the sinful negligence and religious laxity of his fellow-believers than to the higher level of the Christian religion.

In former times, when the Ottoman power extended along the whole right bank of the Danube, and when Belgrade was still the seat of a pasha, the number of these strange visitors to the tomb of Gul Baba was much greater, and the pilgrims moved more freely towards this most westerly mark of bygone Mohammedan power in Europe. But now, as the shadow of the crescent grows paler from day to day, and as the Turk stands only with one tip of his foot in Europe, the number of daring and animated dervishes is continually decreasing. The hag-

gard-looking wanderers, with floating unkempt hair and motley rags, become rarer and rarer.

When the little cupola crowning the hill above the Kaiserbad was falling in ruins, the municipality of Budapest did a good work by voting a sum for the necessary repair of that small building surmounted by the crescent, from which posterity will learn how far the outposts of Mohammedanism had reached, which had threatened the Christian world through centuries, and which had inflicted such heavy wounds on Hungary.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

By ANDREW LANG.

"JANE EYRE" was the first novel I ever read (at the critical age of eight did I read it), and "Villette" is the last I have attempted to read. The interval of time, filled with so much novel reading, is not more wide than the difference of enjoyment. To a child, the early part of "Jane Eyre" was almost as real as his own experience. The surly little girl who was "truly forbidding," who was bullied, who was sent to a school where she did not get enough to eat, was as living as the little boy who retired from all interruption into the secure library, and there enjoyed her society. One was indignant with her indignation and sympathetic with her hunger. How one trembled at her suggestion that Mr. Reed's ghost might return, with mistaken kindness, to his own "red room," and "rise before me in this chamber!" "Something passed behind her, all in white, and vanished;" "three loud raps on the chamber-door;" these explanations of *why* Jane screamed were plausible, only too plausible. Wherefore should not Mr. Reed take a fancy to visit a lonely student of eight, who was reading "Jane Eyre" where he should not, in alternate dips with an account of a Red Indian spectre, "The Boneless One"? These were, indeed, halcyon hours, which only became more delightful when Jane was sent to a school for girls—a school not very unlike the seminary where the boy, according to the waiter in "David Copperfield," was killed "with wopping." Then there were the pictures which Jane drew, "in water-colours." "Two thin hands, joined under the forehead, and supporting it, drew up before the lower features a sable veil; a brow quite bloodless, white as bone, and an

eye swollen and fixed." They do not paint such pictures any more.

When "a half-smothered voice shouted 'Help! help! help!' three times rapidly!" when there was "a demoniac laugh—low, suppressed, and deep;" when *something* came into Jane's room at night, Catherine Morland, in "Northanger Abbey," never enjoyed more delicious tremors. "Mr. Rochester," and "The Baroness, Ingram of Ingram Park," and the dismal St. John, were not at all so interesting. But "Jane Eyre" was a delightful child's book long ago, and may still be recommended to parents and guardians.

The happy times of true literary pleasure, when we skipped instead of criticising; when we did not give our opinion about books, because they would have been taken away, are far behind; and he who read "Jane Eyre" for enjoyment has just endeavoured to read "Villette" for business purposes. If "Villette" had come out before "Jane," would it have made Currer Bell the rage? would somebody very like her have been present at Mrs. Hobson Newcome's Omnium Gatherum? Surely not; surely "Villette" is not a work to be studied for mere entertainment. Or is it that our tastes have changed with the times, our tastes, which are still true to "Colonel Jack," and "Tom Jones," and "Nigel," and Athos, Porthos, and Aramis? Perhaps Miss Brontë was really the novelist of one novel, and, had she lived, would never have recaptured her first impulse, nor equalled her first success.

Opening her sister's novel, "The Tenant of Wildfield Hall," at a venture, one's eyes lighted on this passage:—

"I went down to dinner resolved to be cheerful and well conducted, and kept my resolution very creditably, considering how my head ached and how internally wretched I felt."

That is the keynote of too many pages in all the Brontë novels. The lady who writes has a headache, and feels internally wretched. She is "conducting herself very creditably, considering;" but her dark brow shows how limited is the life she looks out upon, and how a passionate heart eager for love and happiness beats itself against the wires of her little world. When society is better or worse than it is to-day, when governesses no longer exist, these tales will tell people what life looked like to governesses. In them we are always at the governess's point of view. A young lady who is a guest and not a guest, a servant and not a servant, poor and clever among the dull and rich, is watching them, despising them, detesting them, and taking her proud, envious notes of them and their ways. "Heaven was cruel when it made women," says one of George Eliot's people; society was savage when it made governesses. Inevitably miserable themselves, they are the source of misery to others. They see the existence that is not theirs; they hear the words that are not spoken for their ears; young, it is their duty to interfere with the diversions of youth, and to snub the high spirits of the school-room. If they mix with the grown-up people, it is under a protest which they silently make themselves; if they do not mix with them they live in an artificial solitude, alone while music and laughter and talk are echoing faintly not far away. No tact can make their position endurable, as a rule: no tact of their own nor of their employers; and they must feel, more intensely even than other women, a feverish desire for a justice which is not of this world.

This was the position of Charlotte Brontë. "No one but myself can tell how hard a governess's work is to me, for no one but myself is aware how utterly averse my whole mind and nature are for this employment." She did not care for children; she had the shy Yorkshire pride and "intensity," and, perhaps, a vehement appreciation of everything that is not in the fortune of a girl who is poor. The *Quarterly* reviewer was quite in the right about her temper; this good patriot, this admirer of the great Duke, had the spirit of rebellion in her—rebellion not only against social inequalities, but against the inequalities which can never be righted. Socialism cannot make plain

girls pretty, nor, perhaps, deprive pretty girls of their triumphs.

"Unjust! unjust!" said my reason, forced by the agonising stimulus into precocious though transitory power."

The cry of the child Jane Eyre, "Unjust! unjust!" is always shrilling through Miss Brontë's novels. "Villette" is a suppressed howl of indignation at the fact of other people "having good times" while Miss Lucy Snowe is "not in them." Other girls get the lovers with dimples in their chins, the florid, prosperous snobs like Dr. John, and Stephen Guest, and Lydgate, and the other favourites of the fair. Are men's admired women as bad as women's men? and is Beatrix Esmond, in a lady's eyes, what Dr. John, or Stephen Guest, is in a man's? Only Tiresias could answer. However it be, Miss Brontë's passion for justice overflowed into satire, as in the essay which Lucy Snowe wrote for the French professors:—

"Pious mentors!" thought I. 'Pure guides for youth! If "Human Justice" were what she ought to be, you two would scarce hold your present post, or enjoy your present credit.'

"An idea once seized, I fell to work. 'Human Justice' rushed before me in novel guise, a red, random beldame with arras akimbo. I saw her in her house, the den of confusion: servants called to her for orders or help which she did not give; beggars stood at her door waiting and starving-unnoticed; a swarm of children, sick and quarrelsome, crawled round her feet and yelled in her ears: appeals for notice, sympathy, cure, redress. The honest woman cared for none of these things. She had a warm seat of her own by the fire, she had her own solace in a short black pipe, and a bottle of Mrs. Sweeney's soothing syrup; she smoked and she sipped and she enjoyed her paradise, and whenever a cry of the suffering souls about her pierced her ears too keenly, my jolly dame seized the poker or the hearth-brush: if the offender was weak, wronged, and sickly, she effectually settled him: if he was strong, lively, and violent, she only menaced, then plunged her hand in her deep pouch, and flung a liberal shower of sugar-plums."

This is a fair example of her fierceness, which burns with an irregular, angry fire among her books, and finds a windy way into the world, through passionate, half-poetical prose. And this is why "Villette" is such a hard book to read. It has the bitterness of personal sarcasm. The picture of "that tadpole, Désirée Beck" (why tadpole; why not toad?) is like a vicious caricature of some real person. It is clever, but over-laboured; hatred has taken up the pen, and uses it like an instrument of torture. There is no geniality, no good-humoured humanity in the work. Miss Brontë blamed Mr. Thackeray for his toleration of Fielding, the wicked parent of Thomas Jones, and for knowing

that Lady Castlewood was "jealous of a boy and a milkmaid." But she herself is not tolerant of anybody, from the Church of Rome to the unlucky curate in "Shirley." "They have gone to their idolatrous messe," she says, and in her letters and her novel she has only an impatient hatred of that great Church, "the stately structure of eighteen centuries, the mighty and beautiful Roman Catholic faith, in whose bosom repose so many saints and sages." The words are Mr. Thackeray's, the friend of unregenerate Harry Fielding. Miss Brontë very greatly admired her contemporary, but his good-humour and his humour were not in her gift. She distrusts, she detests the Roman communion, even when it offers the hospitality of its confessional to her own feverish, frenzied, love-lorn, home-sick heroine, Lucy Snowe. We may compare the confession of the other heretic, Hilda, in "The Marble Faun," and prefer the kindness of Hawthorne.

Perhaps one thinks, or says, too much about Miss Brontë's narrowness and harshness. She had a noble nature and a courageous heart; she loved England well, and England's great hero. Her minor sins of literary temper may well be forgiven her, *quia multum amarit*. But now that people ask if her novels will endure, or if they will go where Lytton's, and James's (G. P. R.'s), and Trollope's are probably going, it may be remarked that their lack of geniality will perhaps be their bane. It is cruel to compare them with Miss Austen's. We never forget Mr. Collins, but it is not so easy to remember the names of those ill-treated young clerics in "Shirley." There goes no love to the making of them, no kindness, and consequently no humour. They have not that salt of immortality which, in Miss Austen, can never lose its savour while literature lives. Little Mr. Sweeting, Mr. Donne, and Mr. Malone—can many readers pass an examination in their traits? Can it be said that Charlotte Brontë has created characters, people who live? There is Jane Eyre, there is Monsieur Paul, in "Villette," there is the tadpole, Madame Beck, but she is reported rather than created. Mr. Rochester has become a kind of joke, thanks, perhaps, to Mr. Bret Harte. If Mr. Rochester is part of the "moral currency," Mr. Rawjester has decidedly "debased" him, as George Eliot put it. That novelist has been contrasted with Miss Brontë, but such comparisons are usually odious. Miss Austen one has only introduced by way of example of the permanent qualities which Miss Brontë lacked.

In style, too, Miss Austen remains admirable and perfect, whereas the proud, fierce rhetoric of Miss Brontë sometimes looks like rhetoric merely. Here is a specimen: is it good, is it middling? Perhaps we may say that it is dramatically correct, and exactly what Miss Lucy Snowe would have written.

"I waited my champion. Apollyon came trailing his Hell behind him. I think if Eternity held torment, its form would not be fiery rack, nor its nature despair. I think that on a certain day amongst those days which never dawned and will not set, an angel entered Hades—stood, shone, smiled, delivered a prophecy of conditional pardon, kindled a doubtful hope of bliss to come, not now, but at a day and hour unlooked for, revealed in his own glory and grandeur the height and compass of his promise: spoke thus—then towering, became a star, and vanished into his own Heaven. His legacy was suspense—a worse boon than despair.

"All that evening I waited, trusting in the dove-scent olive-leaf, yet in the midst of my trust, terribly fearing. My fear pressed heavy. Cold and peculiar, I knew it for the partner of a rarely-bellied presentiment. The first hours seemed long and slow; in spirit I clung to the flying skirts of the last. They passed like drift cloud—like the rack scudding before a storm.

"They passed. All the long hot summer day burned away like a Yule-log; the crimson of its close perished; I was left bent among the cool blue shades, over the pale and ashen gleams of its night."

Indeed it is ill work writing about style. There is room for so much difference of opinion. Mr. Birrell thinks Miss Brontë's style "glorious," "in its vigour and its strange power of forcing the reader's mind into the bidden mood." It may be so, but there is one little passage in Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights" which abides in the memory, one of her "brief, rich, melancholy sentences," after all the kicking, biting, gouging, and scratching of that violent romance are well forgotten. Whether highly elaborated, "impassioned" pieces of prose are good things, in novels or not, may perchance be doubted. They make the reader pause, they show him the author also pausing to be very clever indeed, to put his best foot foremost. When the rhetoric and the charm of words belong to one of the characters, as, in Lady Esmond's speech, "bringing your sheaves with you," then we are, indeed, stirred by the right sort of eloquence. Moreover we are then in the hands of a master. But if Mr. Swinburne does not like impassioned prose, as Mr. Birrell says he does not, perhaps we need not explain his taste by the ingeniously tradesmanlike theory of Charlotte Brontë's last biographer. "Mr. Swinburne, with his poetical wares to dispose of, is not quite a disinterested party!" Artists and critics are not all animated by motives

which the disdainful may petulantly ascribe to greengrocers.

It is not agreeable work to speak one's mind, as far as the mind is not friendly, about the work of this brave and unhappy woman of genius. Why should she have been tolerant, good-humoured, humorous: she who was always facing poverty, and disease, and the death, or even the shame, of her dearest? We do not ask gaiety from Ezekiel or Jeremiah. Now here was a modern prophetess, as it were, a fierce Yorkshire Deborah, with clear, forbidding, condemning eyes—here was a heart almost never out of pain. It is cruel and touching, the picture of Miss Brontë studying the reviews of her books, "in hopes of extracting precept and advice from which to profit." There is uncommonly little gold in all the sands of the reviews, even when the critic, like Mr. G. H. Lewes, has himself written what he takes for a romance. Miss Brontë cried when she heard the *Times's* thunder brooding and growling over "Shirley;" her friend who was with her "could not help becoming aware of tears stealing down the face and dropping on the lap." Who that wears a beard can go, after this, and review a woman's book? We had better leave them to the tender mercies of their sisters, and if they still cry, the tears will not be on our heads. The masculine author has another kind of temperament, and very soon regards the worst that critics can say with a bland indifference. Yet even regret for a lady who has been reviewed unpleasantly would have vexed Miss Brontë. She hated to have the question of what is due to her sex touched on by critics, and would rather have died, like Penthesilea, by the Peleian spear, than been pardoned in the *mêlée* by any critical Achilles.

Miss Brontë's novels are day-dreams and memories rather than stories. In "Jane Eyre" she is dealing with the eternal day-dream of the disinherited; the unfortunate guest at life's banquet. It is a vision that has many shapes: some see it in the form of a buried treasure to make them suddenly wealthy—this was the day-dream of Poe; or of a mine to be discovered, a company to be formed—thus it haunted Balzac. The lodging-house servant straight of foundlings dreams, and behold she is a young countess, changed at nurse, and kept out of her own. The poor author dreams of a "hit," and (in this novel) Miss Brontë dwelt in fantasy on the love and the adventures that might come to a clever governess, who was not beautiful.

The love and the adventures—these led her on in that path of story-telling where, perhaps, she might have done more and more fortunate work. "Jane Eyre" is her best story, and far the most secure of life, because it has plenty of good, old-fashioned, foolish, immortal romance. The shrieks, and cries, and nocturnal laughers, the wandering vampire of a mad woman, the shadow of a voice heard clamouring in lonely places, the forlorn child, the demon lover (for Mr. Rochester is a modern Euhemerised version of the demon lover)—these are all parts and parcels of the old romantic treasure, and they never weary us in the proper hands. Mr. Rochester is a mere child of dreams, of visions that sprang out of forty French novels, devoured at Haworth's in one winter! But "Shirley" is a day-dream far less successful. The heroine is Emily Brontë, as she might have been if the great god, Wunsch, who inspires day-dreamers, had given her wealth and health. One might as readily fancy the fortunes of a stormy sea-petrel in a parrot's gilded cage. "Shirley" cannot live with "Jane Eyre," and "Villette" appears to be a thing of memories rather than of dreams; of bitter memories, too, and of despairing resignations. If people do not read it, one can only say, like the cook in "Ravenshoe," that one "does not wonder at it."

Miss Brontë had few strings to her bow as a novelist. She had not, apparently, the delight in invention, in character, in life, which inspires a writer like Scott, and she never would have been a manufacturer of fiction. She only said what she had to say, and her vitality was so depressed by sorrow and thwarting circumstances, that she could not wander into fresh and happier fields of thought and experience. Perhaps if she had lived longer as a clergyman's wife, she might have become the prose Crabbe of English literature. It is only a guess; almost as probably, like other ladies happy mothers made, she might have ceased to write altogether.

About her poetry, it is not easy to speak, so much has her poetry been overshadowed by her prose. Mr. Birrell calls it "the poetry of commerce," but then this critic detects the commercial element, unless he be venturing some kind of joke, in the author of "Atalanta." To myself it appears that Miss Brontë often made verses as they ought to be made, that she had an accent of her own. These lines which follow have, unless one's ear is quite mistaken, the firm foot of Mr. Matthew Arnold's reflective poetry.

"God help me in my grievous need,
God help me in my inward pain;
Which cannot ask for pity's meed,
Which has no license to complain;

"Which must be borne; yet who can bear,
Hours long, days long, a constant weight—
The yoke of absolute despair,
A suffering wholly desolate?"

"Who can for ever crush the heart,
Restrain its throbbing, curb its life?
Dissemble truth with ceaseless art,
With outward calm mask inward strife?"

They are from "Frances," a piece which holds, in a few lines, much of her constant sentiment, of love given in vain, of longing, of lost illusions. Her poetry, as in "The



Sincerely yours
Charlotte

Teacher's Monologue," is commonly sincere: does she not speak for herself in "The Wood"?

"Yes, I was tired, but not at heart;
No; that beats full of sweet content,
For now I have my natural part,
Of action with adventure blent!"

Her natural part she never had, action and adventure called to her, and she could not rise and follow them. She could only dream

of them, as in "Jane Eyre," and then she ceased to dream.

"Strew with laurel the grave
Of the early-dying! Alas,
Early she goes on the path
To the silent country, and leaves
Half her laurels unwon,
Dying too soon! Yet green
Laurels she had, and a course
Short, but redoubled by fame." *

* Matthew Arnold.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

THERE is no suffering so severe as that which we perceive to be the outcome of our own mistaken decision. Suffering caused by our own sin is another matter, we feel in some measure that we deserve it. But to have decided hastily, or too hopefully, or while some false view of the case was presented to us, and then to find that the decision brings grievous pain and sorrow, this is cruelly hard.

It was this consciousness of his own mistake which preyed upon Frithiof's mind as he tossed through those long solitary hours. Had he only insisted on speaking to Blanche's uncle at Balholm, or on at once writing to her father, all might have been well—his father yet alive, the bankruptcy averted, Blanche his own. Over and over in his mind he revolved the things that might have happened but for that fatal hopefulness which had proved his ruin. He could not conceive now why he had not insisted on returning to England with Blanche. It seemed to him incredible that he had stayed in Norway merely to celebrate his twenty-first birthday, or that he had been persuaded not to return with the Morgans because Mr. Morgan would be out of town till October. His sanguine nature had betrayed him, just as his father had been betrayed by his too great hopefulness as to the Iceland expedition. Certainly it is true that sanguine people in particular have to buy their experience by bitter pain and loss.

By the Saturday morning he was almost himself again as far as physical strength was concerned, and his mind was healthy enough to turn resolutely away from these useless broodings over the past, and to ask with a certain amount of interest, "What is to be done next?" All is not lost when we are able to ask ourselves that question, the mere asking stimulates us to rise and be going, even though the direction we shall take be utterly undecided.

When Miss Charlotte came to inquire after her patient, she found to her surprise that he was up and dressed.

"What!" she exclaimed. "You are really well then?"

"Quite well, thank you," he replied, in

the rather cold tone of voice which had lately become habitual to him. "Have you a newspaper in the house that you would be so good as to lend me?"

"Certainly," said Miss Charlotte, her face lighting up as she hastened out of the room, returning in a minute with the special organ of the religious party to which she belonged. "I think this might interest you," she began timidly.

"I don't want to be interested," said Frithiof drily. "All I want is to look through the advertisements. A thousand thanks, but I see this paper is not quite what I need."

"Are you sure that you know what you really need?" she said earnestly, and with evident reference to a deeper subject.

Had she not been such a genuine little woman, he would have spoken the dry retort, "Madam, I need money," which trembled on his lips; but there was no suspicion of cant about her, and he in spite of his bitterness still retained much of his Norwegian courtesy.

"You see," he said, smiling a little, "if I do not find work I cannot pay my rent, so I must lose no time in getting some situation."

The word "rent" recalled her eldest sister to Miss Charlotte's mind, and she resolved to say no more just at present as to the other matters. She brought him one of the daily papers, and with a little sigh of disappointment removed the religious "weekly," leaving Frithiof to his depressing study of the column headed "Situations vacant."

Alas! how short it was compared to the one dedicated to "Situations wanted."

There was an editor-reporter needed, who must be a "first class all-round man;" but Frithiof could not feel that he was deserving of such epithets, and he could not even write shorthand. There was a "gentleman needed for the canvassing and publishing department of a weekly," but he must be possessed not only of energy but of experience. Agents were needed for steel pens, toilet soap and boys' clothes, but no novices need apply. Even the advertisement for billiard hands was qualified by the two crushing words, "experienced only."

"A correspondence clerk wanted," made him look hopefully at the lines which followed, but unluckily a knowledge of Portuguese was demanded as well as of French and German; while the corn merchant who would receive a gentleman's son in an office of good position was prudent enough to add the words, "No one need apply who is unable to pay substantial premium."

Out of the whole list there were only two situations for which he could even inquire, and he soon found that for each of these there were hundreds of applicants. At first his natural hopefulness reasserted itself, and each morning he would set out briskly resolving to leave no stone unturned, but when days and weeks had passed by in the monotonous search, his heart began to fail him; he used to start from the little back street in Vauxhall doggedly, dull despair eating at his heart, and a sickening, ever present consciousness that he was only an insignificant unit struggling to find standing room in a world where selfishness and money-grubbing reigned supreme.

Each week brought him of course letters from Norway, his uncle sent him letters of introduction to various London firms, but each letter brought him only fresh disappointment. As the consul had told him, the market was already overcrowded, and though very possibly he might have met with work in the previous summer when all was well with him, no one seemed inclined to befriend this son of a bankrupt, with his bitter tone and proud bearing; the impression he gave every one was that he was an Ishmaelite with his hand against every man, and it certainly did seem that at present every man's hand was against him.

People write so much about the dangers of success and prosperity, and the hardening effects of wealth, that they sometimes forget the other side of the picture. Failure is always supposed to make a man patient and humble and good; it rarely does so, unless to begin with his spirit has been awakened from sleep. The man whose faith has been a mere conventionality, or the man who like Frithiof has professed to believe in life, becomes inevitably bitter and hard when all things are against him. It is just then when a man is hard and bitter, just then when everything else has failed him, that the devil comes to the fore offering pleasures which in happier times would have had no attraction.

At first certain aspects of London life had startled Frithiof; but he speedily became

accustomed to them; if he thought of them at all it was with indifference rather than disgust. One day, however, he passed with seeming abruptness into a new state of mind. Sick with disappointment after the failure of a rather promising scheme suggested to him by one of the men to whom his uncle had written, he walked through the crowded streets too hopeless and wretched even to notice the direction he had taken, and with a miserable perception that his last good card was played, and that all hope of success was over. His future was an absolute blank, his present a keen distress, his past too bright in contrast to bear thinking of.

After all had he not been a fool to struggle so long against his fate? Clearly every one was against him. He would fight no longer; he would give up that notion—that high-flown, unpractical notion of paying off his father's debts. To gain an honest living was apparently impossible, the world afforded him no facilities for that, but it afforded him countless opportunities of leading another sort of life. Why should he not take what he could get? Life was miserable and worthless enough, but at least he might put an end to the hideous monotony of the search after work, at least he might plunge into a phase of life which would have at any rate the charm of novelty.

It was one of those autumn days when shadow and sun alternate quickly; a gleam of sunshine now flooded the street with brightness. It seemed to him that a gleam of light had also broken the dreariness of his life. Possibly it might be a fleeting pleasure, but why should he not seize upon it? His nature, however, was not one to be hurried thoughtlessly into vice. If he sinned he would do so deliberately. He looked the two lives fairly in the face now, and in his heart he knew which attracted him most. The discovery startled him. "The pleasing veil which serves to hide self from itself" was suddenly torn down, and he was seized with the sort of terror which we most of us have experienced.

"As that bright moment's unexpected glare
Shows us the best and worst of what we are."

"Why not? why not?" urged the tempter. And the vague shrinking seemed to grow less; nothing in heaven or earth seemed real to him; he felt that nothing mattered a straw. As well that way as any other. Why not?

It was the critical moment of his life; just as in old pictures one sees an angel and a devil struggling hard to turn the balance,

so now it seemed that his fate rested with the first influence he happened to come across.

Why should he not say, "Evil, be thou my good" once and for all, and have done with a fruitless struggle? That was the thought which seethed in his mind as he slowly made his way along the Strand, surely the least likely street in London where one might expect that the good angel would find a chance of turning the scale. The pushing crowd annoyed him; he paused for a minute, adding another unit to the little cluster of men which may always be seen before the window of a London picture-dealer. He stopped less to look at the pictures than for the sake of being still, and out of the hurrying tide. His eye wandered from landscape to landscape with very faint interest, until suddenly he caught sight of a familiar view, which stirred his heart strangely. It was a picture of the Romsdalshorn; he knew it in an instant, with its strange and beautiful outline, rising straight and sheer up into a wintry blue sky. A thousand recollections came thronging back upon him, all the details of a holiday month spent in that very neighbourhood, with his father and Sigrid and Swanhild. He tried to drag himself away, but he could not. Sigrid's face kept rising before him as if in protest against that "Why not?" which still claimed a hearing within him.

"If she were here," he thought to himself, "I might keep straight. But that's all over now, and I can't bear this life any longer. I have tried everything and have failed. And, after all, who cares? It's the way of the world. I shan't be worse than thousands of others."

Still the thought of Sigrid held him in check, the remembrance of her clear blue eyes seemed to force him to go deeper down beneath the surface of the sullen anger and disappointment which were goading him on to an evil life. Was it after all quite true? Had he really tried everything?

Two or three times during his wanderings he had thought of Roy Boniface, and had wondered whether he should seek him out again; but in his trouble he had shrunk from going to comparative strangers, and, as far as business went, it was scarcely likely that Roy could help him. Besides, of the rest of the family he knew nothing; for aught he knew the father might be a vulgar, purse-proud tradesman—the last sort of man to whom he could allow himself to be under any obligation.

Again came the horrible temptation, again that sort of terror of his own nature. He turned once more to the picture of the Romsdalshorn; it seemed to be the one thing which could witness to him of truth and beauty and a life above the level of the beasts.

Very slowly and gradually he began to see things as they really were; he saw that if he yielded to this temptation he could never again face Sigrid with a clear conscience. He saw, too, that his only safeguard lay in something which would take him out of himself. "I *will* get work," he said almost fiercely. "For Sigrid's sake I'll have one more try."

And then all at once the evil imaginings faded, and there rose up instead of them a picture of what might be in the future, of a home he might make for Sigrid and Swanhild here in London, where he now roamed about so wretchedly, of a life which should in every way be a contrast to his present misery. But he felt, as thousands have felt before him, that he was handicapped in the struggle by his loneliness, and perhaps it was this consciousness more than any expectation of finding work which made him swallow his pride and turn his steps towards Brixton.

CHAPTER XII.

By the time he reached Brixton it was quite dusk. Roy had never actually given him his address; but he made inquiries at a shop in the neighbourhood, was offered the loan of a directory, and having found what he needed was soon making his way up the well-swept carriage-drive which led to Rowan Tree House. He was tired with the walk and with his lonely day of wasted work and disappointment. When he saw the outlines of the big substantial house looming out of the twilight he began to wish that he had never come, for he thought to himself that it would be within just such another house as the Morgan's, with its hateful air of money, like the house of Miss Kilmansegg in the poem—

"Gold, and gold, and everywhere gold."

To his surprise the door was suddenly flung open as he approached, and a little boy in a velvet tunic came dancing out on to the steps to meet him.

"Roy! Roy!" shouted the little fellow merrily, "I've come to meet you!" Then speedily discovering his mistake he darted back into the doorway, hiding his face in Cecil's skirt.

She stood there with a little curly-headed

child in her arms, and her soft grey eyes and the deep blue baby eyes looked searching out into the semi-darkness. Frithiof thought the little group looked like a picture of the Holy Family. Somehow he no longer dreaded the inside of the house. For the first time for weeks he felt the sort of rest which is akin to happiness as Cecil recognised him, and came forward with a pretty eagerness of manner to greet him, too much astonished at his sudden appearance for any thought of shyness to intervene.

"We thought you must have gone back to Norway," she exclaimed. "I am so glad you have come to see us. The children thought it was Roy who opened the gate. He will be home directly. He will be so glad to see you."

"I should have called before," said Frithiof, "but my days have been very full, and then, too, I was not quite sure of your address."

He followed her into the brightly-lighted hall, and with a sort of satisfaction shut out the damp November twilight.

"We have so often spoken of you and your sisters," said Cecil, "but when Roy called at the Arundel and found that you had left without giving any address, we thought you must have gone back to Bergen."

"Did he call on me again there?" said Frithiof. "I remember now he promised that he would come, I ought to have thought of it; but somehow all was confusion that night, and afterwards I was too ill."

"It must have been terrible for you all alone among strangers in a foreign country," said Cecil, the ready tears starting to her eyes. "Come in and see my mother, she has often heard how good you all were to us in Norway."

She opened a door on the left of the entrance-hall and took him into one of the prettiest rooms he had ever seen: the soft crimson carpet, the inlaid rosewood furniture, the book-shelves with their rows of well-bound books, all seemed to belong to each other, and a delightfully home-like feeling came over him as he sat by the fire, answering Mrs. Boniface's friendly inquiries; he could almost have fancied himself once more in his father's study at Bergen—the room where so many of their long winter evenings had been passed.

They sat there talking for a good half-hour before Roy and his father returned, but to Frithiof the time seemed short enough. He scarcely knew what it was that had such

a charm for him; their talk was not particularly brilliant, and yet it somehow interested him.

Mrs. Boniface was one of those very natural, homely people whose commonplace remarks have a sort of flavour of their own, and Cecil had something of the same gift. She never tried to make an impression, but went on her way so quietly, that it was often not until she was gone that people realised what she had been to them. Perhaps what really chased away Frithiof's gloom, and banished the look of the Ishmaelite from his face, was the perception that these people really cared for him, that their kindness was no laboured formality but a genuine thing. Tossed about for so long among hard-headed money-makers, forced every day to confront glaring contrasts of poverty and wealth, familiarised with the sight of every kind of evil, it was this sort of thing that he needed.

And surely it is strange that in these days when people are willing to devote so much time and trouble to good works, so few are willing to make their own homes the havens of refuge they might be. A home is apt to become either a mere place of general entertainment, or else a selfishly guarded spot where we may take our ease without a thought of those who are alone in the world. Many will ask a man in Frithiof's position to an at home or a dance, but very few care to take such an one into their real home and make him one of themselves. They will talk sadly about the temptations of town life, but they will not in this matter stir an inch to counteract them.

Mrs. Boniface's natural hospitality and goodness of heart fitted her admirably for this particular form of kindness; moreover, she knew that her daughter would prove a help and not a hindrance, for she could in all things trust Cecil, who was the sort of girl who can be friends with men without flirting with them. At last the front door opened and footsteps sounded in the hall, little Lance ran out to greet Mr. Boniface and Roy, and Frithiof felt a sudden shame as he remembered the purse-proud tradesman that foolish prejudice had conjured up in his brain—a being wholly unlike the kindly, pleasant-looking man who now shook hands with him, seeming in a moment to know who he was and all about him.

"And so you have been in London all this time!" exclaimed Roy. "Whereabouts are you staying?"

"Close to Vauxhall station," replied Frithiof. "Two or three times I thought of

looking you up, but there was always so much to do."

"You have found work here, then?"

"No, indeed; I wish I had. It seems to me one may starve in this place before finding anything to do."

"Gwen wishes to say good night to you, Herr Falck," said Cecil, leading the little girl up to him; and the bitter look died out of Frithiof's face for a minute as he stooped to kiss the baby mouth that was temptingly offered to him.

"It will be hard if in all London we cannot find you something," said Mr. Boniface.

"What sort of work do you want?"

"I would do anything," said Frithiof. "Sweep a crossing if necessary."

They all laughed.

"Many people say that vaguely," said Mr. Boniface. "But when one comes to practical details they draw back. The mud and the broom look all very well in the distance, you see." Then as a bell was rung in the hall—"Let us have tea first, and afterwards, if you will come into my study we will talk the matter over. We are old-fashioned people in this house and keep to the old custom of tea and supper. I don't know how you manage such things in Norway, but to my mind it seems that the middle of the day is the time for the square meal, as they say in America."

If the meal that awaited them in the dining-room was not "square," it was, at any rate, very tempting; from the fine damask tablecloth to the silver gipsy kettle—from the delicately arranged chrysanthemums to the Crown Derby cups and saucers—all bespoke good taste and the personal supervision of one who really cared for beauty and order. The very food looked unlike ordinary food, the horse-shoes of fancy bread, the butter swan in its parsley bordered lake, the honeycomb, the cakes hot and cold, and the beautiful bunches of grapes from the greenhouse, all seemed to have a sort of character of their own. For the first time for weeks Frithiof felt hungry. No more was said of the unappetising subject of the dearth of work, nor did they speak much of their Norwegian recollections, because they knew it would be a sore subject with him just now.

"By the way, Cecil," remarked Mr. Boniface, when presently a pause came in the general talk, "I saw one of your heroes this morning. Do you go in for hero worship in Norway, Herr Falck? My daughter here is a pupil after Carlyle's own heart."

"We at any rate read Carlyle," said Frithiof.

"But who can it have been!" exclaimed Cecil. "Not Signor Donati?"

"The very same," said Mr. Boniface.

"But I thought he was singing at Paris?"

"So he is; he only ran over for a day or two on business, and he happened to look in this morning with Sardoni, who came to arrange about a song of his which we are going to publish."

"Sardoni seems to me the last sort of man one would expect to write songs," said Roy.

"But in spite of it he has written a very taking one," said Mr. Boniface, "and I am much mistaken if it does not make a great hit. If so his fortune is made, for you see he can write tenor songs for himself and contralto songs for his wife, and they'll get double royalties that way."

"But about Signor Donati, father, what did he say? What is he like?"

"Well, he is so unassuming and quiet that you would never think it possible he's the man every one is raving about. And, except for that, he's really very much like other people, talked business very sensibly, and seemed as much interested about this song of Sardoni's as if there had never been anything out of the way in his own life at all. I took to him very much."

"Can't you get him to sing next summer?"

"I tried, but it is out of the question. He has signed an agreement only to sing for Carrington. But he has promised me to sing at one of our concerts the year after next."

"Fancy having to make one's arrangements so long beforehand!" exclaimed Cecil. "You must certainly hear him, Herr Falck, when you have a chance; they say he is the finest baritone in Europe."

"He made us all laugh this morning," said Mr. Boniface. "I forget now what started it, something in the words of the song I fancy, but he began to tell us how yesterday he had been down at some country place with a friend of his, and as they were walking through the grounds they met a most comical old fellow in a tall hat."

"'Hullo!' exclaimed his friend, 'here's old Sykes the mole-catcher, and I do declare he's got another beaver! Where on earth does he get them?'"

"'In England,' said Donati to his friend, 'it would hardly do to inquire after his hatter, I suppose.'"

"At which the other laughed of course, and

they agreed together that just for a joke they would find out. So they began to talk to the old man, and presently the friend remarked—

"I say, Sykes, my good fellow, I wish you'd tell me how you manage to get such a succession of hats. Why, you are rigged out quite fresh since I saw you on Monday."

"The old molecatcher gave a knowing wink, and after a little humming and hawing he said,

"Well, sir, yer see I changed clothes yesterday with a gentleman in the middle of a field."

"Changed clothes with a gentleman!" they exclaimed. "What do you mean?"

"And the mole-catcher began to laugh outright, and leading them to a gap in the hedge, pointed away into the distance.

"There he be, sir; there he be," he said, laughing till he almost choked. "It be naught but a scarecrow; but the scarecrows they've kep' me in clothes for many a year."

Frithiof broke out into a ringing boyish laugh; it was the first time he had laughed for weeks. Cecil guessed as much, and blessed Signor Donati for having been the cause; but, as she remembered what the young Norwegian had been only a few months before, she could not help feeling sad—could not help wondering that sorrow should have changed him so terribly. Had Blanche Morgan been faithful to him, she wondered? Or had his change of fortune put an end to everything between them? In any case he must greatly resent the way in which his father had been treated by the English firm, and that alone must make matters very difficult for the two lovers.

Musing over it all she became silent and abstracted, and on returning to the drawing-room took up a newspaper, glancing aimlessly down the columns, and wondering what her father and Roy would advise Frithiof to do, and how the discussion in the study was prospering.

All at once her heart began to beat wildly, for she had caught sight of three lines which threw a startling light on Frithiof's changed manner, three lines which also revealed to her the innermost recesses of her own heart.

"The marriage arranged between Lord Romiaux and Miss Blanche Morgan, only daughter of Austin Morgan, Esq., will take place on the 30th instant, at Christ Church, Lancaster Gate."

She was half frightened at the sudden rage which took possession of her—at the bitterness of the indignation which burned

in her heart. What right had Blanche Morgan to play with men? to degrade love to a mere pastime? to make the most sacred thing in the world the sport of a summer holiday? to ruin men's lives for her own amusement? to lure on a mere boy and flatter and deceive him; then quietly to throw him over?

"And how about yourself?" said a voice in her heart. "Are you quite free from what you blame in Blanche Morgan? Will you not be tempted to hope that he may like you? Will you not try to please him? Will it not be a pleasure to you if he cares for your singing?"

"All that is quite true," she admitted. "I do care to please him; I can't help it; but oh God! let me die rather than do him harm!"

Her quiet life with the vague feeling of something wanting in it had indeed been changed by the Norwegian holiday. Now, for the first time, she realised that her uneventful girlhood was over; she had become a woman, and womanlike, she bravely accepted the pain which love had brought into her life, and looked sadly, perhaps, yet unshrinkingly into the future, where it was little likely that anything but grief and anxiety awaited her. For she loved a man who was absolutely indifferent to her, and her love had given her clear insight. She saw that he was a man whose faith in love, both human and divine, had been crushed out of him by a great wrong; a man whose whole nature had deteriorated and would continue to deteriorate, unless some unforeseen thing should interfere to change his whole view of life.

But the scalding tears which rose to her eyes were not tears of self-pity; they were tears of sorrow for Frithiof, of disappointment about his ruined life, of a sad humility as she thought to herself, "Oh! if only I were fit to help him! If only!"

Meanwhile in the study a very matter-of-fact conversation was being held.

"What I want to find out," said Mr. Boniface, "is whether you are really in earnest in what you say about work. There are thousands of young men saying exactly the same thing, but when you take the trouble to go into their complaint you find that the real cry is not 'Give me work by which I can get an honest living!' but 'Give me work that does not clash with my tastes—work that I thoroughly like.'"

"I have no particular tastes," said Frithiof coldly. "The sort of work is quite indif-

ferent to me as long as it will bring in money."

"You are really willing to begin at the bottom of the ladder and work your way up? You are not above taking a step which would place you much lower in the social scale."

"A fellow living on the charity of a relation who grudges every farthing, as taking something away from his own children, is not likely to trouble much about the social scale," said Frithiof bitterly.

"Very well. Then I will, at any rate, suggest my plan for you, and see what you think of it. If you care to accept it until something better turns up, I can give you a situation in my house of business. Your salary to begin with would be but small; the man who leaves me next Monday has had only five-and-twenty shillings a week, and I could not without unfair favouritism give you more at first. But every man has a chance of rising, and I am quite sure that you, with your advantages, would do so. You understand that, as I said, it is mere work that I am offering you. Doubtless standing behind a counter will not be very congenial work to one brought up as you have been; but you might do infinitely worse, and I can at least promise you that you will be treated as a man—not, as in many places you would find it, as a mere 'hand.'"

Possibly, when he first arrived in London, Frithiof might have scouted such a notion if it had been proposed to him, but now his first question was whether he was really qualified for the situation. Those hard words which had so often confronted him—"Experienced only"—flashed into his mind.

"I have had a good education," he said, "and, of course, understand bookkeeping and so forth, but I have had no experience."

"I quite understand that," said Mr. Boniface. "But you would soon get into the way of things. My son would show you exactly what your work would be."

"Of course I would," said Roy. "Think it over, Falck, for at any rate it would keep you going for a time while you look round for a better opening."

"Yes, there is no need to make up your mind to-night. Sleep upon it, and let me know how you decide to-morrow. If you think of accepting the situation, then come and see me in Regent Street between half-past one and two o'clock. We close at two on Saturdays. And in any case, whether you accept or refuse this situation, I hope

you will come and spend Saturday to Monday with us here."

"You are very good," said Frithiof, thinking to himself how unlike these people were to any others he had come across in London. Miss Charlotte Turnour had tried to do him good; it was part of her creed to try to do good to people. The Bonifaces, on the other hand, had simply been friendly and hospitable to him, had shown him that they really cared for him, that they were sorry for his sorrow, and anxious over his anxieties. But from Rowan Tree House he went away with a sense of warmth about the heart, and from Miss Charlotte he invariably turned away hardened and disgusted. Perhaps it was that she began at the wrong end, and like so many people in the world, offered the hard crust of dogmatic utterances to one who was as yet only capable of being nourished on the real substance of the loaf—a man who was dying for want of love, and who no more needed elaborate theological schemes than the starving man in the desert needs the elaborate courses of a dinner-party.

It is God's way to reveal Himself through man, though we are for ever trying to improve upon His way, and endeavouring to convert others by articles of religion instead of the beauty of holiness.

As Frithiof walked home to Vauxhall he felt more at rest than he had done for many days. They had not preached at him; they had not given him unasked-for advice; they had merely given one of the best gifts that can be given in this world, the sight of one of those homes where the kingdom of heaven has begun—a home, that is, where "righteousness and peace and joy" are the rule, and whatever contradicts this reign of love the rare exception.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE gloomy little lodging-house felt desolate enough to him as he unlocked the door with his latch-key and climbed the creaking stairs to his sparsely furnished room. Evidently the three Miss Turnours were having a very animated quarrel, for their voices were pitched in that high key which indicates a stormy atmosphere, and even their words reached him distinctly as he passed by the bedroom which was the arena of strife.

"But, my dear Caroline——"

"Don't talk nonsense, my dear, you know perfectly well——"

"Do you mean to say, my dear——"

"I wonder," thought Frithiof, "whether

they ever allow each other to finish a sentence. It's like the catch that they used to sing at Balholm, about 'Celia's Charms.' If anyone ever writes a catch called 'The Quarrel,' he must take care to stick in plenty of 'my dears!'"

Strict economy in gas was practised by the Miss Turnours, and Frithiof had to grope about for matches. "Attendance," too, did not apparently include drawing down the blind, or turning down the bed. The room looked most bare and comfortless, and the dismal grey paper, with its oblong slabs, supposed, by courtesy, to represent granite, was as depressing as the dungeon of Giant Despair's castle.

To stay here with nothing to do—to lag through weary days of disappointing search after work, and then to return to this night after night, was but a sorry prospect. Would it not indeed be well for him if he swallowed his pride and accepted this offer of perfectly honourable work which had been made to him? The idea was in many ways distasteful to him, and yet dared he reject it?

Looking honestly into his own mind he detected there something that urged him to snatch at this first chance of work, lest, with fresh failure and disappointment, the very desire for work should die within him, and he should sink into a state which his better nature abhorred. The clatter of tongues still ascended from below. He took off his boots, dropping first one and then the other with a resounding thud upon the floor, after the manner of men. Then, wondering whether consciousness of his being within earshot would allay the storm, he threw down both boots at once with a portentous noise outside his room and shut and locked the door with emphasis. Still the female battle continued. He threw himself down on the bed, wondering what it was that made families so different. It was not money which gave the tone to the Bonifaces' house. The Morgans were infinitely richer. It was not a great profession of religion. The Miss Turnours were all ardently and disputatiously religious. What was it?

He fell asleep before he had solved the problem, and had an odd, confused dream. He dreamt that he was climbing the Romsdalshorn, and that darkness had overtaken him. Below him was a sheer precipice, and he could hear the roar of wild beasts as they wandered to and fro thirsting for his blood.

"They are bound to get me sooner or later," he thought, "for I can never hold out till daylight. I may as well let myself go."

And the thought of the horror of that fall was so great that he almost woke with it. But something seemed to quiet him again. It was partly curiosity to understand the meaning of a light which had dawned in the sky, and which deepened and spread every moment. At last he saw that it had been caused by the opening of a door, and in the doorway, with a glory of light all about them, he saw the Madonna and the Holy Child. A path of light traced itself from them on the mountain side to the place where he stood, and he struggled up, no longer afraid to go forward, and without a thought of the beasts or the precipice. And thus struggling on, all details were lost in a flood of light, and warmth, and perfect content, and a welcome that left nothing wanting.

A pushing back of chairs in the room below suddenly roused him. With a sense of bewilderment, he found himself lying on the hard lodging-house bed, and heard the quarrelsome voices rising through the floor.

"Still at it," he thought to himself with a bitter smile. And then he thought of the picture of the Romsdalshorn he had seen that afternoon—he remembered a horrible temptation that had seized him—remembered Cecil standing in the open door with the child in her arms, remembered the perfect welcome he had received from the whole house. Should he in his foolish pride drift into the miserable state of these poor Turnours, and drag through life in poverty, because he was too well-born to take the work he could get?

"These poor ladies would be happier even in service than they are here, in what they call independence," he reflected. "I shall take this situation; it's the first step up."

The next morning he went to the Swedish Embassy to ask advice once more.

"I am glad to see you," said the Consul. "I was hoping you would look in again, for I met old Sivertsen the other day, and he was most anxious to have your address. He said you went off in a hurry, and never gave him time to finish what he was saying."

Frithiof smiled.

"He did nothing but inveigh against the rising generation, and I didn't care to waste the whole morning over that."

"You have too little diplomacy about you," said the Consul. "You do not make the best of your own case. However, Sivertsen seems to have taken a fancy to you, and I advise you to go to him again; he will most likely offer you work. If I were you, I would make up my mind to take whatever honest work turns up, and throw pride to the winds. Leave

your address here with me, and if I hear of anything I'll let you know."

Frithiof, somewhat unwillingly, made his way to Museum Street, and was ushered into the stuffy little den where Herr Sivertsen sat smoking and writing serenely. He bowed stiffly, but was startled to see the sudden change which came over the face of the old Norwegian at sight of him.

"So! You have come back, then!" he exclaimed, shaking him warmly by the hand, just as though they had parted the best of friends. "I am glad of it. Why didn't you tell me the real state of the case? Why didn't you tell me you were one of the victims of the accursed thirst for gold? Why didn't you tell me of the hardness and rapacity of the English firm? But you are all alike—all! Young men nowadays can't put a decent sentence together; they clip their words as close as if they were worth a mint of money. A worthless generation! Sit down, now, sit down, and tell me what you can do."

Frithiof, perceiving that what had first seemed like boorishness was really eccentricity, took the proffered chair, and tried to shake off the mantle of cold reserve which had of late fallen upon him.

"I could do translating," he replied. "English, German, or Norwegian. I am willing to do copying; but there, I suppose, the type-writers would cut me out. Any way, I have four hours to spare in the evening, and I want them filled."

"You have found some sort of work then already?"

"Yes, I have got work which will bring me in twenty-five shillings a week, but it leaves me free from eight o'clock, and I want evening employment."

Herr Sivertsen gave a grunt which expressed encouragement and approval. He began shuffling about masses of foolscap and proofs which were strewn in wild confusion about the writing-table. "These are the revised proofs of Scanbury's new book; take this page and let me see how you can render it into Norwegian. Here are pen and paper. Sit down and try your hand."

Frithiof obeyed. Herr Sivertsen seemed satisfied with the result.

"Put the same page into German," he said.

Frithiof worked away in silence, and the old author paced to and fro with his pipe, giving a furtive glance now and then at the down-bent head with its fair, obstinate hair brushed erect in Norwegian fashion, and the fine Grecian profile upon which the dark look

of trouble sat strangely. In spite of the sarcasm and bitterness which disappointment had roused in Frithiof's nature the old author saw that such traits were foreign to his real character—that they were but a thin veneer, and that beneath them lay the brave and noble nature of the hardy Norseman. The consul's account of his young countryman's story had moved him greatly, and he was determined now to do what he could for him. He rang the bell and ordered the Norwegian maid servant to bring lunch for two, adding an emphatic "Strax!" (immediately), which made Frithiof look up from his writing.

"You have finished?" asked Herr Sivertsen.

"Not quite. I can't get this last bit quite to my mind. I don't believe there is an equivalent in German for that expression."

"You are quite right. There isn't. I couldn't get anything for it myself. What have you put? Good! very good. It is an improvement on what I had thought of. The sentence runs better."

He took the paper from the table and mumbled through it in an approving tone.

"Good! you will do," he said at the end. "Now while we lunch together we can discuss terms. Ha! what has she brought us? Something that pretends to be German sausage! Good heavens! The depravity of the age! This German sausage indeed! I must apologise to you for having it on the table, but servants are all alike nowadays—all alike! Not one of them can understand how to do the marketing properly. A worthless generation!"

Frithiof began to be faintly amused by the old man, and as he walked away from Museum Street with a week's work under his arm he felt in better spirits than he had done for some time.

With not a little curiosity he sought out the Bonifaces' shop in Regent Street. It had a well-ordered, prosperous look about it;—double doors kept the draught from those within, the place was well warmed throughout; on each side of the door was a counter with a desk and stool, Mr. Boniface being one of those who consider that sitting is as cheap as standing, and the monotony of the long shelves full of holland-covered portfolios was broken by busts of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, and other great musicians. The inner shop was consecrated to instruments of all kinds, and through this Frithiof was taken to Mr. Boniface's private room.

"Well," said the shop-owner, greeting him kindly. "And have you made your decision?"

"Yes, sir, I have decided to accept the situation," said Frithiof. And something in his face and bearing showed plainly that he was all the better for his choice.

"I forget whether I told you about the hours," said Mr. Boniface. "Half-past eight in the morning till half-past seven at night, an hour out of that for dinner, and half an hour for tea. You will have of course the usual Bank holidays, and we also arrange that each of our men shall have a fortnight some time during the summer."

"You are very thoughtful for your hands," said Frithiof. "It is few, I should fancy, who would allow so much."

"I don't know that," said Mr. Boniface. "A good many, I fancy, try something of the sort, and I am quite sure that it invariably answers. It is not in human nature to go on for ever at one thing—every one needs variety. Business becomes a treadmill if you never get a thorough change, and I like my people to put their heart into the work. If you try to do that you will be of real value, and are bound to rise."

"Look," said Roy, showing him a neatly drawn-out plan of names and dates. "This is the holiday chart which we worked out this summer. It takes my father quite a long time to arrange it all and make each dovetail properly with the others."

They lingered for a few minutes talking over the details of the business, then Roy took Frithiof down into the shop again, and in the uninterrupted quiet of the Saturday afternoon showed him exactly what his future work would be. He was to preside at the song-counter, and Roy initiated him into the arrangement of the brown-holland portfolios with their black lettering, showed him his desk with account-books, order-book, and cash-box, even made him practise rolling up music in the neat white wrappers that lay ready to hand—a feat which at first he did not manage very quickly.

"I am afraid all this must be very uncongenial to you," said Roy.

"Perhaps," said Frithiof. "But it will do as well as anything else. And indeed," he added warmly, "one would put up with a great deal for the sake of being under such a man as Mr. Boniface."

"The real secret of the success of the business is that he personally looks after every detail," said Roy. "All the men he employs are fond of him; he expects them to do their

best for him, and he does his best for them. I think you may really be happy enough here, though of course it is not at all the sort of life you were brought up to expect."

Each thought involuntarily of the first time they had met, and of Blanche Morgan's ill-timed speech—"Only a shopkeeper!" Roy understood perfectly well what it was that brought the bitter look into his companion's face, and, thinking that they had stayed long enough for Frithiof to get a pretty clear idea of the work which lay before him on Monday morning, he proposed that they should go home together. He had long ago got over the selfish desire to be quit of the responsibility of being with the Norwegian; his first awkward shyness had been, after all, natural enough, for those whose lives have been very uneventful seldom understand how to deal with people in trouble, and are apt to shrink away in unsympathetic silence because they have not learnt from their own sore need what it is that human nature craves for in sorrow. But each time he met Frithiof now he felt that the terrible evening at the Arundel had broken down the barriers which hitherto had kept him from friendship with any one out of his own family. Mere humanity had forced him to stay as the solitary witness of an overwhelming grief, and he had gained in this way a knowledge of life and a sympathy with Frithiof, of which he had been quite incapable before.

He began to know intuitively how things would strike Frithiof, and as they went down to Brixton he prepared him for what he shrewdly surmised would be the chief disagreeable in his business life.

"I don't think you heard," he began, "that there is another partner in our firm—a cousin of my father's—James Horner. I daresay you will not come across him very much, but he is fond of interfering now and then, and sometimes if my father is away he gets fussy and annoying. He is not at all popular in the shop, and I thought I would just warn you beforehand, though of course you are not exactly expecting a bed of roses."

It would have been hard to say exactly what Frithiof was expecting; his whole life had been unstrung, and this new beginning represented to him merely a certain amount of monotonous work to the tune of five-and-twenty shillings a week.

When they reached Rowan Tree House they found a carriage waiting at the door.

"Talk of the angel and its wings appear,"

said Roy. "The Horners are calling here. What a nuisance!"

Frithiof felt inclined to echo this sentiment when he found himself in the pretty drawing-room once more and became conscious of the presence of an overdressed woman and a bumptious little man with mutton-chop whiskers and inquisitive eyes, whose air of patronage would have been comical had it not been galling to his Norwegian independence. Roy had done well to prepare him, for nothing could have been so irritating to his sensitive refinement as the bland self-satisfaction, the innate vulgarity of James Horner. Mrs. Boniface and Cecil greeted him pleasantly, and Mrs. Horner bowed her lofty bonnet with dignity when he was introduced to her, and uttered a platitude about the weather in an encouraging tone, which speedily changed, however, when she discovered that he was actually "one of the hands."

"The Bonifaces have no sense of what is fitting," she said afterwards to her husband. "The idea of introducing one of the shopmen to me! I never go into Loveday's drawing-room without longing to leave behind me a book on etiquette."

"She's a well-meaning soul," said James Horner condescendingly. "But countrified still, and unpolished. It's strange after so many years of London life."

"Not strange at all," retorted Mrs. Horner snappishly. "She never tries to copy correct models, so how's it likely her manners should improve. I'm not at all partial to Cecil either. They'll never make a stylish girl of her with their ridiculous ideas about stays and all that. I'll be bound her waist's a good five-and-twenty inches."

"Oh, well, my dear, I really don't see much to find fault with in Cecil."

"But I do," said Mrs. Horner emphatically. "For all her quietness there's a deal of obstinacy about the girl. I should like to know what she means to do with that criminal's children that she has foisted on to the family! I detest people who are always doing *outré* things like that—it's all of a piece with their fads about no stays and Jaeger's woollen clothes. The old customs are good enough for me, and I'm sure rather than let myself grow as stout as Loveday I'd tight-lace night as well as day."

"She's not much of a figure, it's true."

"Figure, indeed!" echoed his wife. "A feather bed tied round with a string, that's what she is."

"But she makes the house very comfort-

able, and always has a good table," said Mr. Horner reflectively.

His wife tossed her head and flushed angrily, for she knew quite well that while the Bonifaces spent no more on housekeeping than she did their meals were always more tempting, more daintily arranged. She was somehow destitute of the gift of devising nice little dinners, and could by no means compass a pretty-looking supper.

"It seems to me, you know," said James Horner, "that we go on year after year in a dull round of beef and mutton, mutton and beef."

"Well, really, Mr. H.," she replied sharply, "if you want me to feed you on game and all the delicacies of the season, you must give me a little more cash, that's all."

"I never said that I wanted you to launch out into all the delicacies of the season. Loveday doesn't go in for anything extravagant; but somehow one wears of eternal beef and mutton. I wish they'd invent another animal!"

"And till they do, I'll thank you not to grumble, Mr. H. If there's one thing that seems to me downright unchristian it is to grumble at things. Why, where's that idiot of a coachman driving us to? It's half a mile farther that way. He really must leave us; I can't stand having a servant one can't depend on. He has no brains at all."

She threw down the window and shouted a correction to the coachman, but unluckily, in drawing in her head again the lofty bonnet came violently into contact with the roof of the carriage. "Dear! what a bother!" she exclaimed. "There's my osprey crushed all to nothing!"

"Well, Cecil would say it was a judgment on you," said James Horner, smiling. "Didn't you hear what she was telling us just now?—they kill the parent birds by scores and leave the young ones to die of starvation. It's only in the breeding season that they can get these feathers at all."

"Pshaw! what do I care for a lot of silly little birds!" said Mrs. Horner, passing her hand tenderly and anxiously over the crushed bonnet. "I shall buy a fresh one on Monday, if it's only to spite that girl; she's for ever taking up some craze about people or animals being hurt. It's no affair of mine; my motto is 'Live and let live:' and don't be for ever ferreting up grievances."

Frithiof breathed more freely when the Horners had left Rowan Tree House, and indeed everyone seemed to feel that a weight

had been removed, and a delightful sense of ease took possession of all.

"Cousin Georgina will wear ospreys to the bitter end, I prophesy," said Roy. "You'll never convince her that anything she likes is really hard on others."

"Of course, many people have worn them before they knew of the cruelty," said Cecil, "but afterwards I can't think how they can."

"You see, people as a rule don't really care about pain at a distance," said Frithiof. "Torture thousands of these herons and egrets by a lingering death, and though people know it is so they won't care; but take one person within hearing of their cries, and that person will wonder how any human being can be such a barbarian as to wear these so-called ospreys."

"I suppose it is that we are so very slow to realise pain that we don't actually see."

"People don't really want to stop pain till it makes them personally uncomfortable," replied Frithiof.

"That sounds horribly selfish."

"Most things come round to selfishness when you trace them out."

"Do you really quite think that? I don't think it can be true, because it is not of oneself that one thinks in trying to do away with the sufferings of the world; reformers always know that they will have to endure a great deal of pain themselves, and it is the thought of lessening it for others that makes them brave enough to go on."

"But you must allow," said Frithiof, "that to get up a big subscription you must have a harrowing account of a catastrophe. You must stir people's hearts so that they won't be comfortable again till they have given a guinea; it is their own pain that prompts them to act—their own personal discomfort."

"That may be, perhaps; but it is not altogether selfishness if they really do give help; it must be a God-like thing that makes them want to cure pain—a devil would gloat over it. Why should you call it selfishness because the good pleases them? '*Le bien me plat*' was a good enough motto for the Steadfast Prince, why not for the rest of us?"

"But it is orthodox, surely, to do what you dislike doing?"

"Yes," struck in Roy, "like the nursery rhyme about—

"The twelve Miss Pelliwoes they say were always taught
To do the thing they didn't like, which means the thing
they ought."

"But that seems to me exactly what is false," said Cecil. "Surely we have to grow

into liking the right and the unselfish, and hating the thing that only pleases the lower part of us?"

"But the growth is slow with most of us," said Mr. Boniface. "There's a specimen for you," and he glanced towards the door where an altercation was going on between Master Lance and the nurse who had come to fetch him to bed.

"Oh, come, Lance, don't make such a noise," cried Cecil, crossing the room and putting a stop to the sort of war-dance of rage and passion which the little fellow was executing. "Why, what do you think would happen to you if you were to sit up late?"

"What?" asked Lance, curiosity gaining the upper-hand and checking the frenzy of impatience which had possessed him.

"You would be a wretched little cross white child, and would never grow up into a strong man. Don't you want to grow big and strong so that you can take care of Gwen?"

"And I'll take care of you, too," he said benevolently. "I'll take you all the way to Norway, and row you in a boat, and shoot the bears."

Frithiof smiled.

"The trouble generally is to find bears to shoot."

"Yes, but Cecil did see where a bear had made its bed up on Munkeggen, didn't you, Cecil?"

"Yes, yes, and you shall go with me some day," she said, hurrying the little fellow off because she thought the allusion to Munkeggen would perhaps hurt Frithiof.

Roy was on the point of taking up the thread of conversation again about Norway, but she promptly intervened.

"I don't know how we shall cure Lance of dancing with rage like that; we have the same scene every night."

"You went the right way to work just now," said Mr. Boniface. "You made him understand why his own wishes must be thwarted, and you see he was quite willing to believe what you said. You had a living proof of what you were arguing—he did what he had once disliked because he saw that it was the road to something higher, and better, and more really desirable than his play down here. In time he will have a sort of respectful liking for the road which once he hated."

"The only drawback is," said Frithiof rather bitterly, "that he may follow the road, and it may not lead him to what he expects; he may go to bed like an angel,

and yet, in spite of that, lose his health, or grow up without a chance of taking you to Norway or shooting bears."

"Well, what then?" said Cecil quietly. "It will have led him on in the right direction, and if he is disappointed of just those particular things, why he must look farther and higher."

Frithiof thought of his dream and was silent.

"I'm going to make tea, Roy," said Mrs. Boniface, laying down her netting, "and you had better show Herr Falck his room. I hope you'll often come and spend Sunday with us," she added, with a kindly glance at the Norwegian.

In the evening they had music. Roy and Cecil both sang well; their voices were not at all out of the common, but no pains had been spared on their training, and Frithiof liked the comfortable informal way in which they sang one thing after another, treating him entirely as one of the family.

"And now it is your turn," said Cecil after a while. "Father, where is that Amati that somebody sent you on approval? Perhaps Herr Falck would try it."

"Oh, do you play the violin?" said Mr. Boniface; "that is capital. You'll find it in my study cupboard, Cecil; stay, here's the key."

Frithiof protested that he was utterly out of practice, that it was weeks since he had touched his violin, which had been left behind in Norway; but when he actually saw the Amati he couldn't resist it, and it ended in his playing to Cecil's accompaniment for the rest of the evening.

To Cecil the hours seemed to fly, and Mrs. Boniface, after a preliminary round of tidying up the room, came and stood by her, watching her bright face with motherly contentment.

"Prayer time, darling," she said, as the sonata came to an end; "and since it's Saturday night we mustn't be late."

"Ten o'clock already?" she exclaimed; "I had no idea it was so late! What hymn will you have, father?"

"The Evening Hymn," said Mr. Boniface; and Frithiof, wondering a little what was going to happen, obediently took the place assigned him, saw with some astonishment that four white-capped maidservants had come into the drawing-room and were sitting near the piano, and that Mr. Boniface was turning over the leaves of a big Bible. He had a dim recollection of having read something in an English poem about a similar custom, and racked his brain to remember

what it could be, until the words of a familiar psalm broke the stillness of the room, and recalled him to the present.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," read Mr. Boniface. And as he went on, the beautiful old poem with its tender reassuring cadences somehow touched Frithiof, so that when they stood up to sing "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," he did not cavil at each line as he would have done a little while before, but stood listening reverently, conscious of a vague desire for something in which he felt himself to be lacking. After all, the old beliefs which he had dismissed so lightly from his mind were not without a power and a beauty of their own.

"I wish I could be like these people," he thought to himself, kneeling for the first time for years.

And though he did not hear a word of the prayer, and could not honestly have joined in it if he had heard, his mind was full of a longing which he could not explain. The fact was that in the past he had troubled himself very little about the matter, he had allowed the "zeit geist" to drive him as it would, and following the fashion of his companions, with a comfortable consciousness of having plenty to keep him in countenance, he had thrown off the old faiths.

He owned as much to Cecil the next day when, after breakfast, they chanced to be alone together for a few minutes.

"Have you found any Norwegian service in London, or will you come with us?" she asked unconsciously.

"Oh," he replied, "I gave up that sort of thing long ago, and while you are out I will get on with some translation I have in hand."

"I beg your pardon," she said colouring crimson, "I had no idea, or I should not have asked."

But there was not the faintest shade of annoyance in Frithiof's face; he seemed puzzled at her confusion.

"The services bored me so," he explained. He did not add as he had done to Blanche that in his opinion religion was only fit for women, perhaps because it would have been difficult to make such a speech to Cecil, or perhaps because the recollection of the previous evening still lingered with him.

"Oh," said Cecil, smiling as she recognised the boyishness of his remark; "I suppose every one goes through a stage of being bored. Roy used to hate Sunday when he was little; he used to have a Sunday pain

which came on quite regularly when we were starting to chapel, so that he could stay at home."

"I know you will all think me a shocking sinner to stay at home translating this book," said Frithiof.

"No, we shan't," said Cecil quietly. "If you thought it was right to go to church of course you would go. You look at things differently."

He was a little startled by her liberality.

"You assume by that that I always do what I know to be right," he said smiling. "What makes you suppose any such thing?"

"I can't tell you exactly; but don't you think one has a sort of instinct as to people? without really having heard anything about them, one can often know that they are good or bad."

"I think one is often horribly mistaken in people," said Frithiof moodily.

"Yes; sometimes one gets unfairly prejudiced, perhaps by a mere likeness to another person whom one dislikes. Oh, I quite allow that this sort of instinct is not infallible."

"You are much more liable to think too well of people than not well enough," said Frithiof. "You are a woman and have seen but little of the world. Wait till you have been utterly deceived in some one, and then your eyes will be opened, and you will see that most people are at heart mean and selfish and contemptible."

"But there is one thing that opens one's eyes to see what is good in people," said Cecil. "You can't love all humanity and yet think them mean and contemptible, you soon see that they are worth a great deal."

"It is as you said just now," said Frithiof, after a minute's silence, "we look at things differently. You look at the world out of charitable eyes; I look at it seeing its baseness and despising it. Some day you will see that my view is correct; you will find that your kindly judgments are wrong. Perhaps I shall be the first to undeceive you, for you are utterly wrong about me. You think me good, but it is ten to one that I go to the bad altogether; after all, it would be the easiest way and the most amusing."

He had gone on speaking recklessly, but Cecil felt much too keenly to be checked by any conventionality as to the duty of talking only of surface matters.

"You are unjust to the world, yourself included!" she exclaimed. "I believe that you have too much of the hardy Norseman

about you ever to hanker after a life of ease and pleasure which must really ruin you."

"That speech only shows that you have formed too high an estimate of our national character," said Frithiof. "Perhaps you don't know that the Norwegians are often drunkards?"

"Possibly; and so are the English; but, in spite of that, is not the real national character true and noble and full of a sense of duty? What I meant about you was that I think you do try to do the things you see to be right. I never thought you were perfect."

"Then if I do the things that I see to be right I can only see a very little, that's certain," he said lightly.

"Exactly so," she replied, unable to help laughing a little at his tone. "And I think that you have been too lazy to take the trouble to try and see more. However, that brings us round again to the things that bore you. Would you like to write at this table in the window? You will be quite quiet in here till dinner-time."

She found him pens and ink, tore a soiled sheet off the blotting-pad, drew up the blind so as to let in just enough sunshine, and then left him to his translating.

"What a strange girl she is," he thought to himself. "As frank and outspoken as a boy, and yet with all sorts of little tender touches about her. Sigrid would like her; they did take to one another at Balholm, I remember."

Then, with a bitter recollection of one who had eclipsed all others during that happy week on the Sogne Fjord, the hard look came back to his face, and taking up his pen he began to work doggedly at Herr Sivertsen's manuscript.

The next morning his new life began, he turned his back on the past and deliberately made his downward step on the social ladder, which nevertheless meant an upward step on the ladder of honesty and success. Still there was no denying that the loss of position chafed him sorely; he detested having to treat such a man as James Horner as his master and employer; he resented the free-and-easy tone of the other men employed on the premises. Mr. Horner, who was the sort of man who would have patronised an archangel for the sake of showing off his own superior affability, unluckily chanced to be in the shop a good deal during that first week, and the new hand received a large share of his notice. Frithiof's native courtesy bore him up through a good deal, but at last his

pride got the better of him, and he made it so perfectly apparent to the bumptious little man that he desired to have as little to do with him as possible, that James Horner's bland patronage speedily changed to active dislike.

"What induced you to choose that Falck in Smith's place?" he said to Mr. Boniface in a grumbling tone. He persisted in dropping the broad "a" in Frithiof's name, and pronouncing it as if it rhymed with "talc" — a sound peculiarly offensive to Norwegian ears.

"He is a friend of Roy's," was the reply. "What is it that you dislike about him? He seems to me likely to prove very efficient."

"Oh, yes; he has his wits about him, perhaps rather too much so, but I can't stand the ridiculous airs the fellow gives himself. Order him to do anything, and he'll do it as haughtily as though he were master and I servant; and as for treating him in a friendly way it's impossible, he's as stand-offish as if he were a Croesus instead of a poor beggar without a penny to bless himself with."

"He is a very reserved fellow," said Mr. Boniface; "and you must remember that this work is probably distasteful to him. You see he has been accustomed to a very different position."

"Why, his father was nothing but a fish merchant who went bankrupt."

"But out in Norway merchants rank much more highly than with us. Besides, the Falcks are of a very old family."

"Well, really I never expected to hear such a radical as you speak up for old family and all that nonsense," said James Horner. "But I see you are determined to befriend this fellow, so it's no good my saying anything against it. I hope you may find him all you expect. For my part I consider him a most unpromising young man; there's an aggressiveness about his face and bearing that I don't like at all. A dangerous headstrong sort of character, and not in the least fit for the position you have given him."

With which sweeping condemnation Mr. Horner left the room, and Roy, who had kept a politic silence throughout the scene, threw down his pen and went into a subdued fit of laughter.

"You should see them together, father, it's as good as a play," he exclaimed. "Falck puts on his grand air and is crushingly polite the moment Cousin James puts in an appearance, and that nettles him and he becomes more and more vulgar and fussy, and

so they go poking each other up worse and worse every minute."

"It's very foolish of Falck," said Mr. Boniface. "If he means to get on in life, he will have to learn the art of rising above such paltry annoyances as airs of patronage and manners that jar on him."

Meanwhile, down below in the shop, Frithiof had forgotten his last encounter with James Horner, and as he set things in order for the Saturday afternoon closing, his thoughts were far away. He sorted music and took down one portfolio after another mechanically, while all the time it seemed to him that he was wandering with Blanche through the sweet-scented pine-woods, hearing her fresh clear voice, looking into the lovely eyes which had stolen his heart. The instant two o'clock sounded the hour of his release, he snatched up his hat and hurried away; his dreams of the past had taken so strong a hold upon him that he felt he must try for at least one more sight of the face that haunted him so persistently.

He had touched no food since early morning, but he could no more have eaten at that moment than have turned aside in some other direction. Feeling as though some power outside himself were drawing him onwards, he followed with scarcely a thought of the actual way, until he found himself within sight of the Lancaster Gate House. A striped red and white awning had been erected over the steps, he caught sight of it through the trees, and his heart seemed to stand still. Hastily crossing the wide road leading to the church, he gained a better view of the pavement in front of Mr. Morgan's house; dirty little street children with eager faces were clustered about the railings, and nursemaids with perambulators flanked the red felt which made a pathway to the carriage standing before the door. He turned sick and giddy.

"Fine doings there, sir," remarked the crossing-sweeper, who was still sweeping up the autumn leaves just as he had been doing when Frithiof had passed him after his interview with Blanche. "They say the bride's an heiress and a beauty too. Well! well! it's an unequal world!" and the old man stopped to indulge in a paroxysm of coughing, then held out a trembling hand.

"Got a copper about you, sir?" he asked.

Frithiof, just because the old man made that remark about an unequal world, dropped a sixpence into the outstretched palm.

"God bless you, sir!" said the crossing-

sweeper, beginning to sweep up the fallen leaves with more spirit than ever.

"Violets, sir, sweet violets?" cried a girl whose eye had caught the gleam of the silver coin.

She held the basket towards him, but he shook his head and walked hurriedly away towards the church. Yet the incident never left his memory, and to the end of his life the scent of violets was hateful to him. Like one in a nightmare, he reached the church door. The organ was crashing out a jubilant march; there was a sort of subdued hum of eager anticipation from the crowd of spectators.

"Are you a friend of the bride, sir?" asked an official.

"No," he said icily.

"Then the side aisle, if you please, sir. The middle aisle is reserved for friends only."

He quietly took the place assigned him and waited. It did not seem real to him, the crowded church, the whispering people; all that seemed real was the horrible sense of expectation.

"Oh, it will be well worth seeing," remarked a woman who sat beside him to her companion. "They always manages things well in this place. The last time I come it was to see Lady Graham's funeral. Lor! it was jest beautiful! After all, there ain't nothing that comes up to a real good funeral. It's so movin' to the feelin's, ain't it?"

An icy numbness crept over him, a most appalling feeling of isolation. "This is like dying," he thought to himself. And then, because the congregation stood up, he too dragged himself to his feet. The march had changed to a hymn. White-robed choristers walked slowly up the middle aisle; their words reached him distinctly—

"Still in the pure espousal,
Of Christian man and maid."

Then suddenly he caught sight of the face which had more than once been pressed to his, of the eyes which had lured him on so cruelly. It was only for a moment. She passed by with her attendant bridesmaids, and black darkness seemed to fall upon him, though he stood there outwardly calm, just like an indifferent spectator.

"Did you see her?" exclaimed his neighbour. "My! ain't she jest pretty! Satin dress, ain't it?"

"No, bless your heart! not satin," replied the other. "'Twas brocade, and a guinea a yard, I shouldn't wonder."

Yet through all the whispering and the subdued noise of the great congregation he could hear Blanche's clear voice. "I will always trust you," she had said to him on Munkeggen. Now he heard her answer "I will" to another question.

After that, prayers and hymns seemed all mixed up in a wild confusion. Now and then, between the heads of the crowd, he caught a vision of a slim, white-robed figure, and presently Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" was struck up, and he knew that she would pass down the aisle once more. Would her face be turned in his direction? Yes; for a little child scattered flowers before her, and she glanced round at it with a happy, satisfied smile. As for Frithiof, he just stood there passively, and no one watching him could have known of the fierce anguish that wrung his heart. As a matter of fact, nobody observed him at all; he was a mere unit in the crowd; and with human beings all round him, yet in absolute loneliness, he passed out of the church into the chill autumnal air, to—

"Take up his burden of life again,
Saying only, 'It might have been.'"

NICHOLAS FERRAR AND THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY AT LITTLE GIDDING.

A Picture of Religious Life in the Seventeenth Century.

By H. P. PALMER, M.A.

THE religious house at Little Gidding was but little known to the student of history until the life of the place was woven into the touching and beautiful story of "John Inglesant." Yet, for whatever reason the institution has escaped the recognition of the historian, it is important as exhibiting a unique phase of religious life.

Nicholas Ferrar, the founder of the system, was a man of singular parts and attainments. As a boy, he is described as good-natured and lovely. At Clare Hall, Cambridge, he was noted for intelligence and studious habits. After leaving Cambridge he travelled for several years, but before quitting England he had declared "that if God be merciful

to me, and bring me safe home again, I will all the days of my life serve Him in His Tabernacle and in His holy Sanctuary." While roaming abroad, he studied theology and deeply familiarised himself with the Roman Catholic system. On his return he became involved in politics. James and Gondomar, the Spanish Envoy, were endeavouring to destroy the Virginia Trading Company, of which Ferrar's father had been an important member. For several years Nicholas protected the interests of the company, and by securing a seat in Parliament increased his power. At length, however, the personal ascendancy of the king prevailed, the company was dissolved, and Ferrar felt himself free. He resisted the enticements of those who sought to lure him into political life, refused a brilliant matrimonial match, and set about the plan which for years had occupied his mind. In 1624 he purchased a mansion and estate at Little Gidding, and here for many years he lived. His mother, her sister, Mrs. Collett and her children, his brother John Ferrar, and other members of his family, bent on the pursuit of the religious life, soon joined him. Nicholas then proceeded to Laud, at that time Bishop of St. David's, and was ordained deacon.

The church at Little Gidding, which appears to have been disused, was "new floored and wainscotted." A new font and a new lectern were set up. The half-pace was covered with "blue taffety" and cushions of the finest tapestry and blue silk. The holy table was richly decked and provided with silver vessels. The house itself was fitted up for the purposes of religious life. Three oratories were constructed—a common oratory, a night oratory for the men, and a night oratory for the women. The time not spent in prayer was devoted to deeds of mercy, to education, and to recreation. The daughters of Mrs. Collett took charge of the house, and each of them was designated by the name of a virtue which she strove to illustrate. They were known as—1. The Chief; 2. The Patient; 3. The Cheerful; 4. The Affectionate; 5. The Submiss; 6. The Obedient; 7. The Moderate. Besides taking care of the house, the sisters dressed the wounds of the poor, framed harmonies of the Gospels and other biblical books, and composed exercises for recitation on the vigils and saints' days of the Church. Three masters lived in the house, teaching English, Latin, writing, arithmetic, and the use of the organ, viol, and lute. The children of the neighbourhood shared the educational advantages thus afforded,

and were rewarded with money and a dinner for proficiency in scriptural knowledge. These children were known as the Psalm-children, and it is said that "a mighty change was wrought not only on the children, but on the men and women who sat hearing the children reading and repeating at home."

Nicholas was known as "The Guardian," and directed the religious and educational work of the establishment. The ascetic tone of his mind showed itself in his regulations for the guidance of the household. The family rose at 4, at 5 they went to the oratory to prayers, at 6 they repeated the Psalms of the hour, at 6.30 they attended the service of matins, at 7 followed the Psalms of the hour, at 10 they went to church. Dinner was set on the table at 11, and while it proceeded a devotional book was read, in imitation of the monastic practice. Instruction, a service in the church, and recreation filled up the remainder of the day until 8, when prayer was held in the oratory. The watchings then began; each watch lasted from 11 till 1, and the whole of the Psalter was read through "in the way of antiphony."

The harmonies composed by the sisters were sometimes given to friends and patrons of the house. George Herbert, the poet, an intimate friend of Ferrar's, was presented with one, and pronounced it to be "a most inestimable jewel." A harmony presented to Charles is still to be seen in the British Museum.

The fame of the house at Gidding spread throughout the land. Many pretended to have lost their way, and thus secured shelter for the night. There were some who were bitterly hostile to what they termed "the Arminian Nunnery." To the Puritan the ritual of the Church, the sisterhood, the watchings were naturally displeasing. One, however, at any rate, who paid a visit to the place, and was at the outset much prejudiced against it, was induced by what he saw to change his opinion.

On his arrival he was shown into "a fair, spacious parlour," and presently met by Nicholas, whom he describes as "a bachelor, of a plain presence, but of able speech and parts." Then the Puritan, whose name was Lenton, poured forth the accusations he had heard. Nicholas, in reply, begged him to attend a service in the chapel. They "passed towards the chapel, being about forty paces from the house, yet stayed a little by a glass of sack, a sugar-cake, and a fine napkin brought by a mannerly maid. At the entrance of the church (Nicholas) made an

obeisance, a few paces further, a lower: coming to the half-pace, he bowed to the ground. The deacon read prayers and Athanasius, his creed." In the chapel Lenton observed the sisters, all dressed in black but one, who wore a friar's grey gown. As he left, Lenton was "saluted" from a distance by the sisters, and was much disappointed that he was not asked to remain to dinner. "As we friendly met," he says, "we friendly parted." On making inquiries in the neighbourhood, he was told that the family were everywhere revered for their humanity, humility, and charity.

Charles I. paid three visits to Little Gidding, and of his second visit full accounts remain. This occurred in the midst of the civil war, and with the king were the Palsgrave and the Prince of Wales. Charles thoroughly inspected the place, and gave five gold pieces to some widows, pensioners of the family. When the evening drew on the horses were called and the whole company mounted. But before Charles started, "all kneeled down and with hearty and earnest prayer, most humbly besought God Almighty that His holy angels might be his guide, and that his return might be safe and speedy." Thereat, the king moved his hat and said, "I pray you daily to pray for me, and God bless you all." Charles visited the place again when flying from the face of his enemies, and not long before his death.

In recording the visits of the king we have anticipated the death of Ferrar. In 1637 his health, which had for long been broken, began to decline altogether. On November 2nd of that year he officiated in the church for the last time. He gave his brother John his last solemn charges. He exhorted him to pursue the system he had adopted when its founder should have been taken away. He knew, he said, that sad times were coming on; the worship of God would be suppressed and dreadful alterations be made. Three days before his death he ordered a place to be chosen for his grave, and on it caused to be burnt all the comedies, tragedies, heroic poems, and romances in his possession. He received the absolution and partook of the sacrament, and on the 1st of December, just as the clock struck one, his spirit departed to the home of his love.

After the Puritan triumph, the family was compelled to flee; the place was plundered and ransacked, the church stripped of its ornaments, and Ferrar's valuable collection of books and pictures burnt.

The career of Ferrar has nothing like it in English history. That of George Herbert, Ferrar's dear friend, is perhaps the nearest approach to it. Each possessed every advantage of birth and fortune, and was well introduced on entering public life. They resembled one another in their scholarly attainments, their zealous patriotism, and their love for the Church of England. Like Ferrar, Herbert had the chance of a political career. Yet Herbert, when he took orders, had not shown, as Ferrar had shown, statesmanlike qualities of the highest order, and had not, like Ferrar, attracted the admiration of all right-minded politicians of the time. Herbert relinquished the chance of high political promotion. Ferrar gave up the certainty of being one of the most conspicuous public figures of the age.

The political ability of Ferrar was shown in his struggle against the intrigues of Gondomar. So afraid was the Spanish party of this formidable antagonist, that it offered him a distinguished political position in the hope of being rid of him. Through his exertions it was that the Lord Treasurer, who had been bribed by Spain, was imprisoned and fined £50,000.

His ability was no less conspicuous in the organization of the house at Gidding. The spiritual life, as he conceived it, was no mere easy routine of religious practices, but a discipline of the heart.

The practical side of the establishment is beyond praise. A large household, with minds above all meaner ambition, is set in the midst of a rural district, spending its time and leisure on the improvement of the neighbourhood. The benefits of education, pecuniary assistance, and surgical aid are freely bestowed. The religious house at Gidding was the home of mystical devotion, but no less of practical piety; it was "a city set upon a hill" to be gazed upon by all.

When we read the details of its management, of the kindness and goodness therein prevailing, we see the wisdom of Mr. Short-house in causing his brief stay here to have so pronounced an effect on the mind of John Inglesant. For about the place there breathes, as it were, the breath of a higher life, and as we consider the happiness of this family in their self-sought life of discipline and self-denial, we are reminded of the gentle inspiration in the house of Bethany, "Martha! Martha! thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful."

SHOOTING STARS.

By SIR R. S. BALL, LL.D., F.R.S., ASTRONOMER ROYAL FOR IRELAND.

THIRD PAPER.

THE glory of a meteor is often so evanescent that we just get a glimpse and it is gone. The sky resumes its ordinary aspect; the familiar stars are there, and even the very situation of the brilliant streak has become unrecognisable. But this is not always so; it sometimes happens that the brief career of the meteor leaves a notable trace behind it, so that for seconds and for minutes the sky is diversified by an unwonted spectacle. The path of the meteor leaves a stain of pearly light on the sky, to mark the highway pursued by our celestial visitor.

In its fearful career the meteor is often rent to fragments, pulverised to dust, dissolved into vapour. The glowing atoms of the wreck lie strewn along the path, just as the ghastly remnants of Napoleon's mighty army limned out the awful retreat from Moscow to Paris.

A pencil-shaped cloud of meteoric debris, perhaps eighty or a hundred miles in length, and four or five miles in diameter, thus hangs poised in air. It is at night. The sun has sunk so far below the horizon that there is no trace of the feeblest twilight glow. An ordinary cloud would, of course, be invisible; no beams of light fall upon it; there is nothing to render it luminous. So, too, the meteoric streak will often pass instantly into invisibility, but this is not always the case. It frequently continues to glow for seconds, sometimes even for minutes. There is a well-authenticated instance, in which the trail of a superb meteor remained visible for nearly an hour. I have endeavoured up to the present to explain the various phenomena presented to us in the fall of a meteor, but here, for the first time, we have to note a circumstance for which it is not easy to account. We can explain why it is that the long meteoric cloud should be there, but we cannot so easily explain why we should be able to see it. Whence comes this beautiful pearly luminosity? It cannot be reflected sunlight, nor can it be reflected starlight, for neither reflected sunlight nor reflected starlight are found competent to render the ordinary water clouds of an atmosphere visible during the dead of night. Why, then, should they be able to disclose a streak of meteoric matter? It seems to follow that the meteoric dust must glow with some intrinsic luminosity. I have

only heard one attempt to offer a rational explanation of the true character of this interesting phenomenon. It is as follows.

There are certain substances which are called *phosphorescent*, because they possess the power of actually absorbing and retaining the light to which they have been exposed, and then gradually dispensing it afterwards. Phosphorescent materials have some useful applications as ingredients in the so-called "luminous paint." A gate covered with this preparation will absorb the sunlight during the day, and during the night will radiate forth its store in a feeble glow. Clock faces have been similarly illuminated, and match-boxes are made so that the hand shall be guided to them in the dark by a radiance more ghostlike than beautiful. The persistent streak of a meteor can be explained by the supposition that some particles of these phosphorescent substances have been present in the meteoric mass. These particles have been ignited to brilliance during the progress of the meteor, and they still continue to glow until their store of luminous energy shall have become exhausted.

The meteoric streak is subjected to the same influences as those which affect an aqueous cloud in the lofty regions of the atmosphere. It must be dissipated by air currents, and accordingly we observe that the trail, which was at first so nearly straight, becomes bent and curved, becomes sometimes even serpentine, ere its outlines have gradually softened out and all visible traces of the meteor have vanished.

I have thought it convenient to illustrate the leading phenomena of the meteors by reference to some of the more imposing of these bodies, but it must not be supposed that the smaller meteors, and even the tiniest of shooting stars, is unworthy of our close attention. Indeed, the smaller shooting stars, by their greater frequency, have taught us much more about meteors than we could have ever learned from the great fire-balls. Even regarded from the merely spectacular point of view, the splendours of the latter are sometimes eclipsed by the gorgeous showers of comparatively small meteors, to which we shall presently have to refer.

We have spoken of dazzling fire-balls

which generate for a brief moment a light which eye-witnesses with possibly a pardonable exaggeration have ventured to compare with the beams of the sun himself. Other meteors are described as being as bright as the full moon. Descending still lower in the scale of splendour we read of fire-balls as bright as Venus or Jupiter, as bright as Sirius, or as a star of the first magnitude. With each step downwards in brilliancy we find the meteors to increase in numerical abundance. Shooting stars as bright as the stars of the second or third magnitudes are comparatively frequent; they are still more numerous of the fourth and fifth magnitudes. Every night brings its tale of shooting stars whose brightness is just sufficient to impress the unaided eye. Nor do the myriads of shooting stars which even the most attentive eye can detect represent a fraction of their entire number. As there are telescopic stars which the unaided eye cannot see, so it might fairly be conjectured that as we can trace meteors of successive stages of brightness down to the limit of unaided eye visibility, so there may be meteors still and still smaller which would be detected could we only direct a telescope towards them. If it be impossible to turn a telescope with sufficient dexterity to scan a visible shooting star, how, it may well be asked, can we use the telescope to discover shooting stars which the unaided eye cannot see? We must here depend entirely, or almost entirely, on the chapter of accidents. The observer who really sought to discover telescopic shooting stars would generally find that many hours of watching were rewarded with but very meagre results. No doubt, if at certain particular times he directed his telescope to certain particular constellations he would have more prospect of success than if he merely pointed his telescope at random. But though the experience of actually looking out for telescopic shooting stars has not led to much, yet every astronomer who is in the habit of making nightly observations with a good telescope in almost any branch of astronomical work, will frequently find a bright streak of light flash across his field. This is a meteor, and a comparison with any stars which may happen to be in the field of view will probably show him that the object was far too small to have been seen with the naked eye. We must remember that the field of view of a large telescope is but an extremely small fraction of the entire extent of the heavens. It would be easy to show by the doctrine of

chances that if a telescopic shooting star were to dive to extinction into the air, the chance against its being seen by any particular telescope at that moment directed to the sky would be at least fifty thousand to one; but every astronomer knows that the perception of a telescopic shooting star is a common incident in the observatory. If, therefore, we reflect that for every one that is seen there must be thousands which dart in unseen, we obtain an imposing idea of the myriads of shooting stars that daily rain in upon our globe.

The world is thus pelted on all sides day and night, year after year, century after century, by troops and battalions of shooting stars of every size, from objects not much larger than grains of sand up to mighty masses which can only be expressed in tons. In the lapse of ages our globe must thus be gradually growing by the everlasting deposit of meteoric debris. Looking back through the vistas of time past, it becomes impossible to estimate how much of the solid earth may not owe its origin to this celestial source.

It will greatly promote our comprehension of these bodies if we group them into classes so as to discover some of the laws by which their movements are guided. The first and most important truth with regard to the recurrence of the meteors is their occasional appearance in what are known as "meteoric showers." During such displays it sometimes happens that shooting stars in shoals break forth simultaneously, so as to produce a spectacle which we now regard as of the utmost beauty and interest, but which in earlier times has often been the source of the direst terror and dismay.

Let me, for the sake of illustration, give some account of one of these great showers of shooting stars. It occurred on the 13th November, 1866. Doubtless, many of those who read these lines will remember that event. It dwells in my memory along with one or two other superb astronomical spectacles that it has been my privilege to witness. I have never had the good fortune to behold a total eclipse of the sun. This is, I apprehend, about the most sublime of all the occasional phenomena which the heavens present to us. I have, however, seen the great comet of 1858, the shower of shooting stars in 1866, and the transit of Venus in 1882. The last was of interest rather from its rarity and its delicacy, than from its actual appearance when regarded as a spectacle. Of the phenomena in the heavens

which I have seen, I must give the first place to the wonderful shower of shooting stars in November, 1866. Although I have previously had occasion to describe my experience as an eye-witness of this event, yet I think it will bear telling again.

In the year 1866 I occupied the position of astronomer to the late Earl of Rosse, who is specially known to fame as having been the builder of the greatest telescope the world has ever seen. This grand instrument at the time I was in charge of it was devoted to the observation of the nebulae, a branch of astronomical work for which the vast size of the great reflector made it eminently suited. In clear weather it was my duty, and I may truly add my delight, to scan the heavens during the long winter nights, for the purpose of sketching and of measuring those dim, faint nebulae which seem to lie on the confines of the visible universe. The giant telescope is in the open air; it swings between two walls of castellated masonry, and by ladders and galleries of ingenious construction the observer is enabled to reach the mouth of the telescope in all its positions. I say mouth of the telescope, for a reflector of this description is not employed like the ordinary telescope, *through* which we look. In the reflector we must get access to the top and gaze down on the reflections of the stars in the great mirror below. As the telescope is sixty feet long it thus follows that the observers are sometimes sixty feet high in the air, and as the telescope is placed in a very open situation in Lord Rosse's beautiful demesne at Parsonstown, the position for observing the shooting star shower was an exceptionally favourable one. Beside the observer an attendant stands, whose duty it is to move the gallery backwards and forwards, so as to keep the observer conveniently placed near the eye-piece of the telescope. The memorable night between November 13th and 14th, 1866, was a very fine one; the moon was absent, a very important consideration in regard to the effectiveness of the display. The stars shone out clearly, and I was diligently examining some faint nebulae in the eye-piece of the great telescope when a sudden exclamation from the attendant caused me to look up from the eye-piece just in time to catch a glimpse of a fine shooting star, which, like a great sky-rocket, but without its accompanying noise, shot across the sky over our heads. About this time I was joined at the telescope by Lord Oxmantown, as he then was, but who is now the present distinguished Earl of Rosse, and we resumed

our observations of the nebulae, but a grander spectacle soon diverted our attention from these faint objects. The great shooting star which had already appeared was merely the herald announcing the advent of a mighty host. At first the meteors came singly, and then, as the hours wore on, they arrived in twos and in threes, in dozens, in scores, in hundreds. Our work at the telescope was forsaken; we went to the top of the castellated walls of the great telescope and abandoned ourselves to the enjoyment of the gorgeous spectacle. To number the meteors baffled all our arithmetic; while we strove to count on one side many of them hurried by on the other. The vivid brilliance of the meteors was sharply contrasted with the silence of their flight. We heard on that marvellous night no sounds save those with which we were familiar. The hooting of the owls, the scream of the water-hen, and the occasional hoarse note of the heron from the adjoining lake were present, but the flights of the celestial rockets were attended with no noises that we could hear. The meteors were no doubt somewhat various as to size, but the characteristic feature of this shower, as contrasted with another great shower I have also seen, was the remarkable brilliance of the shooting stars. It was their exceptional splendour even more than their innumerable profusion that gave to the shower its peculiarity. As to the actual brilliancy of the meteors I am enabled to give the accurate estimate made by Mr. Baxendell at Manchester, where the shower was well seen. Out of every hundred of these meteors ten were brighter than a first magnitude star, and two or three of them were brighter than Sirius. Fifteen out of each hundred were between the first and second magnitudes, and twenty-five were between the second and third magnitudes, while the remainder were smaller. These results may be placed in a somewhat more simple aspect in a different way. Think of the brightness of the seven stars in that most familiar of all the constellations, the Great Bear; about half of the meteors noticed during the continuance of the shower were as bright as, or brighter than, the stars of the Great Bear. The remaining half of visible meteors must be compared with stars of a fainter description.

I have described how the great November shower of stars began, but I have not asserted that the display came upon us entirely by surprise. I certainly was surprised at its magnificence, but we confidently anticipated that a shooting star shower of some notable

kind would occur on that very night. Hew, it may well be asked, could we know that such a spectacle might be expected? The story is a wonderful romance in modern science.

We expect that the sun will rise to-morrow morning, now why do we so expect it? Without entering into any profound disquisition on the subject we may say that the practical grounds of this expectation depend upon the fact that we have always found that the sun does rise, and that as this operation has continued with unflinching regularity for untold ages, we have reason to anticipate a repetition of the phenomenon to-morrow as well as on the following mornings. It was on similar grounds that we were able to predict the occurrence of that great November shower.

Just thirty-three years previously, in the year 1833, a splendid shower of shooting stars had been witnessed in the same month of November and on the same day of the month. That two great showers should both have occurred, at the same epoch of the year, after an interval of thirty-three years, was in itself a circumstance not a little remarkable. But this might have been regarded as merely a coincidence, if we had only been acquainted with these two showers, and if we did not know their true relations. Researches into history have, however, brought to light the interesting fact that these two showers were not mere isolated events, but that they were only the two latest members of a long and connected series of great November showers of meteors. As we look back through the records of the past we find occasional mention of what can only have been great displays of shooting stars. Within the last century or two such gorgeous phenomena were witnessed in an age when scientific knowledge enabled the spectacle to be in some degree appreciated, but as we peer back still earlier and earlier we find the records of these great events assume a different complexion. Many centuries ago the advent of a great shooting-star shower would be viewed with terror by a superstitious and an ignorant people. The records of the event which might be preserved would be tinged with such credulity, and so devoid of accurate description, that all we can elicit are the facts that on the dates specified certain celestial phenomena were witnessed which we now know to have been showers of shooting stars.

The earliest of these records is nearly a thousand years old, and from that period

down to the present the earth has probably been the scene of about thirty or more superb showers belonging to the system we are now considering. Whether all these displays were actually witnessed we do not know. Thick and cloudy weather would be sufficient to have obscured even the most splendid of these showers. Bright moonlight would have greatly impaired the effectiveness of others. Even those which were seen may not have been all recorded. Even all that have been recorded may not yet have disclosed themselves to the diligent search of Professor H. Newton and the other astronomers who have laboured at this interesting subject. The records which have been found are not always easy to interpret. In the days when astrologers taught, and when the people believed, that the configurations of the stars were designed to shadow forth the vicissitudes of human affairs, it was not likely that any very lucid interpretation would be given to such an event as a shower of shooting stars. Such phenomena have been regarded as miraculous, and they were often thought to be portents conveying and threatening divine wrath. They were occasionally interpreted as gracious manifestations of divine approval.

Some important facts with regard to ancient shooting-star showers have, however, survived the thousand and one casualties to which historical records are exposed. A careful discussion of those which are sufficiently accurate to be intelligible discloses to us the startling fact that in general every thirty-three years a grand shooting-star shower has rained down on our earth. The chief qualifications of this statement would be twofold. In the first place the interval has been occasionally thirty-four years instead of thirty-three. In the second place, it sometimes happens that two consecutive years are rendered memorable by great showers. At present the day of the year on which this particular shower is wont to appear is about the 13th November; but in earlier ages we find the date to shift slowly towards the commencement of the year. Thus the display which took place in A.D. 1698 was on the 9th of November; while, looking back still further to one of the very earliest records, viz., that of the year 934, we find the date has receded to October 14th. This change of the day on which the shower occurs is of profound theoretical importance in connection with the discovery of the orbit which these meteors pursue. The advance of the date is, however, so slow that for the past

few generations as well as for the next, we may sufficiently define this particular shower by the meteors which enliven the skies between the 12th and the 14th of November. In fact, the poetaster has parodied the well-known lines for the days of the month by a similar effort, which will serve to remind us also of another periodic shower of shooting stars which occurs in August. He writes :—

" If you November's stars would see,
From twelfth to fourteenth watching be.
In August too stars shine through heaven,
On nights between nine and eleven."

These lines are intended to imply that the

days named will usually bring, in every November, a few meteors at all events belonging to the grand shower. These are stragglers, as it were, from the mighty host which visits us three times in the century.

Astronomers have a special name for this group of November meteors. They are called the "Leonids." To explain why this name has been given, and why it is appropriate, we must dwell on an important part of the phenomena of the shower, to which we have not yet alluded; and this we shall do in a short concluding paper.

THE AZORES.

By PROFESSOR THORPE, F.R.S.

SECOND PAPER.

ALTHOUGH the Azoreans call themselves Portuguese, their general character differs in many respects from that of their continental brethren. It is not necessary to quote Byron's well-known opinion of the Portuguese to give point to that difference. The character of the Azorean is moulded by the conditions of his existence and by the circumstances of his insular position. His frequent battles with wind and water make him hardy and self-reliant; his constant struggle for a living on a land where he has scarce elbow-room, and among a population denser even than that of Belgium, makes him prudent and thrifty. Nobody is very poor in the Azores, and few are very rich, unless, indeed, a man's riches are measured by the fewness of his wants. "That man," said Cobbet, "who by his own and his family's labour can provide a sufficiency of food and raiment and a comfortable dwelling-place is not a poor man." Of course everything turns upon the man's idea of sufficiency and comfort. The standard of an Azorean's requirements is certainly not high. A crust of maize-bread and a cucumber or some sardines and fruit serve him for breakfast; his mid-day meal is simply a second edition of breakfast; supper furnishes the mainstay of the day in the form of a thin watery broth compounded of maize-bread, pork fat, and a plentiful supply of garlic. Flesh, meat, and tea, are only tasted on fête-days. An unusually hot Sunday afternoon at skittles or ring-ball may tempt him to a pint of his red astringent island wine, and the presence of friends may lead to the sacrifice of a chicken in the evening, or the preparation of a fry of such fish as

chixarros or grapão which the boys may have caught among the rocks. Such fare seems poor material to raise a people on, but the men are fine handsome fellows, in stature of about middle height, sallow oval face with prominent cheek bones, well-formed slightly aquiline nose, large mouth, and magnificent teeth. The women as a class are distinctly inferior to the men in physique, although really handsome women are by no means uncommon. They have, as a rule, the black eyes and hair without the yellow faces of their Portuguese sisters, but now and again one meets with the flaxen tresses and deep blue eyes which tell of their Flemish ancestry. Mothers at sixteen, their hard out-door life makes them old in looks when they are but young in years. Matters take their own time in the Azores. There is a philosophic contentment with the things that are that would please even Mr. Ruskin. Oxen tread out the grain, which the women grind in the most primitive of hand-mills. The ploughs are of the old Roman type—a board shod with a bit of iron—and women drag their little harrows over the stony fields. Until a few years ago a carriage was unknown in the islands. One occasionally sees a lumbering bullock-cart, wooden wheels and axle turning together with that piercing squeal so dear to the ears of the stolid beast that draws it. Everything that can possibly be placed on donkey-back is so carried. The relations of Sancho and Dapple were hardly more tender than those which subsist between an Azorean and his Jack. His ass is as much a member of his family as the "gentleman that pays the rint" is, or used to be, in an Irish house-

hold. He is the playmate of the children, and the patient drudge that brings home the water and the fire-wood. Of course he has his troubles, but the Azorean is too good-natured and easy-going to treat his beast harshly. Nothing is more amusing than to hear the colloquies which are occasionally addressed to these animals. They are reasoned with, cajoled, or railed at as if they were human beings. The ass that stumbles or inadvertently strays on to the stony part of the road, or goes too quickly, ought, one would think, to wince as much under the withering sarcasms to which he is then treated as under the blows with which his error may at the same time be visited.

The cottages of the peasantry usually contain two, or at most three rooms. You enter from the street directly into the living room, which during the day-time gets its light through the half-opened door. The floor is of earth, and made flat and smooth by the tread of generations of naked feet. At one side or in the corner is the bed, covered with a neat coverlet fringed with lace or crochet work. On the floor is usually a small piece of straw matting, on which the women squat by day and the children sleep at night. There are seldom any chairs, but a low wooden chest or two standing near the walls, and containing the household linen and apparel of the family, serve as seats. At one end of the room is the never-failing altar, with its images and candles and gaudy flowers. The rough lava walls are occasionally whitewashed internally, but most frequently not, and are adorned with a few highly-coloured pictures of favourite saints. Here and there one sees a cutting from an illustrated paper—scraps from the *Illustrated London News* or *Harper's Weekly*—gifts from generous sea captains, which quite startle you, as recalling the existence of the busy active world that lies so far outside these little lonely islands. Large numbers of Pico and Fayal men go over to the States, or ship on the American whalers which put into Horta or Flores. They are excellent sailors, and a whaler's life of hardship and adventure tries their qualities of sobriety and steadiness pretty severely. The majority of them come back in a few years with a couple of hundred dollars or so to settle down on their beloved islands as the proud possessors of three acres and a cow. Men from St. Michael's and St. Mary's go out to the Brazils and to the Sandwich Islands, and return with their savings to end their days at home in comparative ease and comfort.

The affection with which the people regard their island homes is almost ludicrously pathetic. A Corvo man who may have spent half his life in California or among the large cities of the Eastern States of America will declare that there is no spot on earth with half the charms of the one tiny village which nestles on a hillside of that rugged and weather-beaten little island.

On the afternoon of the fourth day out, the *Açor* dropped her anchor in the Bay of Ponta Delgada, the capital town of St. Michael's. The city was evidently in a state of great excitement. Troops were under arms in the streets, and the air was filled with the strains of martial music and the din of cannon. Naturally our first impression was that an insurrection had broken out. It turned out, however, that the occasion for all this hubbub was the return to Terceira of the general commanding the military division within which St. Michael's is comprised. The embarkation of the general was an affair of much pomp and circumstance. The way to the quay was lined with troops, and the band of the regiment discoursed the national airs from the top of the steps; but in the eyes of the stony-hearted Briton the ceremony suffered somewhat in point of dignity from the spectacle of a number of martial heroes hugging and patting one another's backs, and kissing each other on both cheeks with an appearance of much fervour.

The *Açor* left Ponta Delgada in the evening, and shortly after daybreak we were awakened by the sound of cannon signalling our approach, or rather that of the general, to Angra, the chief town of Terceira.

Angra do Heroísmo is the metropolis of the Azores, and contains about 5,000 people. Here resides whatever there is of rank, beauty, and fashion in the islands. The Terceirans, indeed, plume themselves on the polish of their society and the elegance of its manners. The town, as seen from the sea, is well situated in a hollow between the red headland of Monte Brasil and the flanks of the great Caldeira at the back. It is the seat of the military government of the islands, and to judge from the display of fortifications, a place of considerable strength. A Terceiran, who pointed out the Fort St. John the Baptist, told us with pride that it had never yet been taken, but his glow of exultation was perceptibly dimmed when we ventured to ask if anybody had ever attempted to take it. Still, Angra has played no inconsiderable part in the history of Portugal. In 1829 the adherents of Maria da

"My aunt."

"Yes, wish she wasn't so old, Harry, and had some money; I'd marry her."

"Don't be a fool."

"Not going to be; so I tell you I'm off."

"No, no, don't go. This place will be unbearable when you are gone."

"Can't help it, dear boy. I must do something to increase my income, and if you will not join in and make a fortune, why I must go and find some one who will."

"But I dare not, Vic."

"You gave me your word—the word of a gentleman. I ask you to borrow the money for a week or two, and then we would replace it, and nobody be a bit the wiser, while we shall be on the high-road to fortune and Fair France."

"I tell you I dare not."

"Then I shall do it myself."

"No, that you shall not."

"Then you shall."

"I daren't."

"Bah! what a milksop you are; you have nothing to care for here. Miss Van Heldre has pitched you over because you are now her father's clerk."

"Let that be, please."

"And taken up with Mr. Bagpipes."

"Do you want to quarrel, Pradelle?"

"Not I, dear boy; I'm dumb."

He said no more on that subject, but he had said enough. That was the truth then. Madelaine had given him up on that account, and the sting rankled in Harry's breast.

"Money goes to the bank every day, you say?" said Pradelle.

"Yes. Crampton takes it."

"But that sum of money in notes? How much is there of that?"

"Five hundred."

"Why don't that go to the bank?"

"I don't know. A deposit, I think: likely to be called for."

"May be; but that's our game, Harry. The other could not be managed without being missed; this, you see, is not in use."

"Pradelle, it's madness."

"Say Vic, dear boy."

"Well, Vic, I say it's madness."

"Nothing of the kind. It's making use of a little coin that you can get at easily. Why, hang it, old fellow, you talk as if I were asking you to steal the money."

"Hush! Don't talk like that."

"Well, you aggravate me so. Now, am I trying to serve you, or am I not?"

"To serve me, of course."

"Yes, and you behave like a child."

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"I want to behave like an honourable man to my father's friend."

"Oh, if you are going to preach I'm off."

"I'm not going to preach."

"Then do act like a man. Here is your opportunity. You know what the old chap said about the tide in the affairs of men?"

Harry nodded.

"Well, your tide is at its height. You are going to seize your opportunity, and then you can do as you like. Why you might turn the tables on Miss Madelaine."

"If you don't want to quarrel just leave her name alone," said Harry, with a bulldog-like growl.

"Oh, I'll never mention it again if you like. Now, then, once for all, is it business?"

Harry was silent for a few minutes, and then replied—

"Yes."

"Your hand on it."

Harry stretched out his hand unwillingly, and it was taken and held.

"I shall hold you to it now, my lad. Now, then, when is it to be?"

"Oh, first opportunity."

"No; it's going to be now—to-night—as soon as it's dark."

"Nonsense, it must be some day—when Crampton is not there."

"That means it will not be done at all, for Crampton never leaves; you told me so. Look here, Harry Vine, if you borrow the amount then, and it's missed, of course you are asked directly, and there you are. No, my lad, you'll have to go to-night."

"But it will be like housebreaking."

"Bah! You'll go quietly in by the back way, make your way along the passage to Van Heldre's room, take the keys down from the hook——"

"How did you know that the keys hung there?"

"Because, my dear little man, I have wormed it all out of you by degrees. To continue: you will go down the glass passage, open the office door, go to the safe, open that, get the two hundred——"

"Two hundred! You said fifty would do."

"Yes, but then I said a hundred, and now I think two will be better. Easier paid back. You can work more spiritedly with large sums than with small. You've got to do this, Harry Vine, so no nonsense."

Harry was silent.

"When you have the notes, you will look all up as before, and then if they are missing

before we return them, which is not likely, who can say that you have been there? Bah! don't be so squeamish. You've got to do that to-night. You have promised, and you shall. It is for your good, my lad."

"Yes, and yours," said Harry gloomily.

"Of course. Emancipation for us both."

Harry was silent, and soon after they rose and strolled back to the old house, where through the open window came the strains of music, and the voices of Madelaine and Louise harmonised in a duet.

"One less at Van Heldre's, lad. The old man will be having his evening pipe, and the doors open. Nothing could be better. Half-past nine, mind, while they are at tea. It will be quite dark then."

Harry was silent, and the two young men entered and sat down, their coming seeming to cast a damp on the little party, for the music was put aside and work taken up, Vine being busy with some notes of his day's observations of the actions of a newly found mollusc.

Tea was brought in at about a quarter-past nine, and Pradelle rose and went to the window.

"What a beautiful night, Harry," he said. "Coming for half-an-hour's stroll before bed?"

"Don't you want some tea?" said Harry, loudly.

"No. Do you?"

"No," said Harry shortly; and he rose and went out, followed by his friend.

"You mean this then," he said, as soon as they were out on the cliff.

"No; but you do. There is just time for it, so now go."

Harry hesitated for a few minutes, and then strode off down toward the town, Pradelle keeping step with him, till they reached the street where a lane branched off, going round by the back of Van Heldre's house, but on a higher level, a flight of steps leading down into the half garden, half yard, overlooked by the houses at the back, whose basements were level with Van Heldre's first floor.

The time selected by Pradelle for the carrying out of his scheme happened to be Crampton's club night, and, according to his weekly custom, he had gone to the old-fashioned inn where it was kept, passing a muffled-up figure as he went along, the said figure turning in at one of the low entrances leading to dock premises as the old clerk came out, so that he did not see the face.

It was a trifling matter, but it was not the

first time Crampton had seen this figure loitering about at night, and it somehow impressed him so that he did not enjoy his one glass of spirits and water and his pipe. But the matter seemed to have slipped his memory for the time that he was transacting his club business, making entries and the like. Later on it came back with renewed force.

Harry and Pradelle parted in the dark lane with very few more words spoken, the understanding being that they should meet at home at half-past nine.

As soon as the former was alone he walked slowly on round the front of Van Heldre's house, and there, according to custom, sat the merchant smoking his nightly pipe, resting one arm upon the table, with the shaded lamp shining down on his bald forehead, and a thoughtful, dreamy look in his eyes. Mrs. Van Heldre was seated opposite working and respecting her husband's thoughtful mood, for he was in low spirits respecting the wreck of his ship. Insurance made up the monetary loss, but nothing could restore the poor fellows who had gone down.

Harry stood on the opposite side watching thoughtfully.

"It would be very easy," he said to himself. "Just as we planned, I can slip round to the back, drop in the garden, go in, take the keys, get the money, lock up again, and go and hang up the keys. Yes: how easy for any one who knows, and how risky it seems for him to leave his place like that. But then it is people's want of knowledge which forms the safest lock."

"Yes," he said, after a pause, as he stood there in profound ignorance of the fact that the muffled-up figure which had taken Crampton's attention was in a low dark doorway, watching his every movement. "Yes: it would be very easy: and in spite of all your precious gloss, Master Victor Pradelle, I should feel the next moment that I had been a thief; and I'll drudge as a clerk till I'm ninety-nine before I'll do anything of the kind."

He thrust his hands into his pockets and turned off down by the harbour side, and hardly had he reached the water when Pradelle walked slowly up to the front of the house, noted the positions of those within by taking his stand just beneath the arched doorway opposite, and so close to the watcher that they nearly touched.

The next moment Pradelle had passed on.

"I knew he hadn't the pluck," he muttered bitterly. "A contemptible hound! Well, he shall see."

Without a moment's hesitation, and as if he were quite at home about the place, Pradelle went round to the narrow back lane and stood by the gate leading down the steps into the yard. As he pressed the gate it gave way, and he could see that the doorway into the glazed passage was open, for the light in the hall shone through.

There was no difficulty at all; and after a moment's hesitation he stepped lightly down, ready with an excuse that he was seeking Harry, if he should meet any one; but the excuse was not needed. He walked softly and boldly into the passage, turned to his right, and entered the back room, which acted as Van Heldre's private office and study. The keys lay where he knew them to be—in a drawer, which he opened and took them out, and then walked straight along the glazed passage to the office. The door yielded to the key, and he entered. The inner office was locked, but that was opened by a second key, and the safe showed dimly by the reflected lights which shone through the barred window.

"How easy these things are!" said Pradelle to himself, as he unlocked the safe; "enough to tempt a man to be a burglar."

The iron door creaked faintly as he drew it open, and then began to feel about hastily, and with the perspiration streaming from his forehead. Books in plenty, but no notes.

With an exclamation of impatience, he drew out a little match-box, struck a light, and saw that there was an iron drawer low down. The flame went out, but he had seen enough, and stooping he dragged out the drawer, thrust in his hand, which came in contact with a leaden paper weight, beneath which, tied round with tape, was a bundle of notes.

"Hah!" he muttered with a half laugh, "I can't stop to count you. Yes, I must, or they'll miss 'em. It's tempting though. Humph! tied both——"

Thud!

One heavy blow on the back of Victor Pradelle's head which sent him staggering forward against the door of the safe; then he felt in a confused, half-stunned way that something had been snatched from his hand. A dead silence followed, during which his head swam, but he had sufficient sense left to totter across the outer office, and along the passage to the garden yard.

How he got outside into the little lane he could not afterwards remember, his next recollection being of sitting down on the steps by the water-side bathing his face.

Five minutes before Harry Vine had been in that very spot, from which he turned to go home.

"Let him say what he likes," muttered the young man, "I must have been mad to listen to him. Why——"

Harry Vine stopped short, for a thought had struck him like a flash.

How it was—why he should have such a suspicion he could not tell; but a terrible thought had seemed to burn into his brain. Then he felt paralysed as he shivered, and uttering an ejaculation full of rage and anger, he started off at a run toward Van Heldre's place.

"Nonsense!" he said to himself, and he checked his headlong speed. "What folly!"

He walked on past a group of seamen, who had just quitted a public-house, and was about to turn up the lane which led to his home, when the thought came once more.

"Curse him!" he said, half aloud, "I'd sooner kill him," and hurrying back, he made straight for the lane behind Van Heldre's.

The gate yielded, he stepped down quickly into the yard, walked to the open door, looked to the right toward the hall, and then to the left toward the office. A dim light shone down the passage, and his heart seemed to stand still. The office door was open, and without hesitation he turned down the passage panting with horror, as he felt that his suspicions were confirmed. He crossed the outer room, the inner door was shut, and entering, he paused for a moment.

"Vic!" he whispered harshly.

All was still.

Trembling now with agitation, he was rapidly crossing to the safe when he stepped on something which gave beneath his feet, and he nearly fell headlong.

Recovering himself, he stooped down to pick up the heavy ebony ruler used by old Crampton, and polished by rubs of his coat-tail till it shone.

Harry felt giddy now with excitement, but he went to the safe door, felt that it was swung open, and groaning to himself, "Too late, too late!" he bent his head and felt for the drawer.

Empty!

"You scoundrel!" he groaned; "but he shall give up every note, and——"

Once more he felt as if paralysed, for as he turned from the safe he knew that he was not alone in the office.

Caught in the act! Burglary—the open safe—the notes gone, who would believe in his innocence?

He could think of nothing else, as he heard Van Heldre's voice in the darkness—one fierce angry utterance—"Who's there?"

"He does not know me," flashed through Harry Vine's brain.

"You villain!" cried Van Heldre, springing at him.

It was the instinctive act of one smitten by terror, despair, shame, and the desire to escape—a mad act, but prompted by the ter-

rible position. As Van Heldre sprang at him and grasped at his breast, Harry Vine struck with all his might, the heavy ruler fell with a sickening crash upon the unguarded head, he felt a sudden tug, and with a groan his father's friend sank senseless on the floor.

For one moment Harry Vine stood bending over his victim; then uttering a hoarse sigh, he leaped over the body and fled.

ST. PAUL'S HOME.

Short Sunday Readings for April.

By THE REV. JAMES STALKER, M.A.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalms cxxvii., cxxviii., and Luke x. 38-42.

WHETHER or not St. Paul was ever married is a point on which students of his life are not agreed. The settlement of it depends on whether he was ever a member of the Sanhedrim, the members of which are understood to have been all married men, and on the meaning of a passage in his writings in which he seems to speak of himself as a widower. The balance of probability appears to lean to the positive side; and the possibility that at the root of his public career there may have lain the private sorrow of a great bereavement is a circumstance not to be neglected in the study of his life and teaching.

But it is certain that, if he was ever married, his home must have been early broken up by death. When he comes into prominence as an apostle he is evidently a wifeless man; and, though honouring the institution of marriage, he considered it a necessity of the peculiar sphere of service which Providence had appointed him to remain in this condition.

To those who think of him only as the missionary, invading and subduing city after city with apostolic zeal, or as the ecclesiastic, unceasingly occupied with the founding and organization of churches, or as the dogmatist, laying down for all time the outlines of Christian belief, it may seem that to such a man this homeless condition can have been of little consequence, because a temperament so high-strung and self-sufficing has little need for the solace and the charities of the domestic hearth. But those who know him better are aware that he had a totally different side, and that to no man can the lack of all that makes home a name

of charm have meant more than it did to him. Though the manliest of men, he had in his nature a streak of sensibility almost womanly in its intensity. Though in public he displayed a courage which rose to every emergency, and a presence of mind which made him equal to every combination of circumstances, however novel or dangerous, the reaction of feeling which ensued in private when the tension of publicity was relaxed was often extreme, and he who in the face of opposition had been bold as a lion might frequently be seen among his friends dissolved in tears. He was shy even about his bodily presence, which made it a pain to him to meet the critical eyes of strangers; and the sufferings through which he passed must often have left him in a condition in which he urgently needed the comfort and the care which only home can afford.

Perhaps his need of such solace was never greater than when, at the close of his second missionary journey, he first entered the city of Corinth. During this journey, indeed, he had displayed the most extraordinary enterprise, and the audacity of his faith had been rewarded with corresponding success; he may almost be said to have conquered a new continent for the gospel. These public successes had, however, been won amidst many sufferings and discouragements, which at the close of the journey became exceedingly acute. They culminated at Athens. There he was at the centre of the Greek world, where the battle of the gospel had to be lost or won. It was apparently lost; for, though he put forth a great effort, it had very little effect. St. Paul was accustomed, when he preached, to meet with opposition, which often rose to wild and murderous fury, but in Athens he encountered something worse than opposition. Even opposition is proof that the blow

has told; but the Athenians treated him with indifference; they turned away on Mars' Hill and left him speaking without an audience. This cut him more deeply than Jewish thongs or Roman rods. He was never more depressed than when he crossed from Athens to the neighbouring Corinth; and in Corinth, for a time at least, his discouragement continued to deepen. Describing his own condition, as it then was, he says, in writing afterwards to the Corinthians, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." St. Paul trembling! Surely he is the last man we should have expected to see in such a state! But at that time the worst terror which the world contained had risen on him; for it seemed as if the gospel, which had everywhere else proved the power of God unto salvation, was in Greece to be a failure.

It was at this juncture in St. Paul's career that the Providence, whose servant he was, opened to the weary and heavy-laden apostle the door of the only earthly home he ever had after he became a Christian. This was the house of Aquila and Priscilla, with whom he lodged for a year and a half at Corinth, and afterwards for three years at Ephesus, receiving from them the utmost kindness and attention that devoted friendship could render.

Looking back, after these years were over, on all he had received at their hands, St. Paul breaks out into this lofty strain of gratitude: "Unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles." And to this day all lovers of the apostle who know what these two did for him are still giving them thanks. We thank them on his behalf; but we can thank them also on our own; for their life, when reconstructed out of the scattered notices of the New Testament, is a priceless example of how common life may be glorified by Christianity, and how the humblest hands may add a stone to the fabric of that temple of which apostles laid the foundations, and which when completed is to be the ornament of eternity.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read 1 Samuel ix. and Acts xviii. 1-11.

Aquila and Priscilla are Roman names, the latter being a pet form of Prisca, as St. Paul also calls his friend once (2 Tim. iv. 19). This couple were not, however, Romans, but Jews. In those days it was not unusual for Jews to adopt, for business convenience or for other reasons, Latin or Greek names in addition to those by which they were called

among themselves. Sometimes they abandoned the Jewish name altogether in preference for the other; as Saul himself, for example, became Paul.

Aquila and Priscilla belonged originally to Pontus, a province of Asia Minor, lying on the southern shore of the Black Sea. But they emigrated, probably in pursuit of business, to Rome, the London of those days. There, however, they were not permitted to stay, but were driven forth, during the reign of Claudius, by one of those cruel edicts of expulsion which for so many centuries have pursued their unhappy race over the face of the earth. They turned their exiled footsteps eastward to Corinth, the commercial capital of Greece; and there they arrived and set up their home just in time to receive St. Paul when he came to that city.

Very likely it may have seemed to them at the time a heavy calamity to be driven from Rome; and, as they pursued their melancholy way eastward, they had no thought that they were going to meet the great opportunity of their life; but He in whose hand are the destinies of all His creatures was conducting them, and through darkness He led them into light. There is nothing more mysterious than the intersection of lives which are intended to influence one another. Aquila and Priscilla were born at a great distance from St. Paul—they in Pontus, on one side of Asia Minor, and he in Tarsus, on the other. They went still farther apart when they moved out of their birth-places—they going west to Rome, he east to Jerusalem. But in spirit their paths diverged more widely still; for they went into commercial life and settled down in the capital of worldly business, whilst he chose the life of learning and settled in the seat of ecclesiastical exclusiveness. Yet God had designed that their orbits should intersect, and step by step they came closer and closer till they met. Thus from the ends of the world can He bring those together who are meant to make and mould each other's destiny.

It is interesting to note the circumstances which at last brought them into close contact. It was doubtless in church that St. Paul met most of those to whom he proved an influence. In the synagogue or the Christian place of worship he preached and they profited. But with Priscilla and Aquila he appears first to have met in business. They were of the same handicraft as he—makers of tents of *cilicium* or goat's-hair cloth, which formed a well-known article of commerce in those days in all the countries bordering on

the Mediterranean. It is difficult to realise that the first thing St. Paul had to do when he entered a town was to seek for work. To us he is so great that, as he leaves one city and passes on to another, we almost imagine that he must have been riding in a car of victory, and that his arrival must have agitated the whole place. Nothing probably could be less like the reality. Of all who passed the city gates on the day of his arrival he was perhaps the least noticed. His dress was mean, he carried in his wallet the tools of a mechanic, he asked the way to a cheap lodging, and, when he had deposited his slender effects, he had to go out and search for employment.

Wandering through the streets of Corinth with this object, he came upon the house of Aquila and Priscilla, where the signs of his craft met his eye. Going in, he asked if they required a workman. Fortunately they had a vacant place; and part of his wages, it was agreed, should be that he should lodge and board with them. It continued, we know, to be important for St. Paul, all the time he was in Corinth, to have regular employment, for he had special reasons for refusing to accept the smallest pecuniary support from the Corinthians. So he continued to ply the instruments of his craft in the workshop of Aquila and Priscilla; and here it was that the tentmaker and his wife learned from his lips the words of eternal life.

Business brings people together as it brought these three; and sometimes it is with the like blessed results. The coming of a godly servant into a family may prove an incalculable blessing to the children. The kind of companion a young man goes to lodge with, when business brings him to the city, may be the determining influence which shapes his whole existence. The apprentice may receive a truly Christian conception of business life from observing the character and conduct of his master. But might not such results be far more common than they are if Christian men were more like St. Paul? He was not one who could sit long in the workshop with others without letting them know Whose he was and Whom he served. In prison at Rome, when he was bound with a chain to a soldier of the imperial guard, who was changed every few hours, his influence on these soldiers became so strong that Christianity spread through the whole barracks. So St. Paul's ordinary employment opened up to him opportunities of doing good; for everything becomes a weapon

and an instrument in the hands of a master. Aquila and Priscilla soon discovered that in their workman they had found the best of friends; they had received into their household an angel unawares; and although, as has been hinted, his lodging may at first have been part of his wages, they were soon eager to invest it with all the attractions of home for him whom they loved as his children in the Lord.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Ruth i. and Matt. xvi. 21-28.

It was but a humble home that Aquila and Priscilla were able to offer to their friend; and touching it is to think that in such centres of culture and influence as Corinth and Ephesus they should have been the most constant company of the greatest spirit of that age. His proper associates, one might think, would have been the most brilliant and distinguished in the world of his day. Yet perhaps with these humble people he felt himself happy enough; for home does not need to be brilliant in order to rest and satisfy the heart. To one who has been standing in the fierce light of publicity and playing his part before critical eyes, it may be the most delightful relief, when the strain is over, to steal up to the nursery and play among his children. To the student who has been living amidst the dazzling cross-lights of philosophy and fighting hard for a place in the competition of the class-room, how restful it is to get away from the hot arena back to the green fields and familiar objects of the country and to the wholesome fireside talk of common people! So St. Paul, in whose mind the greatest thoughts of that age were coming to the birth and plans forming for the spiritual conquest of the world, yet found friends after his own heart in the humble couple with whom he lodged and did not disdain to make them his confidants.

They, on their part, appear to have fully appreciated the privilege which Providence had sent their way. It is easy now, at the safe distance of eighteen hundred years, to appreciate the greatness of St. Paul; and, as we read his history, we may sometimes wish that we had had the chance of being his entertainers and his friends. But are we sure we should have liked it? Many certainly saw nothing in him to admire or love; he was a disturber of conventionalities; you could only become his friend by consenting to sweep out of your mind three-fourths of your in-

herited beliefs and adopt new ones in their place; the principalities and powers of the time were all against him, and it was dangerous to have anything to do with him. And then, such an unprepossessing appearance and such a shabby coat! It is easy to worship the great and the good of the past on whom time has set its endorsement; but of those who do so with enthusiasm but few are capable of appreciating or assisting the men and the movements that are fighting the battle of God in their own day.

But Aquila and Priscilla recognised their hero in their own workman. They gave their whole heart to him; he became the enthusiasm of their lives. When he left Corinth and went to Ephesus, which was to be the next great centre of his apostolic labours, they went with him and settled there, giving up the home and business connections which they had formed in Corinth. He did not, indeed, remain at Ephesus when they arrived, for he had a visit to pay to Jerusalem first; but he soon returned and rejoined them, and for the three years he stayed in the capital of the province of Asia, their house doubtless was again his home.

Thus did Aquila and Priscilla subordinate the arrangements of their home and their business to their friendship for Christ's servant. Rather than lose the pleasure and the profit which they derived from his society, they accompanied him where he went, and he continued to enjoy in their home a retreat from the fatigues and perils of his public work. In another way, also, we find they put their resources at the disposal of the gospel. Twice in notices of them subsequently, when they were at Rome and Ephesus, we hear of "the church in their house." Being substantial business people, they had probably roomy premises, which could be cleared for the accommodation of the Christians, who may often in those times have found it difficult to procure a place of meeting. Beneath the roof of Aquila and Priscilla they assembled to hear the gospel and sing the praises of their Saviour, and there God's work was done in their souls. What an honour to the humble place! Might we not covet it for our own homes?

But Aquila and Priscilla were prepared to sacrifice more than home and business for their friend; and in Ephesus the occasion arose for doing so. St. Paul tells us himself that they there "laid down their own necks for his life." What the precise nature of this occasion was, or how they laid down

their necks for him, we have not been informed, but it is natural to suppose that their danger arose out of the tumults by which St. Paul was driven out of Ephesus. They appear to have been driven out of it at the same time, for very soon afterwards we find him writing to them at Rome, to which they must have returned.

This second breaking up of their establishment for his sake probably involved greater sacrifices than the first, for it was sudden, involuntary and violent. Altogether Aquila and Priscilla may have lost much through their acquaintance with St. Paul; they may have missed their chance of making a fortune. But who would compare their loss with their gain? Business and home have their lawful claims on our attention; no one can despise common work who remembers that Jesus was a carpenter and St. Paul a tentmaker. I hope his Christianity made Aquila a better workman; and I am certain that the tents which St. Paul made kept out the weather. Yet man shall not live by bread alone, nor for bread alone. There are other interests which claim him besides shop and home. This was what their connection with St. Paul did for Aquila and Priscilla: it liberated them from the slavery of living for merely personal aims and took them out into the stream of things, enabling them to comprehend the movement of God in the world and to contribute to the coming of the kingdom of heaven.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Deut. vi. and Acts xviii. 18—23.

There is one more episode in the history of this worthy couple which must not be passed by, for it exhibits them in a very favourable light, and supplies valuable evidence of the broadening influence which their association with St. Paul exercised on their sympathies.

Between the time when St. Paul left them at Ephesus, whilst he went on to Jerusalem, and the time when he returned, there appeared in Ephesus one of the most interesting figures of the apostolic age. This was Apollos. He was a young man fresh from the schools of Alexandria, at that period a renowned centre of culture and, in the training of rabbis, a rival of Jerusalem. As became a learned rabbi, he was "mighty in the Scriptures," but he possessed, besides, the golden gift of eloquence, and he had "a fervent spirit," which impelled him to make use of his great gifts, not for self-glorification, but for practical ends. His appearances in

the synagogue excited great enthusiasm, for in him was recognised once more a preacher who taught with authority and not as the scribes.

Yet the gospel he preached was an imperfect one. As yet he knew "only the baptism of John." He knew nothing of the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, or of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The strain of his preaching was an echo of the Baptist's—vehement denunciation of sin, for which there was plenty of scope in a city so wicked as Ephesus, glowing pictures of the Messianic era about to dawn, and earnest calls to repent and be ready to meet the Messiah at his coming. Many a young preacher's strain is not unlike this. The effect of a course of theological study is sometimes to strip the mind of all beliefs which have been learned as mere traditions. The student has to begin and build for himself from the very foundation. And not improbably the one thing he is certain of, after all other beliefs have been swept out of his mind, is the reality of sin. "Father, I have sinned," is his confession of faith; and on this foundation the new structure of belief begins to rise. Even John Bunyan confesses that during the first two years of his ministry he knew nothing more and preached nothing else. But he was soon able to preach more; for where experience is real it is sure to grow; and all truth is so connected that, if you have hold of the merest hem of its garment, you are in the way of getting the whole of it.

Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos and easily perceived the imperfection of his teaching, for they had not heard St. Paul so long in public and private for nothing. But they did not denounce him as unorthodox. They perceived that what he was teaching, though imperfect, was genuine as far as it went; and the man himself was genuine. They might easily have destroyed his influence; for their connection with St. Paul gave them a position in the little community as judges of preaching. They could have made Apollos a heretic and said, perhaps with perfect accuracy, that what he was teaching was not Christianity. Thus they might have shown their own importance and superiority, and lost Apollos to the Church.

But they went a more excellent way. "They took him unto them." Probably they installed him in St. Paul's vacant chamber; they enveloped him in sympathy and kindness; and only then did they begin to hint that his preaching was imperfect.

"They showed him the way of God more perfectly." They led him from the law to the gospel and initiated him into St. Paul's system of doctrine. Surely this is one of the great scenes of the Bible—Apollos, the talented and eloquent, whom professors had praised and audiences flattered, sitting at the feet of the tent-maker and his wife and learning of them. Honour to him for it, and honour to them for it! But it reflects honour most of all on the gospel, which qualified Aquila and Priscilla for playing such a part. True religion is the best culture. The Bible expands and ennobles the common understanding. When the teaching from without meets a genuine response in the experience within, there is begotten a kind of conviction that imparts majesty and beauty to the character. It was not because the language of Aquila and Priscilla was fine or their logic convincing that Apollos listened to them so respectfully, but because he saw in them something which he did not possess; he heard Christianity flowing from their lips, but he saw it also stamped on their life.

For a time he continued to labour in Ephesus, preparing the ground for St. Paul. Then, in response to an urgent call, he passed into Achaia, where "he helped them much who had believed through grace, for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." Thus was the influence of Aquila and Priscilla transmitted through Apollos, and the truth which they carried in earthen vessels lifted up and made to shine far and wide through the luminous medium of his eloquence. For the teaching and influence of the humblest believer may attain to tenfold efficiency when transferred to another mind, and an obscure life be the sunk pillar on which the lofty structure of a conspicuous one is reared.

In this way did Aquila and Priscilla form another hallowed friendship and link their names with another of the forces which were beginning to alter the course of history. Soon they had their still greater friend back again beneath their roof; and though, after three years, circumstances drove them asunder, nothing could break the bond of their friendship. In the last letter he ever wrote St. Paul sent them his salutation. Their names are indissolubly associated with his, and wherever the gospel of which he was the apostle is preached, this also which they did will be told as a memorial of them.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE cemetery just outside the Stadspport at Bergen, which had called forth the eager admiration of Blanche Morgan in the previous summer, looked perhaps even lovelier now that winter had come with its soft, white shroud. The trees, instead of their green leaves, stretched out rime-laden branches against the clear, frosty sky; the crosses on the graves were fringed with icicles, which, touched here and there by the level rays of the setting sun, shone ruby-red, or in the shade gleamed clear as diamonds against the background of crisp white snow. Away in the distance Ulriken reared his grand old head majestically, a dark streak of precipitous rock showing out now and then through the veil which hid his summer face; and to the right, in the valley, the pretty Lungegaarsvand was one great sheet of ice, over which skaters glided merrily.

The body of Sigurd Falck rested beside that of his wife in the midst of all this loveliness, and one winter afternoon Sigrid and little Swanhild came to bring to the grave their wreaths and crosses, for it was their father's birthday. They had walked from their uncle's house laden with all the flowers they had been able to collect, and now stood at the gate of the cemetery, which opened stiffly owing to the frost. Sigrid looked older and even sadder than she had done in the first shock of her father's death, but little Swanhild had just the same fair rosy face as before, and there was a veiled excitement and eagerness in her manner as she pushed at the cemetery-gate; she was able to take a sort of pleasure in bringing these birthday gifts, and even had in her heart a keen satisfaction in the certainty that "their grave" would look prettier than any of the others.

"No one else has remembered his birthday," she said, as they entered the silent graveyard. "See, the snow is quite untrodden. Sigrid, when are they going to put father's name on the stone?" and she pointed to the slanting marble slab which leant against the small cross. "There is only mother's name still. Won't they put a bigger slab instead where there will be room for both?"

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"Not now," said Sigrid, her voice trembling.

"But why not, Sigrid? Every one else has names put. It seems as if we had forgotten him."

"Oh, no, no," said Sigrid, with a sob. "It isn't that, darling; it is that we remember so well, and know what he would have wished about it."

"I don't understand," said the child wistfully.

"It is in this way," said Sigrid, taking her hand tenderly. "I cannot have money spent on the tombstone, because he would not have liked it. Oh, Swanhild!—you must know it some day, you shall hear it now—it was not only his own money that was lost, it was the money of other people. And till it is paid back how can I alter this?"

Swanhild's eyes grew large and bright.

"It was that, then, that made him die," she faltered. "He would be so sorry for the other people. Oh, Sigrid, I will be so good; I don't think I shall ever be naughty again. Why didn't you tell me before, and then I shouldn't have been cross because you wouldn't buy me things?"

"I wanted to shield you and keep you from knowing," said Sigrid. "But after all, it is better that you should hear it from me than from some outsider."

"You will treat me like a baby, Sigrid; and I'm ten years old after all—quite old enough to be told things. . . . And oh, you'll let me help to earn money and pay back the people, won't you?"

"That is what Frithiof is trying to do," said Sigrid, "but it is so difficult and so slow. And I can't think of anything we can do to help."

"Poor dear old Frithiof," said Swanhild. And she gazed away over the frozen lake to the snow mountains which bounded the view, as if she would like to see right through them into the big London shop where, behind a counter, there stood a fair-haired Norseman toiling bravely to pay off those debts of which she had just heard. "Why, on father's last two birthdays Frithiof was away in Germany, but then we were looking forward so to having him home again. There's nothing to look forward to now."

Sigrid could not reply, for she felt choked. She stood sadly watching the child as she bent down, partly to hide her tears, partly to replace a flower which had slipped out of one of the wreaths. It was just that sense of having nothing to look forward to which had weighed so heavily on Sigrid herself all these months; she had passed very bravely through all the troubles as long as there had been anything to do; but now that all the arrangements were made, the villa in Kalvedalen sold, the furniture disposed of, the new home in her uncle's house grown familiar, her courage almost failed her, and each day she realised more bitterly how desolate and forlorn was their position. The first sympathetic kindness of her aunt and cousins had, moreover, had time to fade a little, and she became growingly conscious that their adoption into the Grönvold family was an inconvenience. The house was comfortable but not too large, and the two sisters occupied the only spare-room, so that it was no longer possible to have visitors. The income was fairly good, but times were hard, and even before their arrival Fru Grönvold had begun to practise a few little economies, which increased during the winter, and became more apparent to all the family. This was depressing enough; and then, as Swanhild had said, there was nothing to which she could look forward, for Frithiof's prospects seemed to her altogether blighted, and she foresaw that all he was likely to earn for some time to come would only suffice to keep himself, and could by no possibility support three people. Very sadly she left the cemetery, pausing again to struggle with the stiff gate, while Swanhild held the empty flower-baskets.

"Can't you do it?" exclaimed the child. "What a tiresome gate it is! worse to fasten than to unfasten. But see! here come the Lundgrens. They will help."

Sigrid glanced round, blushing vividly as she met the eager eyes of Torvald Lundgren, one of Frithiof's school friends. The greetings were frank and friendly on both sides, and Madale, a tall, pretty girl of sixteen, with her hair braided into one long, thick plait, took little Swanhild's arm and walked on with her.

"Let us leave those two to settle the gate between them," she said smiling. "It is far too cold to wait for them."

Now Torvald Lundgren was a year or two older than Frithiof, and having long been in a position of authority he was unusually old for his age. As a friend Sigrid liked him,

but of late she had half feared that he wished to be more than a friend, and consequently she was not well pleased to see that, by the time the gate was actually shut, Madale and Swanhild were far in advance of them.

"Have you heard from Frithiof yet?" she asked, walking on briskly.

"No," said Torvald. "Pray scold him well for me when you next write. How does he seem? In better spirits again?"

"I don't know," said Sigrid; "even to me he writes very seldom. It is wretched having him so far away and not knowing what is happening to him."

"I wish there was anything I could do for him," said Torvald, "but there seems no chance of any opening out here for him."

"That is what my uncle says. Yet it was no fault of Frithiof's, it seems hard that he should have to suffer. I think the world is very cruel. You and Madale were almost the only friends who stood by us; you were almost the only ones who scattered fir branches in the road on the morning of my father's funeral."

"You noticed that?" he said colouring.

"Yes; when I saw how little had been strewn, I felt hurt and sore to think that the others had shown so little respect for him, and grateful to you and Madale."

"Sigrid," he said quietly, "why will you not let me be something more to you than a friend? All that I have is yours. You are not happy in Herr Grönvold's house. Let me take care of you. Come and make my house happy, and bring Swanhild with you to be my little sister."

"Oh, Torvald!" she cried, "I wish you had not asked me that. You are so good and kind, but—but——"

"Do not answer me just yet, then; take time to think it over," he pleaded; "indeed I would do my best to make you very happy."

"I know you would," she replied, her eyes filling with tears. "But yet it could never be. I could never love you as a wife should love her husband, and I am much too fond of you, Torvald, to let you be married just for your comfortable house."

"Your aunt led me to expect that, perhaps, in time, after your first grief had passed——"

"Then it was very wrong of her," said Sigrid hotly. "You have always been my friend—a sort of second brother to me—and oh, do let it be so still. Don't leave off being my friend because of this, for indeed I cannot help it."

"My only wish is to help you," he said sadly; "it shall be as you would have it."

And then they walked on together in an uncomfortable silence until they overtook the others at Herr Grönvold's gate, where Torvald grasped her hand for a moment, then, looking at his watch, hurried Madale away, saying that he should be late for some appointment.

Fru Grönvold had unluckily been looking out of the window and had seen the little group outside. She opened the front door as the two girls climbed the steps.

"Why did not the Lundgrens come in?" she asked, a look of annoyance passing over her thin worn face.

"I didn't ask them," said Sigrid, blushing.

"And I think Torvald had some engagement," said Swanhild, unconsciously coming to the rescue.

"You have been out a long time, Swanhild, now run away to your practising," said Fru Grönvold, in the tone which the child detested. "Come in here, Sigrid, I want a word with you."

Fru Grönvold had the best of hearts, but her manner was unfortunate; from sheer anxiety to do well by people she often repulsed them. To Sigrid, accustomed from her earliest girlhood to come and go as she pleased and to manage her father's house, this manner was almost intolerable. She resented interference most strongly, and was far too young and inexperienced to see, beneath her aunt's dictatorial tone, the real kindness that existed. Her blue eyes looked defiant as she marched into the sitting-room, and drawing off her gloves began to warm her hands by the stove.

"Why did you not ask Torvald Lundgren to come in?" asked Fru Grönvold, taking up her knitting.

"Because I didn't want to ask him, auntie."

"But you ought to think what other people want, not always of yourself."

"I did," said Sigrid quickly. "I knew he didn't want to come in."

"What nonsense you talk, child!" said Fru Grönvold, knitting with more vigour than before, as if she vented her impatience upon the sock she was making. "You must know quite well that Torvald admires you very much; it is mere affectation to pretend not to see what is patent to all the world."

"I do not pretend," said Sigrid angrily, "but you—you have encouraged him to

hope, and it is unfair and unkind of you. He told me you had spoken to him."

"What! he has proposed to you?" said Fru Grönvold, dropping her work. "Did he speak to you to-day, dear?"

"Yes," said Sigrid, blushing crimson.

"And you said you would let him have his answer later on. I see, dear, I see. Of course you could not ask him in."

"I said nothing of the sort," said Sigrid vehemently. "I told him that I could never think of marrying him, and we shall still be the good friends we have always been."

"My dear child," cried Fru Grönvold, with genuine distress in her tone, "how could you be so foolish, so blind to all your own interests? He is a most excellent fellow, good and steady and rich—all that heart could wish."

"There, I don't agree with you," said Sigrid perversely. "I should wish my husband to be very different. He is just like Torvald in Ibsen's *Ett Dukkeltøj*, we always told him so."

"Pray don't quote that hateful play to me," said Fru Grönvold. "Everyone knows that Ibsen's foolish ideas about women being equal to men and sharing their confidence, could only bring misery and mischief. Torvald Lundgren is a good, upright, honourable man, and your refusing him is most foolish."

"He is very good, I quite admit," said Sigrid. "He is my friend, and has been always, and will be always. But if he was the only man on earth nothing would induce me to marry him. It would only mean wretchedness for us both."

"Well, pray don't put your foolish notions about equality and ideal love into Karen's head," said Fru Grönvold sharply. "Since you are so stupid and impractical it will be well that Karen should accept the first good offer she receives."

"We are not likely to discuss the matter," said Sigrid, and rising to her feet she hurriedly left the room.

Upstairs she ran choking with angry tears, her aunt's last words haunting her persistently and inflicting deeper wounds the more she dwelt upon them.

"She wants me to marry him so that she may be rid of the expense of keeping us," thought the poor girl. "She doesn't really care for us a bit, for all the time she is grudging the money we cost her. But I won't be such a bad friend to poor Torvald as to marry him because I am miserable

here. I would rather starve than do that. Oh! how I hate her maxims about taking what you can get! Why should love and equality and a true union lead to misery and mischief? It is the injustice of lowering woman into a mere pleasant housekeeper that brings half the pain of the world, it seems to me."

But by the time Sigrid had lived through the long evening, bearing as best she might the consciousness of her aunt's disappointment and vexation with her, another thought had begun to stir in her heart. And when that night she went to her room her tears were no longer the tears of anger, but of a miserable loneliness and desolation.

She looked at little Swanhild lying fast asleep, and wondered how the refusal would affect her life.

"After all," she thought to herself, "Swanhild would have been happier had I accepted him. She would have had a much nicer home, and Torvald would never have let her feel that she was a burden. He would have been very kind to us both, and I suppose I might have made him happy—as happy as he would ever have expected to be. And I might have been able to help Frithiof, for we should have been rich. Perhaps I am losing this chance of what would be best for everyone else just for a fancy. Oh, what am I to do? After all he would have been very kind, and here they are not really kind. He would have taken such care of me, and it would surely be very nice to be taken care of again."

And then she began to think of her aunt's words, and to wonder whether there might not be some truth in them, so that by the time the next day had dawned she had worried herself into a state of confusion, and had Torvald Lungren approached her again might really have accepted him from some puzzle-headed notion of the duty of being practical and always considering others before yourself. Fortunately Torvald did not appear, and later in the morning she took her perplexities to dear old Fru Askevold, the pastor's wife, who having worked early and late for her ten children, now toiled for as many grandchildren, and into the bargain was ready to be the friend of any girl who chose to seek her out. In spite of her sixty years she had a bright, fresh-coloured face, with a look of youth about it which contrasted curiously with her snowy hair. She was little and plump and had a brisk, cheerful way of moving about which somehow recalled to one—

"The bird that comes about our doors
When autumn winds are sobbing,
The Peter of Norway boars,
Their Thomas in Finland,
And Russia far inland.
The bird, who by some name or other,
All men who know it call their brother."

"Now that is charming of you to come and see me just at the very right minute, Sigrid," said Fru Askevold, kissing the girl, whose face, owing to trouble and sleeplessness, looked more worn than her own. "I've just been cutting out Ingeborg's new frock, and am wanting to sit down and rest a little. What do you think of the colour? Pretty, isn't it?"

"Charming," said Sigrid. "Let me do the tacking for you."

"No, no; you look tired, my child, sit down there by the stove, and I will tack it together as we chat. What makes those dark patches beneath your eyes?"

"Oh, it is nothing. I could not sleep last night, that is all."

"Because you were worrying over something. That does not pay, child; give it up. It's a bad habit."

"I don't think I can help it," said Sigrid. "We all of us have a natural tendency that way. Don't you remember how Frithiof never could sleep before an examination?"

"And you perhaps were worrying your brain about him? Was that it?"

"Partly," said Sigrid, looking down and speaking nervously. "You see it was in this way—I had a chance of becoming rich and well-to-do, of stepping into a position which would have made me able to help the others, and because it did not come up to my own notion of happiness I threw away the chance."

And so little by little and mentioning no name, she put before the motherly old lady all the facts of the case.

"Child," said Fru Askevold, "I have only one piece of advice to give you—be true to your own ideal."

"But then one's own ideal may be unattainable in this world."

"Perhaps, and if so it can't be helped. But if you mean your marriage to be a happy one, then be true. Half the unhappy marriages come from people stooping to take just what they can get. If you accepted this man's offer you might be wronging some girl who is really capable of loving him properly."

"Then you mean that some of us have higher ideals than others?"

"Why, yes, to be sure; it is the same in this as in everything else, and what you

have to do is just to shut your ears to all the well-meaning but false maxims of the world, and listen to the voice in your own heart. Depend upon it you will be able to do far more for Frithiof and Swanhild if you are true to yourself, than you would be able to do as a rich woman and an unhappy wife."

Sigrid was silent for some minutes.

"Thank you," she said at length. "I see things much more clearly now; last night I could only see things through Aunt Grönvold's spectacles, and I think they must be very shortsighted ones."

Fru Askevold laughed merrily.

"That is quite true," she said. "The marriages brought about by scheming relatives may look promising enough at first, but in the long run they always bring trouble and misery. The true marriages are made in heaven, Sigrid, though folks are slow to believe that."

Sigrid went away comforted, yet nevertheless life was not very pleasant to her just then, for although she had the satisfaction of seeing Torvald walking the streets of Bergen without any signs of great dejection in his face, she had all day long to endure the consciousness of her aunt's vexation, and to feel in every little economy that this need not have been practised had she decided as Fru Grönvold wished. It was on the whole a very dreary Christmas, yet the sadness was brightened by one little act of kindness and courtesy which to the end of her life she never forgot. For after all it is that which is rare that makes a deep impression on us. The word of praise spoken at the beginning of our career lingers for ever in our hearts with something of the glow of encouragement and hopefulness which it first kindled there; while the applause of later years glides off us like water off a duck's back. The little bit of kindness shown in days of trouble is remembered when greater kindness during days of prosperity has been forgotten.

It was Christmas-eve. Sigrid sat in her cold bedroom, wrapped round in an eider-down quilt. She was reading over again the letter she had last received from Frithiof, just one of those short unsatisfying letters which of late he had sent her. From Germany he had written amusingly enough, but these London letters often left her more unhappy than they found her, not so much from anything they said as from what they left unsaid. Since last Christmas all had been taken away from her, and now it

seemed to her that even Frithiof's love was growing cold, and her tears fell fast on the thin little sheet of paper where she had tried so hard to read love and hope between the lines, and had tried in vain.

A knock at the door made her dry her eyes hastily, and she was relieved to find that it was not her cousin Karen who entered, but Swanhild, with a sunny face and blue eyes dancing with excitement.

"Look, Sigrid," she cried, "here is a parcel which looks exactly like a present. Do make haste and open it."

They cut the string and folded back the paper, Sigrid giving a little cry of surprise as she saw before her the water-colour sketch of Bergen, which had been her father's last present to her on the day before his death. Unable to pay for it, she had asked the proprietor of the shop to take it back again, and had been relieved by his ready consent. Glancing quickly at the accompanying note she saw that it bore his signature. It ran as follows:—

"MADAM,—Will you do me the honour of accepting the water-colour sketch of Bergen chosen by the late Herr Falck in October. At your wish I took back the picture then and regarded the purchase as though it had never been made. I now ask you to receive it as a Christmas gift and a slight token of my respect for the memory of your father." &c., &c.

"Oh!" cried Sigrid, "isn't that good of him! And how nice of him to wait for Christmas instead of sending it straight back. Now I shall have something to send to Frithiof. It will get to him in time for the new year."

Swanhild clapped her hands.

"What a splendid idea! I had not thought of that. And we shall have it up here just for Christmas-day. How pretty it is! People are very kind, I think!"

And Sigrid felt the little clinging arm round her waist, and as they looked at the picture together she smoothed back the child's golden hair tenderly.

"Yes," she said, smiling, "after all, people are very kind."

CHAPTER XV.

As Presten Askevold had feared, Frithiof bore the troubles much less easily. He was without Sigrid's sweetness of nature, without her patience, and the little touch of philosophic matter-of-factness which helped her to

endure. He was far more sensitive too, and was terribly handicapped by the bitterness which was the almost inevitable result of his treatment by Blanche Morgan, a bitterness which stirred him up into a sort of contemptuous hatred of both God and man. Sigrid, with her quiet common-sense, her rarely expressed but very real faith, struggled on through the winter and the spring, and in the process managed to grow and develop; but Frithiof, in his desolate London lodgings, with his sore heart and rebellious intellect, grew daily more hard and morose. Had it not been for the Bonifaces he must have gone altogether to the bad, but the days which he spent every now and then in that quiet, simple household, where kindness reigned supreme, saved him from utter ruin. For always through the darkest part of every life there runs, though we may sometimes fail to see it, this "golden thread of love," so that even the worst man on earth is not wholly cut off from God, since He will, by some means or other, eternally try to draw him out of death into life. We are astounded now and then to read that some cold-blooded murderer, some man guilty of a hideous crime, will ask in his last moments to see a child who loved him devotedly, and whom he also loved. We are astonished just because we do not understand the untiring heart of the All-Father who in His goodness often gives to the vilest sinner the love of a pure-hearted woman or child. So true is the beautiful old Latin saying, long in the world but little believed, "*Mergere nos patitur, sed non submergere, Christus*" (Christ lets us sink maybe, but not drown).

Just at this time there was only one thing in which Frithiof found any satisfaction, and that was in the little store of money which by slow degrees he was able to place in the savings bank. In what way it could ever grow into a sum large enough to pay his father's creditors he did not trouble himself to think, but week by week it did increase, and with this one aim in life he struggled on, working early and late, and living on an amount of food which would have horrified an Englishman. Luckily he had discovered a place in Oxford Street where he could get a good dinner every day for sixpence, but this was practically his only meal, and after some months the scanty fare began to tell upon him, so that even the Miss Turnours noticed that something was wrong.

"That young man looks to me underfed," said Miss Caroline one day. "I met him on the stairs just now, and he seems to me to

have grown paler and thinner. What does he have for breakfast, Charlotte? Does he eat as well as the other lodger?"

"Dear me, no," said Miss Charlotte. "It's my belief that he eats nothing at all but ship's biscuits. There's a tin of them up in his room, and a tin of cocoa, which he makes for himself. All I ever take him is a jug of boiling water night and morning!"

"Poor fellow!" said Miss Caroline, sighing a little as she plaited some lace which must have been washed a hundred times into her dress.

A delicate carefulness in these little details of dress distinguished the three ladies—they had inherited it with the spelling of their name and other tokens of good breeding.

"I feel sorry for him," she added. "He always bows very politely when I meet him, and he is remarkably good-looking, though with a disagreeable expression."

"When one is hungry one seldom looks agreeable," said Miss Charlotte. "I wish I had noticed him before," and she remembered, with a little pang of remorse, that she had more than once preached to him about his soul, while all the time she had been too dreamy and unobservant to see what was really wrong with him.

"Suppose," she said timidly, "suppose I were to take him a little of the stewed American beef we shall have for supper."

"Send it up by the girl," said Miss Turnour, "she is still in the kitchen. Don't take it yourself—it would be awkward for both of you."

So Miss Charlotte meekly obeyed, and sent up by the shabby servant girl a most savoury little supper. Unluckily the girl was a pert cockney, and her loud abrupt knock at the door in itself irritated Frithiof.

"Come in," he said in a surly tone.

"Look here," said the girl, "here's something to put you in a better temper. Missus's compliments, and she begs you'll accept it," and she thrust the tray at him with a derisive grin.

"Have the goodness to take that down again," said Frithiof, in a fit of unreasoning anger. "I'll not be treated like your mistress's pet dog."

Something in his manner cowed the girl. She beat a hasty retreat, and was planning how she could manage to eat the despised supper herself, when at the foot of the stairs she met Miss Charlotte, and her project was nipped in the bud.

"It ain't no use, miss, 'e won't touch it," she explained; "'e was as angry as could

be, and says 'e, 'Take it away! I'll not be treated like your mistress's pet dog,' says 'e. So, bein' frightened, I ran down-stairs agen."

Miss Charlotte looked troubled, and later on, when as usual she took up the jug of hot water, she felt nervous and uncomfortable, and her knock was more timid than ever. However, she had scarcely set down the jug on the floor when there came sounds of hasty footsteps in the room, and Frithiof flung open the door.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "You meant to be kind, I'm sure, but the girl was rude, and I lost my temper. I ask your forgiveness."

There were both pathetic and comic elements in the little scene; the meek Miss Charlotte stood trembling as if she had seen a ghost, and gazing up at the tall Norseman who, in the hurry of the moment, had forgotten to remove the wet towel which, in common with most night-workers, he was in the habit of tying round his forehead.

Miss Charlotte stooped to pick up the jug.

"I am so sorry the girl was rude," she said. "I wish I had brought it myself. You see, it was in this way; we all thought you looking so poorly, and we were having the beef for supper, and we thought perhaps you might fancy some, and—and——"

"It was very good of you," he said, touched, in spite of himself, by the kindness. "I regret what I said, but you must make allowance for a bad-tempered man with a splitting headache."

"Is that the reason you tie it up?" asked Miss Charlotte.

He laughed and pulled off the towel, passing his hand over the mass of thick light hair which it had disordered.

"It keeps it cooler," he said, "and I can get through more work."

She glanced at the table, and saw that it was covered with papers and books.

"Are you wise to do so much work after being busy all day?" she said. "It seems to me that you are not looking well."

"It is nothing but headache," he said. "And the work is the only pleasure I have in the world."

"I was afraid from your looks that you had a hard life," she said hesitatingly.

"It is not hard outwardly. As far as work goes it is easy enough, but there is a deadly monotony about it."

"Ah! if only——" she began.

He interrupted her.

"I know quite well what you are going

to say—you are going to recommend me to attend one of those religious meetings, where people get so full of a delightful excitement. Believe me, they would not have the slightest effect on me. And yet, if you wish it, I will go. It shall be my sign of penitence for my rudeness just now."

Miss Charlotte could not make out whether his smile was sarcastic or genuine. However, she took him at his word, and the next evening carried him off to a big, brightly-lighted hall to a revivalist meeting, from which she hoped great things.

It was a hot June evening. He came there tired with the long day's work, and his head felt dull and heavy. Merely out of politeness to his companion he tried to take some sort of interest in what went on, stifled his inclination to laugh now and then, and watched the proceedings attentively, though wearily enough. In front of him rose a large platform with tiers of seats one above the other. The men and women seated there had bright-looking faces. Some looked self-conscious and self-satisfied, several of the women seemed overwrought and hysterical, but others had a genuine look of content which impressed him. Down below was a curiously heterogeneous collection of instruments—cornets, drums, tambourines, trumpets, and pipes. A hymn was given out, followed by a chorus; the words were solemn, but the tune was the reverse; still it seemed to please the audience, who sang three choruses to each verse, the first loud, the second louder, the third a perfect frenzy of sound, the drums thundering, the tambourines dashing about wildly, the pipes and cornets at their shrillest, and every one present singing or shouting with all his might. It took him some time to recover from the appalling noise, and meantime a woman was praying. He did not much attend to what she said, but the audience seemed to agree with her, for every minute or two there was a chorus of fervent "Amen," which rolled through the hall like distant thunder. After that the young man who conducted the meeting read a story out of the Bible, and spoke well and with a sort of simple directness. There was very little in what he said, but he meant every word of it. It might have been summed up in three sentences: "There is only one way of being happy. I have tried it and have found it answer. All you who haven't tried it begin at once."

But the words which meant much to him conveyed nothing to Frithiof. He listened, and wondered how a man of his own age

could possibly get up and say such things. What was it he had found? How had he found it? If the speaker had shown the least sign of vanity his words would have been utterly powerless; but his quiet positiveness impressed people, and it was apparent to every one that he believed in a strength which was not his own. There followed much that seemed to Frithiof monotonous and undesirable; about thirty people on the platform, one after another, got up and spoke a few words, which invariably began with "I thank the Lord I was saved on such and such a night." He wondered and wondered what the phrase meant to them, and revolved in his mind all the theological dogmas he had ever heard of. Suddenly he was startled to find that some one was addressing him, a hymn was being sung, and there was a good deal of movement in the hall; people went and came, and an elderly woman had stepped forward and taken a place beside him.

"Brother," she said to him, "are you saved?"

"Madam," he replied coldly, "I have not the slightest idea."

"Oh, then," she said, with a little gesture that reminded him of Miss Charlotte, "let me beg you to come at once to Christ."

"Madam," he said, still in his coldly polite voice, "you must really excuse me, but I do not know what you mean."

She was so much surprised and puzzled by both words and manner that she hesitated what to reply; and Frithiof, who hated being questioned, took his hat from the bench, and bowing formally to her, left the hall. In the street he was joined by Miss Charlotte.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "I am so sorry you said that. You will have made that poor woman so terribly unhappy."

"It is all her own fault," said Frithiof. "Why did she come meddling with my private affairs? If her belief was real she would have been able to explain it in a rational way, instead of using phrases which are just empty words."

"You didn't leave her time to explain. And as to her belief being real, do you think, if it was not real, that little, frail woman would have had courage to go twice to prison for speaking in the streets? Do you think she would have been able to convert the most abandoned thieves, and induce them to make restitution, paying in week by week what they could earn to replace what they had stolen?"

"Does she do that? Then I respect her. When you see her again please apologise for my abruptness, and tell her that her form of religion is too noisy for my head and too illogical for my mind."

They walked home in silence, Miss Charlotte grieving over the hopeless failure of the meeting to achieve what she desired. She had not yet learnt that different natures need different kinds of food, and that to expect Frithiof to swallow the teaching which exactly suited certain minds was about as sensible as to feed a baby with Thorley's Food for Cattle. However, there never yet was an honest attempt to do good which really failed, though the vast majority fail apparently. It was impossible that the revivalists' teaching could ever be accepted by the Norseman; but their ardent devotion, their practical, aggressive lives, impressed him not a little, and threw a somewhat disagreeable light over his own selfishness. Partly owing to this, partly from physical causes, he felt bitterly out of heart with himself for the next few weeks. In truth, he was thoroughly out of health, and he had not the only power which can hold irritability in check—the strong restraint of love. Except a genuine liking for the Bonifaces, he had nothing to take him out of himself, and he was quite ready to return with interest the dislike which the other men in the shop felt for him, first on account of his foreign birth, but chiefly because of his proud manner and hasty temper. Sometimes he felt that he could bear the life no longer; and at times, out of his very wretchedness, there sprang up in him a vague pity for those who were in his own position. As he stood there behind the counter he would say to himself, "There are thousands and thousands in this city alone who have day after day to endure this horrible monotony, to serve the customers who are rude, and the customers who are civil, the hurried ones who are all impatience, the tiresome ones who dawdle, the bores, who give you as much trouble as they can, often for nothing. One day follows another eternally in the same dull round. I am a hundred times better off than most—there are no hurried meals here, no fines, no unfairness—and yet what drudgery it is!"

And as he glanced out at the sunny street and heard the sound of horses' hoofs in the road, a wild longing used to seize him for the freedom and variety of his life in Norway, and the old fierce rebellion against his fate woke once more in his heart, and made him

ready to fly into a rage on the smallest provocation.

One day he was sent for to Mr. Boniface's private room; he was quite well aware that his manner, even to Roy himself, whom he liked, had been disagreeable in the extreme, and the thought crossed his mind that he was going to receive notice to leave.

Mr. Boniface was sitting at his writing-table, the sunlight fell on his quiet, refined face, lit up his white hair and trim beard, and made his kindly grey eyes brighter than ever. "I wanted a few words with you, Falck," he said. "Sit down. It seems to me that you have not been looking well lately, and I thought perhaps you had better take your holiday at once instead of the third week in August. I have spoken to Darnell, and he would be willing to give you his turn and take the later time. What do you think?"

"You are very good, sir," said Frithiof, "but I shall do very well with the August holiday, and, as a matter of fact, it will only mean that I shall do more translating."

"Would you not do well to go home? Come, think of it, I would give you three weeks if you want to go to Bergen."

Frithiof felt a choking sensation in his throat, because it was of the old life that he had been dreaming all the morning with a restless, miserable craving.

"Thank you," he said, with an effort, "but I cannot go back to Norway."

"Now, tell me candidly, Falck, is it the question of expense that hinders you?" said Mr. Boniface. "Because if it is merely that, I would gladly lend you the money. You must remember that you have had a great deal to bear lately, and I think you ought to give yourself a good rest."

"Thank you," replied Frithiof, "but it is not exactly the expense. I have money enough in hand to pay for my passage, but I have made up my mind not to go back till I can clear off the last of the debts of—of our firm," he concluded, with a slight quiver in his voice.

"It is a noble resolution," said Mr. Boniface, "and I would not for a moment discourage you. Still you must remember that it is a great undertaking, and that without good health you can never hope for success. I don't think you get enough exercise. Now why don't you join our cricket club?"

"I don't play," said Frithiof. "In Norway we are not great at those games, or indeed at any kind of exercise for the mere

sake of exercise. That is an idea that one only finds among Englishmen."

"Possibly; but living in our climate you would do well to follow our habits. Come, let me persuade you to join the club. You look to me as if you needed greater variety."

"I will think about it for next year; but, just now I have work for Herr Sivertsen on hand which I can't put aside," said Frithiof.

"Well then, things must go on as they are for the present," said Mr. Boniface; "but at least you can bring your translating down to Rowan Tree House, and spend your holiday with us."

"You are very kind," said Frithiof, the boyish expression returning to his face just for a minute. "I shall be only too delighted."

And the interview seemed somehow to have done him good, for during the next few days he was less irritable, and found his work in consequence less irksome.

CHAPTER XVI.

BUT the change for the better did not last long, for Frithiof was without the motive which "makes drudgery divine." And there was no denying that the work he had to do was really drudgery.

It has been the fashion of late years to dwell much on the misery of the slums, and most of us are quite ready to be stirred into active sympathy with the abjectly poor, the hungry or the destitute. It is to be feared, however, that very few of us have much consideration for the less romantic, less sensational lives of the middle-class, the thousands who toil for us day after day behind the counter or at the desk. And yet are their lives one whit less worthy of sympathy? Are they not educated to a point which makes them infinitely more sensitive? Hood has given us a magnificent poem on the sorrows of a shirtmaker; but who will take the trouble to find poetry in the sorrows and wearinesses of shop-assistants? It has been said that the very atmosphere of trade kills romance, that no poet or novelist would dare to take up such a theme; and yet everywhere the human heart is the same, and shop-life does not interfere with the loves and hatreds, the joys and sorrows which make up the life of every human being, and out of which are woven all the romances which were ever written. No one would dispute the saying that labour is worship, yet nevertheless we know well enough that while some work of itself ennoble the worker,

there is other work which has to be ennobled by the way in which it is done. An artist and a coalheaver both toil for the general good, but most people will admit that the coalheaver is heavily handicapped. If in the actual work of shop-assistants there is a prosaic monotony, then it is all the more probable that they need our warmest sympathy, our most thoughtful considerateness, since they themselves are no machines, but men and women with exactly the same hopes and desires as the rest of us. It is because we consider them of a different order that we tolerate the long hours, that we allow women to stand all day long to serve us, though it has been proved that terrible diseases are the consequence. It is because we do not in our hearts believe that they are of the same flesh and blood, that we think with a sort of contempt of the very people who are brought most directly into contact with us, and whose hard-working lives often put ours to shame.

About the middle of July the Bonifaces went down to Devonshire for their usual summer holiday, and Frithiof found that, as Roy had predicted, Mr. Horner made himself most disagreeable, and never lost a chance of interfering. It must be owned that there are few things so trying as fussiness, particularly in a man, of whom such weakness seems unworthy. And Mr. Horner was the most fussy mortal on earth. It seemed as if he called forth all that was bad in Frithiof, and Frithiof also called out everything that was bad in him. The breach between the two was made much wider by a most trivial incident. A miserable-looking dog unluckily made its way into the shop one morning and disturbed Mr. Horner in his sanctum.

"What is the meaning of this?" he exclaimed, bearing down upon Frithiof. "Can you not keep stray curs off the premises? Just now too, with hydrophobia raging!" And he drove and kicked the dog to the door.

Now there is one thing which no Norseman can tolerate for a moment, and that is any sort of cruelty to animals. Frithiof, in his fury, did not measure his words, or speak as the employed to the employer, and from that time Mr. Horner's hatred of him increased tenfold. To add to all this wretchedness an almost tropical heat set in, London was like a huge over-heated oven; every day Frithiof found the routine of business less bearable, every day he was less able to fight against his love for Blanche, and he rapidly

sank into the state which hard-headed people flatter themselves is a mere foolish fancy,—that most real and trying form of illness which goes by the name of depression. Again and again he wrestled with the temptation that had assailed him long ago in Hyde Park, and each sight of James Horner, each incivility from those he had to serve, made the struggle harder.

He was sitting at his desk one morning adding up a column which had been twice interrupted, and which had three times come to a different result, when once again the swing-door was pushed open and a shadow falling across his account book warned him that the customer had come to the song-counter. Annoyed and impatient he put down his pen and went forward, forcing up the sort of cold politeness which he assumed now, and which differed strangely from the bright, genial courtesy that had once been part of his nature.

The customer was evidently an Italian. He was young and strikingly handsome; when he glanced at you, you felt that he had looked you through and through, yet that his look was not critical but kindly, it penetrated yet at the same time warmed. Beside him was a bright-eyed boy who looked up curiously at the Norseman, as though wondering how on such a sunny day any one could wear such a clouded face.

Now Frithiof was quite in the humour to dislike anyone, more especially a man who was young, handsome, well-dressed, and prosperous-looking; but some subtle influence crept over him the instant he heard the Italian's voice, his hard eyes softened a little, and without being able to explain it he felt a strong desire to help this man in finding the song which he had come to inquire about, knowing only the words and the air, not the name of the composer. Frithiof, who would ordinarily have been inclined to grumble at the trouble which the search involved, now threw himself into it heart and soul, and was as pleased as his customer when after some little time he chanced to find the song.

"A thousand thanks," said the Italian warmly. "I am delighted to get hold of this; it is for a friend who has long wanted to hear it again, but who was only able to write down the first part of the air."

And he compared with the printed song the little bit of manuscript which he had shown to Frithiof. "Now, was it only a happy fluke that made you think of Knight's name?"



"And he compared with the printed song the little bit of manuscript."

"I know another of his songs, and thought this bore a sort of likeness to it," said Frithiof, pleased with his success.

"You know much more of English music than I do most likely," said the Italian, "yet surely you, too, are a foreigner."

"Yes," replied Frithiof, "I am Norwegian. I have only been here for nine months, but to try and learn a little about the music is the only interesting part of this work."

The stranger's sympathetic insight showed him much of the weariness and discontent, and "Heimweh" which lay beneath these words.

"Ah, yes," he said, "I suppose both work and country seem flat and dull after your life among the fjords and mountains. I know well enough the depression of one's first year in a new climate. But courage! the worst will pass. I have grown to love this England which once I detested."

"It is the airlessness of London which depresses one," said poor Frithiof, rolling up the song.

"Yes, it is certainly very oppressive to-day," said the Italian; "I am sorry to have given you so much trouble in hunting up this song for me. We may as well take it with us, Gigi, as we are going home."

And then with a pleasant farewell the stranger bowed and went out of the shop, leaving behind him a memory which did more to prevent the blue-devils from gaining the mastery of Frithiof's mind than anything else could possibly have done. When he left, however, at his usual dinner hour he was without the slightest inclination to eat, and with a craving for some relief from the monotony of the glaring streets he walked up to Regent's Park, hoping that there perhaps he might find the fresh air for which he was longing. He thought much of his unknown customer, half laughing to himself now and then to think that such a chance encounter should have made upon him so deep an impression, should have wakened within him desires such as he had never before felt for a life which should be higher, nobler, more manly than his past.

"Come along, will you!" shouted a rough voice behind him. He glanced round and saw an evil-looking tramp who was speaking to a most forlorn little boy at his heels.

The child seemed ready to drop, but with a look of misery and fear and effort, most painful to see in such a young face, it hurried on, keeping up a wretched little sort of trot at the heels of its father, who tramped on doggedly. Frithiof was not in the habit

of troubling himself much about those he came across in life, his heart had been too much embittered by Blanche's treatment, he had got into the way now of looking on coldly and saying with a shrug of the shoulders that it was the way of the world. But to-day the magical influence of a noble life was stirring within him; a man utterly unknown to him had spoken to him a few kindly words, had treated him with rare considerateness, had somehow raised him into a purer atmosphere. And so it happened that he, too, began to feel something of the same divine sympathy, and to forget his own wretchedness in the suffering of the little child. Presently the tramp paused outside a public-house.

"Wait for me there in the park," he said to the child, giving it a push in the direction.

And the little fellow went on obediently, until, just at the gate, he caught sight of a costermonger's barrow on which cool green leaves and ripe red strawberries were temptingly displayed. Frithiof lingered a minute to see what would happen, but nothing happened at all, the child just stood there patiently. There was no expectation on his tired little face, nothing but intense appreciation of a luxury which must for ever be beyond his hopes of enjoyment.

"Have you ever tasted them?" said Frithiof, drawing nearer.

The boy shook his head shyly.

"Would you like to?"

Still he did not speak, but a look of rapture dawned in the wistful child eyes, and he gave a little spring in the air which was more eloquent than words.

"Sixpennyworth," said Frithiof to the costermonger; then signing to the child to follow, he led the way into the park, sat down on the nearest seat, put the basket of strawberries down beside him, and glanced at his little companion.

"There, now sit down by me and enjoy them," he said.

And the child needed no second bidding, but began to eat with an eager delight which was pleasant to see. After a while he paused, however, and shyly pushed the basket a little nearer to his benefactor. Frithiof, absorbed in his own thoughts, did not notice it, but presently became conscious of a small brown hand on his sleeve, and looked round.

"Eat too," said the child, pointing to the basket.

And Frithiof, to please him, smiled and took two or three strawberries.

"There, the rest are for you," he said. "Do you like them?"

"Yes," said the child emphatically; "and I like you."

"Why do you like me?"

"I was tired, and you was kind to me, and these is real jammy!"

But after this fervent little speech, he said no more. He did not, as a Norwegian child would have done, shake hands as a sign of gratitude, or say in the pretty Norse way, "Tak for maden" (thanks for the meal); there had never been any one to teach him the expression of the courtesies of life, and with him they were not innate. He merely looked at his friend with shining eyes like some animal that feels but cannot speak its gratitude. Then before long the father reappeared, and the little fellow with one shy nod of the head ran off, looking back wistfully every now and then at the stranger who would be remembered by him to the very end of his life.

The next day something happened which added the last drops to Frithiof's cup of misery, and made it overflow. The troubles of the past year, and the loneliness and poverty which he had borne, had gradually broken down his health, and there came to him now a revelation which proved the final blow. He was dining at his usual restaurant. Too tired to eat much, he had taken up a bit of one of the society papers which some one had left there, and his eye fell on one of those detestable paragraphs which pander to the very lowest tastes of the public. No actual name was given, but every one knowing anything about her could not fail to see that Blanche Romiaux was the woman referred to. The most revolting insinuations, the most contemptible gossip, ended with the words, "An interesting divorce case may soon be expected."

Frithiof grew deathly white. He tried to believe that it was all a lie, tried to work himself up into a rage against the editor of the paper, tried to assure himself that whatever Blanche might have been before marriage, that after it she must necessarily become all that was womanly and pure. But deep down in his heart there lurked a fearful conviction that in the main this story was true. Feeling sick and giddy, he made his way along Oxford Street, noticing nothing, walking like a man in a dream. Just in front of Buzzard's a Victoria was waiting, and a remarkably good-looking man stood on the pavement talking to its occupant. Frithiof would have passed by without ob-

serving them had not a familiar voice startled him into keen consciousness. He looked up hastily and saw Lady Romiaux—not the Blanche who had won his heart in Norway, for the lips that had once been pressed to his wore a hard look of defiance, and the eyes that had ensnared him had now an expression that confirmed only too well the story he had just read. He heard her give a little artificial laugh in which there was not even the ghost of merriment, and after that it seemed as if a great cloud had descended on him. He moved on mechanically, but it was chiefly by a sort of instinct that he found his way back to the shop.

"Good heavens, Mr. Falck! how ill you are looking!" exclaimed the head man as he glanced at him. "It's a good thing Mr. Robert will be back again soon. If I'm not very much mistaken, he'll put you into the doctor's hands."

"Oh, it is chiefly this hot weather," said Frithiof, and as if anxious to put an end to the conversation, he turned away to his desk and began to write, though each word cost him a painful effort, and seemed to be dragged out of him by sheer force. At tea-time he wandered out in the street, scarcely knowing what he was doing, and haunted always by Blanche's sadly altered face. When he returned he found that the boy who dusted the shop had spilt some ink over his order book, whereupon he flew into one of those violent passions to which of late he had been liable, so entirely losing his self-control that those about him began to look alarmed. This recalled him to himself, and much disgusted at having made such a scene, he sank into a state of black depression. He could not understand himself; could not make out what was wrong; could not conceive how such a trifle could have stirred him into such senseless rage. He sat pen in hand, too sick and miserable to work, and with a wild confusion of thoughts rushing through his brain. He was driving along the Strangaden with Blanche, and talking gaily of the intense enjoyment of mere existence; he was rowing her on the fjord, and telling her the Frithiof Saga; he was saving her on the mountain, and listening to her words of love; he was down in the sheltered nook below the flagstaff at Balholm, and she was clinging to him in the farewell which had indeed been for ever.

"I can bear it no longer," he said to himself. "I have tried to bear this life, but it's no use—no use."

Yet after a while there rose within him a

thought which checked the haunting visions of failure and the longing for death. He remembered the face which had so greatly struck him the day before, and again those kindly words rang in his ear, "Courage! the worst will pass."

Who was this man? What gave him his extraordinary influence? How had he gained his insight, and sympathy, and fearless brightness? If one man had attained to all this, why not any man? Might not life still hold for him something that was worth having? There floated back to him the remembrance of the last pleasurable moment he had known—it was the sight of the child's enjoyment of the strawberries.

At length closing-time came. He dragged himself back to Vauxhall, shut himself into his dreary little room, pulled the table towards the open window, and began to work at Herr Sivertsen's translating. Night after night he had gone on, with the dogged courage of his old Viking ancestors, upheld by the same fierce, fighting nature which had made them the terror of the North. But at last he was at the very end of his strength. A violent shivering fit seized him. Work was no longer possible; he could only stagger to the bed, with that terrible consciousness of being utterly and hopelessly beaten, which to a man is so hard to bear.

Oppressed by a frightful sense of loneliness, dazed by physical pain, and tortured by the thought of Blanche's disgrace, there was yet one thing which gave him moments of relief—like a child he strained his eyes to see the picture of Bergen which hung by the bedside.

Later on, when the summer twilight deepened into night, and he could no longer make out the harbour, and the shipping, and the familiar mountains, he buried his face in the pillow and sobbed aloud, in a forlorn misery which, even in Paradise, must have wrung his mother's heart.

Roy Boniface came back from Devonshire the following day, his holiday being shortened by a week on account of the illness of Mrs. Horner's uncle. As there was every reason to expect a legacy from this aged relative, Mr. Horner insisted on going down at once to see whether they could be of any use; and since the shop was never left without one of the partners, poor Roy, anathematising the whole race of the Horners, had to come back and endure as best he might a London August and an empty house.

Like many other business men he relieved

the monotony of his daily work by always keeping two or three hobbies in hand. The mania for collecting had always been encouraged at Rowan Tree House, and just now botany was his keenest delight. It was even perhaps absorbing too much of his time, and Cecil used laughingly to tell him that he loved it more than all the men and women in the world put together. He was contentedly mounting specimens on the night of his return, when James Horner looked in, the prospective legacy making him more than ever fussy and pompous.

"Ah, so you have come back: that's all right!" he exclaimed. "I had hoped you would have come round to us. However, no matter, I don't know that there is anything special to say, and of course this sad news has upset my wife very much."

"Ah," said Roy, somewhat sceptical in his heart of hearts about the depth of her grief. "We were sorry to hear about it."

"We go down the first thing to-morrow," said James Horner, "and shall, of course, stay on. They say there is no hope of recovery."

"What do you think of that?" said Roy, pointing to a very minute flower which he had just mounted. "It is the first time it has ever been found in England."

"H'm, is it really!" said James Horner, regarding it with that would-be interested air, that bored perplexity, which Roy took a wicked delight in calling forth. "Well, you know, I don't understand," he added, "how a practical man like you can take an interest in such trumpery bits of things. What are your flowers worth when you've done them? Now, if you took to collecting autographs, there'd be some sense in that, for I understand that a fine collection of autographs fetches a good round sum in the market."

"That would only involve more desk-work," said Roy, laughing. "Writing to ask for them would bore me as much as writing in reply must bore the poor celebrities."

"By-the-bye," said Mr. Horner, "I have just remembered to tell you that provoking fellow, Falck, never turned up to-day. He never even had the grace to send word that he wasn't coming."

"Of course he must be ill," said Roy, looking disturbed. "He is the last fellow to stay away if he could possibly keep up. We all thought him looking ill before we left."

"I don't know about illness," said James Horner, putting on his hat; "but he certainly has the worst temper I've ever come across. It was extremely awkward without

him to-day, for already we are short of hands."

"There can hardly be much doing," said Roy. "London looks like a desert. However, of course I'll look up Falck. I daresay he'll be all right again by to-morrow."

But he had scarcely settled himself down comfortably to his work after James Horner's welcome departure when the thought of Frithiof came to trouble him. After all, was it likely that a mere trifle would hinder a man of the Norwegian's nature from going to business? Was it not much more probable that he was too ill even to write an excuse? And if so, how helpless and desolate he would be!

Like most people, Roy was selfish. Had he lived alone he would have become more selfish every day; but it was impossible to live in the atmosphere of Rowan Tree House without, at any rate, trying to consider other people. With an effort he tore himself away from his beloved specimens, and set off briskly for Vauxhall, where, after some difficulty, he found the little side street in which, among dozens of others precisely like it, was the house of the three Miss Turnours.

A little withered-up lady opened the door to him, and replied nervously to his question.

"Mr. Falck is ill," she said. "He seems very feverish; but he was like it once before, when he first came to England, and it passed off in a day or two."

"Can I see him?" said Roy.

"Well, he doesn't like being disturbed at all," said Miss Charlotte. "He'll hardly let me inside the room. But if you would just see him, I should really be glad. You will judge better if he should see the doctor or not."

"Thank you, I'll go up then. Don't let me trouble you."

"It is noise he seems to mind so much," said Miss Charlotte. "So if you will find your way up alone, perhaps it would be best. It is the first door you come to at the top of the last flight of stairs."

Roy went up quietly, opened the door as noiselessly as he could, and went in. The window faced the sunset, so that the room was still fairly light, and the utter discomfort of everything was fully apparent.

"I wish you wouldn't come in again," said an irritable voice from the bed. "The lightest footstep is torture."

"I just looked in to ask how you were," said Roy, much shocked to see how ill his friend seemed.

"Oh, it's you!" said Frithiof, turning his

flushed face in the direction of the speaker. "Thank God you've come! That woman will be the death of me. She does nothing but ask questions."

"I've only just got back from Devonshire, but they said you hadn't turned up to-day, and I thought I would come and see after you."

Frithiof dragged himself up and drank feverishly from the ewer which stood on a chair beside him.

"I tried to come this morning," he said, "but I was too giddy to stand, and had to give it up. My head's gone wrong somehow."

"Poor fellow! you should have given up before," said Roy. "You seem in terrible pain."

"Yes, yes; it's like a band of hot iron," moaned poor Frithiof. Then suddenly starting up in wild excitement, "There's Blanche! there's Blanche! Let me go to her! Let me go! I will see her once more—only this once!"

Roy with some difficulty held him down, and after a while he seemed to come to himself. "Was I talking nonsense?" he said. "It's a horrid feeling not being able to control one's self. If I go crazy you can just let me die, please. Life's bad enough now, and would be intolerable then. There she is again! She's smiling at me. Oh, Blanche!—you did care once. Come back! Come back! He can't love you as I love! But it's no use—no use! she is worse than dead. I tell you I saw it in that cursed paper, and I saw it in her own face. Why, one might have known! All women are like it. What do they care so long as their vanity is satisfied? It's just as Bjørnsen says:—

'If thou hadst not so smiled on me,
Now I should not thus weep for thee.'

And then he fell into incoherent talk, chiefly in Norwegian, but every now and then repeating the English rendering of Bjørnsen's lines.

Meanwhile Roy turned over in his mind half-a-dozen schemes, and at length decided to leave Frithiof during one of the quiet intervals, while he went for their own doctor, Miss Charlotte mounting guard outside the door, and promising to go to him if he seemed to need care.

Dr. Morris, who was an old friend, listened to Roy's description, and returned with him at once, much to the relief of poor Miss Charlotte, who was frightened out of her senses by one of Frithiof's paroxysms of wild excitement.

"Do you think seriously of him?" said Roy, when, the excitement having died down, Frithiof lay in a sort of stupor, taking no notice at all of his surroundings.

"If we can manage to get him any sleep he will pull through all right," said Dr. Morris, in his abrupt way. "If not, he will sink before many days. You had better send for his mother, if he has one."

"He has only a sister, and she is in Norway."

"Well, send for her, for he will need careful nursing. You say you will take charge of him? Very well; and to-morrow morning I will send in a nurse, who will set you at liberty for a few hours. Evidently he has had some shock. Can you make out what it was at all?"

"Well, last autumn, I believe—indeed, I am sure—he was jilted by an English girl with whom he was desperately in love. It all came upon the top of the other troubles of which I told you."

"And what is this paper he raves about? What is the girl's name? We might get some clue in that way."

"Oh," said Roy, "she was married some months ago. She is now Lady Romiaux."

The doctor gave a stifled exclamation.

"That explains all. I suppose the poor fellow honestly cared for her, and was shocked to see the paragraph in this week's *Idle Time*. Your friend has had a lucky escape, if he could but see it in that light. For the husband of that heartless little flirt must be the most miserable man alive. We shall soon have another of those detestable *causes célèbres*, and the newspapers lying about in every household will be filled with all the poisonous details."

As Roy kept watch through the long nights and days that followed, as he listened to the delirious ravings of his patient, and perceived how a man's life and health had been ruined by the faithlessness of a vain girl, he became so absorbed in poor Frithiof, so devoted to him, that he altogether forgot his specimens and his microscope. He wondered greatly how many victims had been sacrificed to Blanche Romiaux's selfish love of admiration, and he longed to have her in that room, and point to the man who tossed to and fro in sleepless misery, and say to her, "This is what your hateful flirting has brought about."

But the little Norwegian episode had entirely passed out of Lady Romiaux's mind. Had she been questioned she would probably have replied that her world contained too many hard realities to leave room for the recollection of mere dreams.

The dream, however, had gone hard with Frithiof. Sleeping-draughts had no effect on him, and his temperature remained so high that Dr. Morris began to fear the worst.

Roy used to be haunted by the thought that he had telegraphed for Sigrid Falck, and that he should have to meet her after her long journey with the news that all was over. And remembering the bright face and sunny manner of the Norwegian girl, his heart failed him at the thought of her desolation. But Frithiof could not even take in the idea that she had been sent for.

Nothing now made any difference to him. Sleep alone could restore him. But sleep refused to come, and already the death-angel hovered near, ready to give him the release for which he so greatly longed.



STORM-GOLD.

AFTER the rainy day,
After the stormy weather,
Breaks the gold in the grey,
Gold and silver together.
Flutters and falls the splendour,
Turns to scarlet and rose;
Clear in a sky that is tender
A crescent-moon grows.

After the rainy day
The passion and sobbing are over;
Dim in distance away
Seem my love and my lover.
The gold of the evening is round me,
Night comes with the wings of a dove;
The peace of the evening hath bound me
Far sweeter than love.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

"A LOST TEXT REGAINED."

By THE LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

THERE are probably few of the readers of GOOD WORDS who are not familiar with the Burial Service of the Church of England. Dear as that service is to her own children, it is hardly less dear to many who do not call her mother. The exquisite simplicity and beauty of its language; its tender consolations for the living; its large and hopeful charity for the dead; its marvellous expression of every thought that might be supposed to fill the heart of the Christian mourner; its sad confessions of the briefness and the vanity of this present life, mingling with its sure and certain hopes of the life to come; its solemn deprecations of the displeasure of the Judge Eternal, and yet its assured trust in the pity of the Eternal Father; its cries of human helplessness in the presence of our last enemy, death, alternating with its sublime defiance of that enemy in the name of Him who has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light by the resurrection from the dead—all combine to make it what it is—the common and precious heritage of all English-speaking Christians.

Whatever else in our Prayer Book men might wish to erase, or might think they could improve upon, there is no man who loves things lovely, and who prizes those wells of English undefiled that are still left us in our Bible and Book of Common Prayer, but would desire to preserve intact this, perhaps the sweetest and purest of them all. And yet it seems that we cannot altogether so preserve it. The unlovely shadow of revision has fallen upon it, and has fallen, too, on just that portion of it which we would most desire to keep unchanged.

Loftiest, perhaps, amongst the defiance of death and of the grave with which this service abounds, are those opening sentences of it with which the minister is bidden to greet the mourners as they draw nigh to the place where they are to lay their dead. As he meets them he is charged to speak to them those words on which the faith of Christendom has stayed itself from the hour in which they were first spoken: "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And then, as it were in answer to this promise of the risen Lord, he speaks for

them the words that utter the challenge of the Christian in the face of death: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

Those who have listened in the hour of their sorrow to these words know how they fall upon the ear like the solemn music of some stately funeral march fraught with dear and sad, yet glorious and sustaining memories. The farewells of the dying, the lamentations for the dead, the broken words of resignation in which mourners sob out their submission to the Father's will, seem to mingle with the hymns of confessors and the psalms of martyrs and the far-off songs of the multitude of redeemed ones who have passed beyond the shadow of our night into the brightness of the eternal day; and so, with firmer step and calmer mien, we follow our dead to their last resting-place, and we in our turn take up the Church's song of triumph over death, as we, too, say, though with quivering lips and faltering voice, "We know that our Redeemer liveth."

And now we are told that we must say these words no more. They are a mis-translation. These are not, we are assured, the words which the inspired writer placed on the lips of him whom we have hitherto supposed to have uttered them. The passage as it stands in the Revised Version runs thus:—"I know that my Redeemer (or vindicator) liveth, and that he shall stand at the last on the earth, and after my skin hath been thus destroyed yet from my flesh shall I see God."

That is to say, that Job is here only expressing his firm belief that, spite of all he has suffered, spite of the terrible ravages that disease has wrought in his body, an avenger or deliverer will come for him, and that from his flesh, that is from out of the healed and restored flesh of his living body, he should see God—the God whom he had once known as his loving and gracious Father, and whom he was so to know again. Him should he see for himself with his own eyes, and not through the representations or the arguments and pleadings of another. In a word, what Job is really described as expressing, is not his sure and certain hope of his resurrection after death, but his sure and

certain hope of his restoration to health and happiness before his death, and that therefore there is in this passage no such distinct prophecy of the resurrection of the dead as we have hitherto supposed it to contain.

Is this so? and must we therefore, if we would be loyal to truth, strike out these words, even in their revised form, from our burial service?

To the first of these questions we must, I think, answer distinctly "Yes." To the second I should say as distinctly "No."

I. There is, it must be admitted, unanimous consent amongst Hebrew scholars that this passage, as given in the Revised Version, is correctly rendered, and that it is therefore certain that Job is here described as expecting not resurrection but recovery.

But even were this doubtful, there are other reasons which compel us to admit that it is hardly possible to regard this passage as, what it seems in the older version to be, a full, precise and detailed prophecy of the resurrection from the dead. For, in the first place, it seems impossible to reconcile such a prophecy with other passages in this book, which show an utter unconsciousness, not only of the doctrine of the resurrection, but even of that of a future state. When, for instance, Job exclaims, "My life is as wind, mine eye shall no more see good. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more." Or when he tells us that there is "hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again; but man dieth, and wasteth away: man giveth up the flesh and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down and riseth not." Or again, when we hear him say, "If I wait, the grave is my house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now any hope?—my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, where our rest together is in the dust." When we listen to such despairing utterances as this we feel that the writer who places such words on the lips of Job could not have known, could not have represented Job as knowing, the great truth of which these utterances are so many virtual denials. Can we imagine any Christian, believing in the resurrection of the dead—and our Christian belief in the resurrection is no clearer nor fuller than that which these words, as commonly

interpreted, would imply—can we imagine, I say, any Christian giving utterance to words of such blank and hopeless ignorance of aught beyond the grave, as those which we have quoted above? Is it possible then to suppose that he who did utter them could have known this article of the Christian faith?

Nor again would such an anticipation of one of the latest truths of Revelation occurring in one of the earliest books in the Bible, be at all in accordance with the analogy of all prophecy, which we know to have been a gradually dawning light, shining ever more and more until the perfect day. It would have been a strange exception to such a system of progressive revelation if such a burst of sunrise had come before the dawn. Strange indeed would it have been if to the writer of the book of Job should have been revealed a truth hidden seemingly from all the saints and prophets of the older dispensation, and yet one of such importance, one so widely and deeply affecting the faith and the life of all who held it, that had it ever formed part of one of their own sacred writings, we cannot imagine them being ignorant of it or unaffected by it.

And there is besides another consideration which seems absolutely fatal to the idea that any such revelation was meant to be conveyed in these words of Job. Namely, that had it been so it would have made the whole of the book unmeaning and self-contradictory. What is the idea of the book of Job? Surely it is that of a good man tried by the mystery of suffering as existing under the government of a righteous God. Job is conscious of his integrity; no false accusations, no special pleadings of others will ever convince him that he has deserved his sufferings at the hand of God, and that they are punishments for his misdeeds. But if this be so, why is it that he, the innocent and righteous man, is thus smitten of God and afflicted? Can He who so deals with him be really a just and a loving God? This it is that all through his sufferings tries Job's soul with agony far keener than bodily pain or heart sorrow. This it is that all but maddens him into defiance of his Maker, and that does drive him into those wild cries for pity, those passionate exclamations against what seems to him the strange capriciousness of Him who thus torments him, which break from him again and again like the groans of a sick man, which he is loth to give way to and yet cannot suppress.

Surely if Job had all along known the

truth of the resurrection ; if he had believed that in another world his Father would requite him for all his sufferings ; would give him another, a more perfect, a happier life ; would in that render him double for all that he lost and all that he had suffered in this life, he could not thus have expressed himself. All his difficulty would have vanished. No longer could he have been tempted to regard the Father, whose purpose for him was thus manifestly all love, as the seemingly capricious or cruel tyrant who was causelessly afflicting him. Surely it is just because Job does not know this, just because all that he does know of is this present life that seems for him to be about to end in sorrow and misery and with no hope beyond, that he is thus sore distressed.

Strictly in accordance too with the idea of the whole book of Job—as that of one face to face with the great problem of evil, unrelieved by any prospect of a future or a better life and striving in spite of this to retain his trust in God—are the concluding utterances of the book, wherein the Lord in whom he is striving to trust, appears upon the scene, to speak the last concluding word, which shall silence alike the passionate appeals of Job and the ill-judged reasonings of his friends. In all those divine utterances there is not so much as one word that speaks of a future life in which Job shall be requited for his sufferings in this ; not one gleam of light is shed upon the dark mystery of present evil under the government of an almighty and yet a just God. The voice from out of the whirlwind is all of power, and of power alone. It is a challenge to the creature to compete, if he can, in wisdom and power with the Creator, and if he cannot, to lay his hand upon his mouth and to submit. Canst thou do this and this ? Knowest thou this ? Canst thou understand that ? and if thou canst not, and if thou dost not ; if the whole material world in which thou findest thyself, is all to thee a great unfathomable mystery, then be silent, endure, perish even, if thou must perish ; but ask me not to tell thee why I thus deal with thee. Suffer and be still. To the last the book is thus true to its own idea. To the last the servant of the Lord is to be seen tried with the doubt, is my Lord just and good as well as great ? And to the last that question is left unanswered, in order that his faith may come forth as pure gold from the fire, that searching him through and through purifies but cannot destroy it. Is it possible then that it could have entered into the

conception of the inspired writer of such a drama as this, to describe its hero as having received from God, by special and exceptional revelation, just that very knowledge which would have made the trial of his faith no trial, and would have made the awful mystery which perplexes him clear as the day ? The idea of such a revelation, made in such a way, under such circumstances, is—apart from all other objections to it—a dramatic impossibility. It might have been, it must have been, a supernatural revelation ; but it would have been also an unnatural one. And in all the supernatural in Scripture there is nothing unnatural. For these reasons then we hold that the revisers of our authorised version here, at any rate, are right, and that the words of Job must henceforth be read as they render them to us, and the hope of Job be henceforth held to be of this life and not of the next.

II. But when we have admitted this, must we go further, and admit that in these words there is no prophecy of the resurrection or of an after life ? With the old words, is the old hope they proclaimed gone too, and must their place in our Burial Service, like the place of the departed, know them no more for ever ?

The answer to this question depends entirely on what meaning we assign to the word prophecy. If by that word we mean merely and strictly verbal prediction, merely the foretelling, in so many distinct and precise words, so many distinct and precise events, then doubtless these words are for us no longer words of prophecy. What Job distinctly and precisely foretold for himself is described as having as distinctly come to pass. His vindicator did appear, he did stand beside him at the last, he did do him exactly the justice that he claimed. Job did in his natural flesh see his gracious and loving Father. There in its fulfilment ends the prophecy. It was for him and him alone, and not for us—a thing not of the future but of the past.

But is this idea of prophecy the true one ? Is there no foreshowing of the future save in words only ? Is there no such thing as prophecy in events, in persons, in history itself ? Is there no such thing as a plan, a purpose in all human history—a working out in time of one deep counsel laid from all eternity—a divinely ordered evolution of humanity, according to which the race tends ever onwards, upwards to its complete perfection ? Is there, or is there not, presented to us in

Scripture—viewed not in detached and scattered fragments of books or of texts, but viewed as a whole—one great idea slowly working itself out in many ways—the bringing of good out of evil; the deliverance of the creature, made subject to vanity, but in hope; the redemption of a creation groaning and travailing together in bondage, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God; the *dénouement*, if we may so dare to speak, of the great mysterious drama of life in the justifying of the ways of the hidden Father, through the work of the Redeeming Son and the Sanctifying Spirit? If there be—if this be the central idea—the ground-plan of the whole structure of human history, viewed in the revealing light of the inspired word, then ought we not to expect that this history should be itself a prophecy—that it should ever be foreshowing its own future, as it ever strives to become, as it in some measure does become, that which it is yet to be? Just as science tells us that each order in creation—each successive type in the long evolution of living creatures—gives, in some rudimentary organ or function, its mute mysterious prophecy of the higher type that is to follow it; so that each type is at once a prophecy and a fulfilment of a prophecy, an accomplishment of a past foreshadowing, a foreshadowing of a coming future—so in the slow evolution of redeemed humanity, all along its course, there may be seen like tokens and prophecies of its completion; prophecies all the more real, because they are not read in words, but in facts and events; profound analogies, marvellous correspondences between what has been and what is, and again between what is and what we are told is yet to be; successive and ever clearer indications of the one great design that runs through all the ages; prophecies, as the buds are of the spring—as the flowers are of the summer—as the dawn is of the sunrise; prophecies which are therefore a far weightier evidence for Christianity than any number of merely verbal predictions, because they are predictions which could not possibly have been interpolations of later date, made to fit the events after they had occurred; prophecies entirely free from questions of dates, or authorship of books, or verbal niceties of translation, because they are interwoven through the whole structure of the sacred books—nay, throughout the whole structure of human history—of human life itself—which they illustrate and explain. As the cross in the ground-plan of some great cathedral, shows that its idea from the first

must have been Christian, whereas the external cross placed upon it might have been but the afterthought of later builders; so this prophetic structure of all sacred history is in itself a far greater, a far more certain word of prophecy than any single word or words of this or that individual prophet.

Let us, then, try if we can discern any prophecy of this kind in the book of Job, and more especially in those words of his with which we are now dealing.

In the first place, then, we can see that the story of Job is just what we have supposed the whole story of our race on earth to be—a great drama, working out one great idea. Its opening chapter brings, as it were, on the stage before us—with all the boldness and freedom of some old mystery play—the great central idea of all religions, man contended for by the two opposing powers of good and evil. God is there, and Satan, and between these the free will and choice of man. And the idea of the drama is that of man making his choice for good and for God, and what comes of that choice. And then—the prologue, as it were, of the drama having been spoken—the supernatural vanishes from the scene. Heaven and hell are no longer there; earth only remains, and man upon it as we know him, child apparently of the earth only, engaged in that struggle for existence in which all earthly creatures are engaged; but striving also, as he alone can, to understand why he must thus strive; forced by those terrible pedagogues, pain and sorrow, to the study of the great enigma: "Why am I what I am? why is it that I suffer and sorrow thus?" and this with the added difficulty of the belief in a God. The belief, that is to say, in a just and righteous, a perfectly just and righteous ruler of all men, who is also the author of that system of things in which righteous men, his servants, his children, are the seemingly helpless, unregarded victims of those terrible, pitiless laws of nature to which they are subject, which are nevertheless His laws, and to which He has subjected them. This is the great enigma of life—insoluble, hopelessly insoluble, if there be no future life in which the righteous sufferer may be recompensed for all that he has suffered in this. For if there be no other life than this, then assuredly the God who rules it would seem to be either unjust or impotent; unjust if He will not, impotent if He cannot, prevent the sufferings of righteous men. And this was the trial, in all its terrible intensity, to which the faith of Job was exposed, and from out

of which it emerges triumphant, not because it can justify itself to his reason, but because—spite of all that reason can allege to the contrary, spite of all those terrible facts of nature and of life which seem to disprove it—his spiritual being, that in him which is supernatural, which rises still above the things of time and sense, refuses to believe that He who made it conscious of right and wrong, loving justice and hating injustice, can Himself be aught save just. And so it is that this righteous man, holding fast to his own integrity, and therefore holding fast to the righteousness of Him who made him righteous, declares his conviction that there must be for him an avenger; that at the end of his trial there must be deliverance; and that at the last he shall see for himself the righteous, loving Father, whom he believes his God to be. And then, when his faith, thus proved to the uttermost, triumphs, then, but not till then, comes the deliverance he hoped for. The supernatural appears once more on the scene of the natural. No longer do we behold man the mere unpitied victim of the forces of nature. God the Creator and the Ruler of nature is seen to interfere for the deliverance of His afflicted servant. Health is restored to him, and wealth, and happiness in larger measure than ever. The Lord renders to him double for all that He had done to him. His Redeemer has come, has taken his stand beside him upon earth; he has in his flesh seen God, and knows him to be good and just as well as great.

The idea, then, of this book of Job would seem to be this: *That the justice of God is pledged for the happiness of His servants*; that He has not left them, as He seems to have done, the sport and the prey of the physical forces of that material universe in which He has placed them; that more precious in His sight is one loving, trusting human soul than all the universe of material worlds and all the laws that govern them; that sooner than that one righteous soul should unjustly suffer, those laws should—all of them, if need were—be suspended; that full surely there will come for every soul that trusts the Father's love a deliverance wrought by the Father's power.

And now let us turn from this dramatic story of the suffering, temptation and final deliverance of a righteous servant of God, to contemplate two other dramas, one still unfinished, the other, like that of Job, finished and complete.

The unfinished drama is the history of our race. The life of humanity on earth is exactly typified by all that part of the drama of Job's life which lies between its prologue and its epilogue, between its supernatural beginning and its supernatural ending. Through all that long story of man—full, as it is, of tragic interest—what is the very sorest trial to which it ever has been subjected, to which it still is and always must be subject? It is not merely the calamities, the sorrows of life, which come to all, but it is the added suffering of the mystery of these sorrows. It is the thought of the apparent carelessness and capriciousness with which the joys and the pains of existence seem to be scattered among the children of the common Father. It is that suffering in this life seems to be neither penal nor yet remedial, but seems to come as the rains of heaven fall and the winds blow, on just and on unjust alike. It is that there is so much apparent waste and gratuitous suffering; so much purely useless and purposeless agony. It is that human lives seem wasted by myriads, poured out on the earth like water, unregarded seemingly, unpitied, unaided, unrequited. Suffering humanity, wherever it still retains its faith in a divine Lord and Ruler, is still haunted by this question, "Why is it thus with us?" Like Job, too, it has been sorely vexed by false comforters, would-be friends who preach and lecture and rebuke and exhort, but who cannot console, because they cannot solve that enigma with which every sufferer finds himself confronted: "Why, if God is good and just, does He thus afflict me?" Surely the analogy is perfect here. Humanity seems to have still the old choice presented to it: to curse God and die; or to die believing in and blessing Him, and yet with a thousand reasons why it should not believe in, why it should not bless nor praise the Being who thus seems causelessly afflicting it. And the message—the inspired message of this type of our race to all who strive to believe in a Father, though they have no visible and sensible proof of a Father's love—is this: "Believe as I did, although such proof be lacking. Believe as I did, spite of all the seeming disproof that you see and feel. Believe that God is your Father. Believe that He will—nay, must, because He is your righteous Father—do for you what He has done for me. Believe that for you, too, there is an avenger; one who will yet give you victory over all that now afflicts you. Believe that you shall yet see for your-

selves the loving Father who is hidden from you now. Believe that a day is coming for you when you will discover that there was a needs be for all you mourn under; when you will receive from your Father double for all that He has done unto you.

But then in answer to this message, echoed and re-echoed as it is from psalmist and from prophet through all that elder dispensation when loving, trustful souls still loved and trusted on, though all around was darkness that might be felt, the question still arises, *is this message true?* What ground had these suffering saints and prophets for the hope they thus so firmly cherished? What proof have we who suffer now and who see thousands around us suffering without any just cause, without any assignable reason even, what proof have we that all shall be made right at last? The drama of the patriarch's life was complete, ours is unfinished, incomplete. No avenger stands beside the poor, the wronged, the oppressed; no healer and helper beside the sick and the dying. Graves are closing day after day over those whose lives have been the strangest, saddest mysteries of suffering, and they seem to have had no redeemer, no deliverer. With their eyes in the flesh they have never seen a just or merciful and loving Father. And assuredly if this were all we knew the answer would be answerless. Assuredly if in this life only we have hope, we who believe in God must be of all men most miserable, miserable above all others for this reason, that a sense of cruel injustice would envenom all those sufferings which we share with others; a bitter sense that if we have a Father He has forsaken us and regards us not. At best the hope of the patriarch could be for us but a pious opinion, a hope against hope, not impossible, for is not our Father almighty as well as just? but difficult, sadly, terribly difficult to hold fast in the presence of all that seems so utterly to refute it. For the belief in a future state rests mainly upon faith in the justice of God. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? is still the cry of the soul, which from its own righteousness infers the righteousness of Him who has created it. But if this life be all that He has given us to live, then assuredly He is not seen to be just, for in this life "we see the ungodly in such prosperity," the godly in such adversity, that "our faith is well-nigh gone, our treadings well-nigh slip." We cannot see the Father, nay, we cannot see the righteous ruler and judge of men, in a

world where happiness and misery, joy and sorrow, seem to be distributed by no rule of right, but showered rather at random upon each as he chances to come within their range, distressing us with their capricious and mechanical incidence, and forcing us to ask, is there then no moral government of this universe, in which the wicked flourish as a green bay-tree, and the righteous perish and no man regardeth, and chance or fate seems Lord of all?

Against this reasoning of despair it is that men in all ages have set the faith in a future state—the belief that life in this world is an unaccomplished drama, the completion of which is to be found in another life and another world, where men shall be dealt with according to the deeds done in this; where happiness and misery shall be, as we instinctively feel they ought to be, the result of what men are, and not the accident of when and where they happen to be; where Lazarus shall have good things and Dives evil things; where each shall go to his own place, the place which is fitted for him, and for which he has fitted himself; where man and his environment shall be no longer at war; where God shall be seen to be not only all-powerful, but all good and just. But, as I have said, apart from Revelation, without the light which it throws upon the gloomy confusion of this present life, this hope, this faith, is at best but the struggle of the soul with the things of sense and time, the protest of our moral nature against its unmoral surroundings. It is a hope, which in our brightest moments rises into certainty, in our dark ones sinks into doubt and all but into denial. It is a faith which as it wanes and sickens almost unto death has but the strength to cry, Oh, that there were a Day-man who could lay his hands upon God and upon us; one who, nearer to God than man, could speak for God to man as no mere man can do; one who, drawing nigh to men, suffering as men suffer, tried as men are tried, can plead for them with God. Who, being man with God and God with man, shall show us what none but He can show, the meaning of this life of ours, in which God seems so far off, and so show Himself at once the life and the light of men.

The cry of the patriarch is the utterance of, the desire of humanity. But it is more; it is a prophecy; it points forward to the completed drama of another life, in which once more appears, as in this older drama, the supernatural controlling the natural. Once more we see behind the veil of the material and the

visible, the divine power that rules and over-rules all things for good. We see once more a righteous sufferer, holy, harmless, undefiled, whose whole life was spent in absolutely perfect submission to the will of his Father in heaven, and who was yet a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and whose sorest sorrow and whose deepest grief sprang from the intensity of His sympathy with His sorrowing and suffering fellow-men. We see Him rejected, despised, hated of those He loved so well, dying at last a death of shame and agony, which was regarded by those who inflicted it as the just punishment for offences against the laws of His country and His God, and we hear from Him in the moment of His supremest agony just that appeal to the justice and to the love of God which suffering has wrung from the hearts of the righteous sufferer in all ages: "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" And as we contemplate this life, this death, we see that which, if this life be all, if there be no hereafter, would constitute the most terrible disproof of the existence of a just God and loving Father of men; and then—as in the older story of the righteous servant, tried, afflicted, seemingly forsaken, but all the while guarded, guided, sustained by love that never ceases and power that never fails—we see a miraculous deliverance. We see that death itself may not frustrate the justice, nor the grave shut out the love of God. We see Him, the just, the holy one, proclaimed to be the righteous Son of God by the resurrection of the dead. We see Him, too, receiving at the hand of the Lord, double for all that He had suffered. We see Him who, "though He was a Son," had to "learn obedience" by things that He suffered, rewarded for His suffering by glory and honour and power; by that glory which He most desired, and by that power which must for Him have been most infinitely precious—the glory of having conquered death for all men; the power of delivering humanity from the miseries of this sinful life. We see Him whom Job in his suffering typified; we see Him whom Job in his prophetic anticipation of his deliverance foretold; the Redeemer, who lives and lives for ever—the true avenger of all righteous sufferers—standing upon this earth, revealing to all men the righteous God, the loving Father in whom, hoping against hope, believing, in spite of doubt, they had still trusted even though He slew them. We hear Him say to all who are weary and heavy laden—wearied with the burden of life, heavy

laden with the intolerable weight of doubt that life, uncheered by the hope of immortality, must ever lay upon the souls of the righteous—Come unto me and find rest for your souls. See in me, your risen Lord and Saviour, the answer to that terrible question which has haunted the souls of all who have striven to believe in a righteous God in spite of the seemingly unrighteous rule which left them seemingly unpitied to suffer and to die. See in me the proof that God cares for the souls of the righteous and that none that trust in Him shall ever perish. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," saith the Lord: "he that liveth and believeth in me, though he was dead, yet shall he live." As we hear these words of our risen Lord we learn how deep, how true, was the prophecy that lay hidden in those words which follow them in our funeral hymn of triumph over death. We do not need to throw ourselves back into the time of him who first uttered them and try to reason out of them a verbal prediction of our Redeemer. We need but to read these words in the light of the Easter dawn that flashes out from the unsealed tomb of Christ to see in them, not a verbal prediction, but a typical foreshadowing of the great fact that our Redeemer liveth. The pillar of cloudlike hope, turns as we thus gaze upon it, into a pillar of fire, to lead us through the night of our pilgrimage. The old words of faith and hope are ours once more, but ours with a thousandfold deeper meaning than they had for him who spoke them first. We speak the words which he spoke of defiant faith in the presence of our great enemy, death; but we speak them with a more assured certainty, for as we utter them there glides into his place another sufferer—there speaks in his stead another tried and tempted and triumphant one. We see the "Daysman" for whom the patriarch sighed and sighed in vain; and we hear from Him how that He has destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light—a life and an immortality that shall be ours, too, if we will trust in Him. We hear, too, that other word of prophecy—the voice from heaven echoing the voice of our Redeemer on earth. "Write, From henceforth, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." And—as we listen to the promise and the prophecy—the old familiar answer rises to our lips once more, "We know that our Redeemer liveth;" "We know that at the last He shall stand upon the earth;" "We know that in our flesh we shall see God."

WILLIAM FLEMING STEVENSON, D.D.

By A. MACLEOD SYMINGTON, D.D.

THE life of the author of that famous and fruitful book, "Praying and Working," was not a long one. Born on the 20th of September, 1832, he died on the 16th of the same month, 1886, thus not quite completing fifty-four years. The book, written in 1861 and published in 1862, when he was thirty, is more the centre and key of the author's whole life than even one who knew something of him in private was prepared to find it. Praying and working marked the career of Fleming Stevenson from first to last. We all knew of the twenty-four years which followed the publication, of the exuberant labours in which he exemplified the principles he had taught; what we now learn from his "Life and Letters" * is that at least twelve years of praying and working had gone before; that the book not merely contained interesting and stimulating information about certain earnest workers in Germany, but was a fervent utterance of practical convictions. The book may be taken—not alone by any means, but with fully as much propriety as any other—as indicating a distinct epoch in the development of the Church in this country; it was a result of the gracious influences that had been working among us, reviving and deepening spiritual life during the first half of the century; and it was a considerable force in that advance and diffusion of practical Christianity which has made labours such as those of Wichern and Fliedner and Gossner happily no longer conspicuous by their rarity and novelty. The materials for a study of nineteenth-century saints are accumulating fast as the sands of the century run out; and a noble treatise might be written, on Fleming Stevenson's plan enlarged, illustrating the growth of the Church of Christ during this, its most remarkable period, by the lives of its more prominent workers. What a list they would make, from Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay at the beginning, to Hannington and Keith-Falconer at the end! There are some half-a-dozen sentences that have been seething in our brain since reading Fleming Stevenson's life which it will be prudent not to begin to write, lest each sentence should grow into rather a lengthy paragraph; but it is germane to our subject to emphasize the sig-

nificance of the period at which Fleming Stevenson comes in. Those polemical conflicts which were the inevitable result of quickened spiritual apprehensions were beginning to lose something of their asperity; the new impulse in Biblical study was beginning to tell in all branches of the Church, when he was a youth of eighteen or twenty, forming his opinions. The Christian heart was, more or less consciously, craving enlargement in a wider catholicity of sympathy, and in a sphere of practical power enlarged to a more just correspondence with the person of Christ, with His love, with His commission. Caught on the rising tide of this expansion before he had left his home, Fleming Stevenson did more than many to help it forward; and brief as his career was, the contrast between the condition of things at the beginning and end of it is sufficiently striking.

The origin of *GOOD WORDS*, and of several other magazines of kindred spirit, is one of the well-marked outward signs of the new inward force then growing up in our country; and with *GOOD WORDS* Fleming Stevenson was associated closely from the first. "Praying and Working" appeared in our columns before it became a book; indeed, Norman Macleod had quickly discerned his fine literary faculty as well as the excellent qualities of his heart so early as 1855, when he was fresh from Germany, and had employed his pen in the *Edinburgh Christian Magazine*.

"On the establishment of *Good Words*, Dr. Macleod enrolled him as one of its regular contributors, and was anxious to assign him a more prominent position, but Mr. Stevenson felt that his ministerial duties would not permit him to give up the requisite time. His advice, however, was constantly sought, and Dr. Macleod used often to call him his 'right arm.' The tie between them was very close and tender, and Mr. Stevenson's admiration of the genius and great loving heart of 'the chief,' as the *Good Words* staff used to call their editor, deepened a friendship which he regarded as one of the greatest privileges of his life."

Fleming Stevenson was an Irishman; of Scottish descent, but every inch an Irishman—genial, witty, hospitable, patriotic. Besides, he was by birth and disposition a gentleman, one of the finest specimens to be anywhere met with, with manners which made the plainest folk feel at home with him, and which enabled him to go with ease into the society of the high-born on occa-

* "Life and Letters of William Fleming Stevenson, D.D., Minister of Christ Church, Rathgar, Dublin." By his Wife. London, Edinburgh, and New York. T. Nelson & Sons, 1888.

sion. He was the youngest in a family of five, his father being a man of pure and cultured tastes, an intelligent Presbyterian, a fervent Christian, rich in catholic sympathies. "His house was always open to the deputations of the London Missionary Society and other kindred agencies who visited Strabane from year to year. The names of Williams, Moffat, and Duff were household words among parents and children." The mother is described as "a devoted Christian, whose religion took hold of a character already beautiful, and transfigured it." And there seems to have been a Lois as well as a Eunice in the family, for of his mother's mother it is said, "Many of her qualities, her enthusiasm, her sensitive, sympathetic temperament, and her strong force of will, were inherited by her grandson; while to his mother he owed his gentle, loving disposition, his marvellous patience, and self-denying consecration."

He studied Arts at the University of Glasgow, being deterred from going to Edinburgh by an awful tragedy the shadow of which hung over all his sunny life. His brother Samuel, four years older than himself, was getting on hopefully in Edinburgh, when one evening he went out to pay a visit, and was never more heard of. "The elements for forming even a distant conjecture as to his fate do not exist. . . . The shock was felt most acutely by his brother Willie. From being the merriest boy, brimful of fun and frolic, he became grave and thoughtful as a man. His whole life seemed lifted into another groove, as if by the heave of an earthquake, and the unseen world was made very real and near to him from that day forward." He was then in his fifteenth year. In Glasgow Fleming Stevenson formed a friendship of the closest kind, destined to last through life, with Adolph Saphir, who says: "I remember distinctly the time when we, as it were, looked into each other's soul and felt that we were one." An insatiable reader, Stevenson was overflowing with the English classics, while his friend naturally led him into acquaintance with the language and literature of Germany. When, in 1851, they went together to study theology at the New College in Edinburgh, they were joined by Charles de Smidt, a young Dutchman from the Cape, "of character so honest, open, and childlike that no one could help liking him." They lived together, called one another Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and Dr. Saphir thinks that the cosmopolitan friendships into which he was thus led nourished the mis-

sionary spirit Stevenson had brought from his father's house. They, with others, formed a select society for the study of exegesis, eager to get at the fountain head and heart of Christian truth. To his father, with whom his intercourse was always of the most open and frank character, he deplores that "the external, the doctrine, the shell, the pulpit-dress of the gospel should be so studied in the closet and so preached in the church, but that of the spirit you only see faint glimmerings. Men have put ugly, ill-fitting habiliments on the Christ-spirit, and under such an uninviting cold exterior one has great difficulty in finding out the divine, the true, the life."

Studying hard, and acquiring invaluable habits of industry and method, he lived "a life of communion with God in prayer and study of Scripture." That was the one side, the praying. What has specially struck us is that along with it there was also, thus early, the other side, the working for Christ; that personal, earnest effort to benefit others which distinguished his life to the end. He had a district in the Canongate, where he faithfully visited the sick and outcast. At a time when he was unable to walk through rheumatism, and might have held himself excused for staying at home, he took a cab as far as it could carry him, and painfully climbed the steep stairs, that his poor friends might not be neglected. He had, like most earnest students, his own struggles about vital doctrines and beliefs; and it was not merely by reading, thinking, or even praying that he found his way to settled convictions, but by this experiment of the application of Christian truth to the wants of the human heart. The lesson, the example, is a precious one.

It was the same when, at the age of twenty-two, he went to study in Germany. Keenly delighting in travel and the fresh first glimpses of foreign life, he yet began his continental experiences by repeated visits to the Rauhe Haus at Hamburg, and long interviews with Immanuel Wichern; and after he had settled down at Berlin, "every moment that could be spared from study was spent in investigating the state of the poor, the working of the 'Inner Mission,' with its many plans for aggressive action on the evils of our modern social life." It was the devotion of the brethren of St. John that fired him with an enthusiasm which was burning, clear and strong, eight years later when he exclaimed,

"Why should there not be a Christian

chivalry? Why should there not be hearts to join in the new crusade? Why should there not be life-service for the good of your poor neighbours as much as for war or travel, as heroic spirits to fling themselves into the battle against sin as into the strife for a kingdom? Romance, adventure, action, sacrifice, a purpose worth living for, the springs of generous minds are touched here, and the delicate subtle springs of religious feeling which the clumsy fingers of the world can never touch" ("Praying and Working," chap. v.). Such an enthusiasm had early taken possession of the young student.

He studied none the less; he got the full intellectual profit to be reaped from residence in Berlin and Heidelberg; he enjoyed travel in the land of Luther and intercourse with distinguished men, such as Delitzsch and Bunsen; but along with all that there went from the first this warm working interest in the welfare of his fellow-men. It was for him an integral part of Christian living; and had it not been so thus early, the

writing and speaking of his later life would not have been accompanied by such power in raising the enthusiasm of others.

After so full preparation, Fleming Stevenson became a preacher in 1856. After itinerating for a time among vacant charges, he offered himself for the work of the Belfast Town Mission, and had one of the most wretched districts assigned him. Here he patiently sowed the seed from house to house, as well as from the pulpit, not seldom carrying his own dinner to some starving family. Then, as all through, careless of himself, he caught typhus in a bad

form while visiting its victims, and months passed before his health was restored. His sister, who nursed him, says,

"Willie constantly offers the most beautiful prayers for his poor people, but quite unconsciously."

When health returned he undertook the temporary charge of a Presbyterian congregation in Bonn during the absence of the pastor; and the record of his brief stay there brings to light what continued to be a feature of his ministry to the end, patient, wise, loving dealing with individuals by means of letters. He established also a

missionary prayer-meeting, and interested the congregation in the evangelisation of British India. It was at this time also that he saw the deaconess' work at Kaiserswerth, Amsterdam, and Utrecht, gathering facts and impressions which were afterwards to be turned to great account.

Returning to Ireland in the summer of 1859, he was glad to resume work as assistant to the minister of a small mission

church in Belfast. The place was soon filled to overflowing by the poor and needy, and some of those in a different rank of life began to mingle with them, feeling the attraction of a ministry unusual in its combination of culture and insight with the most genuine earnestness. When a new congregation was being formed in an attractive suburb of Dublin, the fame of those qualities led to his being pressed to undertake the pastoral care of it; and thus Rathgar became, from the first day of 1860, Fleming Stevenson's home and the scene of his noble life-work.

He threw himself into the work with all



From a photograph]

W. Fleming Stevenson.

[by Lafayette, Dublin.

the ardour of his nature, and with a conviction that he had at length found the task in which all his knowledge and experience were to be spent. He preached, he visited, he organized, winning hearts to the Saviour and to himself, and when he had won them building them up. Attention has been mainly fixed hitherto on the warmth of Stevenson's zeal and the depth of his piety; but it is time to mention that he was also a very wise man, full of common-sense. He had a sound judgment, was quick and shrewd in his discernment of character, possessed great tact in the management of human nature, had enormous industry, and was a most capable man of business—all this without sacrificing one whit of the godly simplicity which formed the basis of his character. Once more let it be said, praying *and* working—not the one more than the other—described Fleming Stevenson fully and exactly. The steady growth of the congregation from three-and-twenty persons to some hundreds; the beautiful building, which Norman Macleod opened in 1862; the admirable organization of all sorts of congregational machinery; the training in scriptural methods of Christian giving; the care of the young; the development of women's work in the church; the enlargement of his people's sympathies towards "the Mission"—both home and foreign, the two being, as he taught so well, branches of only one stock: these things began soon to witness for the young pastor, and are still fruitful of works which follow him into the heavenly rest. One might dwell long on his work at Rathgar, as a stimulating example of ministerial efficiency. For that of course there is no place here; only let the reader distinctly understand that the pastorate was Fleming Stevenson's work, that all the activities reaching forth into a wider sphere were only superadded by means of a rigid economy of time, wise methods, and a sacrifice of sleep, the wisdom of which some may doubt, though no one, considering the motive which dictated it, can blame it. The spirit in which he laboured at Rathgar is indicated in the following letter:—

"The state of the congregation lately is spiritually more encouraging than it ever was. People that it was hopeless to rouse, whose hardened indifference used to stab me as I went into the pulpit, are singularly arrested and listen with the most fixed attention. One man for whom I had prayed in vain for years, came to the Communion to-day, saying he dared no longer hold back. One that was in darkness by miserable doubts has been altogether relieved. Several have come to a clearer knowledge of their redemption by Christ."

He was a man of great eloquence; but this is something quite different from eloquence, and much better.

Such was the work, such the character of Fleming Stevenson up to his thirtieth year. At that time, as we have indicated, the author of "Praying and Working" became famous, and his work rapidly extended itself till it concerned the ends of the earth. His literary work was continued, but tempting suggestions of a purely literary career, in which success was assured, and in which his influence would have had indefinite expansion, were wisely put aside in favour of the pastoral office he had solemnly undertaken. His eloquence caused him to be in perpetual demand for all manner of public services, not in Ireland alone, but in England and Scotland as well; and he complied with the invitations of friends and churches at a sacrifice of time and strength which his constant smile and good-nature concealed. But for the power he had of sleeping at will he could not have gone through the excessive labours, and it may be—though of that we do not speak with confidence—that they prematurely shortened his career.

More and more as the years went on he had been pressing on the attention of all whom he could influence the supreme claims of what he preferred to call the Mission, that is, the extension of the kingdom of Christ over the whole earth. He was one of the first thoroughly to apprehend the intimate relation between the propagation of the gospel abroad and its success at home, and to accept the principle which, it is to be feared, is still novel and strange to many, that a strictly universal effort is the Church's work and the condition of her prosperity. Everything connected with the history of missions and with their spread was studied by Fleming Stevenson until he acquired a mastery of the subject such as few have; and when in 1871 the General Assembly of the Irish Church had to find another convener for its foreign missions the choice fell on the minister of Rathgar with a unanimity which surprised no one except himself. The election came about thus. The venerable Dr. Morgan resigned the office on account of age, and the Assembly, while declining to formally accept the resignation, asked him to choose one who might, as a colleague, relieve him of the burden. He named Fleming Stevenson, and the Assembly endorsed his choice with a burst of acclamation. "A friend who was sitting near him at the time, turning to congratulate him on the honour so spontaneously

and enthusiastically conferred, was struck by the solemnity of his countenance and the words of deprecation and misgiving which followed. Never was a charge less lightly assumed." The post is no sinecure in any of the Presbyterian churches; indeed, so great is the labour involved that in most of them there is now a secretary set apart for foreign missions alone. On a minister already as busy as he could be (so one would have thought) there was laid an office which taxed all his powers. He must henceforth preside in and direct meetings of committee, and in order to do that must keep himself minutely familiar with every detail of the stations in India and China. He must correspond with the missionaries on the field, and he did that with a gracious wisdom (we will not call it tact) which made every man feel that he was one of themselves, and loved the work quite as warmly as they could. He must find out and encourage new missionaries, and keep back the unfit; he must prepare annual reports; and he must go from town to town rousing his brethren into something of his own intelligent zeal for the great work. He not only did all this, but he also organized and presided over a women's auxiliary, which has done very much for the cause, and will remain as a fruitful memorial of his wisdom and love. He gave his services also freely to other churches, both in this country and even in America, the pathos and power of his appeals rising ever as time went on. Yet somehow he contrived to maintain at Rathgar the full measure of pulpit and pastoral efficiency. We wonder at it; but the fact is, few of us test the resources of a full heart.

In 1877 he made a tour round the world

in the interests of the Mission, carrying cheer to the lonely workers, and bringing home a mass of information, which he was of all men best fitted to collect and to use. The record of this service was in part given to readers of GOOD WORDS in 1879, but only in part. The knowledge and impulse gained by this contact with the spiritual destitution of mankind was appearing in his addresses to the end.

His last years were occupied with the preparation and delivery of lectures—on the history of missions—in Scotland on the Duff foundation, and the publication of these has been rendered incomplete by his sudden removal.

In 1865 Fleming Stevenson was married, and a beautiful home at Orwell Bank, rich in all the pure felicities of domestic life, supplied the unwearied labourer with an unfailing well-spring of refreshment.

When the Earl of Aberdeen was at Dublin Castle he made the author of "Praying and Working" one of his chaplains, and greatly enjoyed the "combination of spirituality and culture" in his preaching. He speaks warmly of the pleasure and advantage derived from frequent private intercourse, and suggests what is most true, that the influence of one so large-hearted, so full of Christ-like service, given with a self-denial all the more noble that it was never paraded, perhaps never thought of, "will remain as a permanent heritage toward the promotion of the kingdom of the Lord and Master whom he loved and served so well." It is no broken column that is to be reared over Fleming Stevenson's grave; the Master who has taken him home knew that his work here was accomplished.

THE AZORES.

By PROFESSOR THORPE, F.R.S.

THIRD PAPER.

OUR vessel left Angra in the evening for Fayal, which is about seventy miles distant, and at daybreak we were awakened by the rattle of the descending chain as the ship was brought up off Horta, the chief town of Fayal. The appearance of Horta from the sea is rather striking. The town lies along the edge of a bay sheltered by high land on all sides except to the south-west, and is protected from the heavy surf by a massive sea-wall built of lava. To the south is the Monte Queimada, a huge mound of black and brown cinders, from which runs a

breakwater. Behind is the Guia Head, forming the southern arm of the bay, and to the rear of the town are some four or five rounded hills, the slopes of which are parcelled out into plots green with maize and orange-trees, and beyond them is the Great Caldeira rising to a height of some 3,000 feet above the sea. It was evident that disembarkation was to be a work of some difficulty. There was a tumbling sea on and a strong south wind. As our boat ran towards the little jetty which forms the chief landing-place, we were met by a number of large

half-decked vessels, each containing some forty or fifty people, men and women, returning to the opposite island of Pico. They had crossed over in the early morning with fruit and vegetables, firewood and dairy produce for the Horta market, and were now on their way home. The boats had usually two masts, and carried huge lateen sails. At first sight the rig seems quite unsuitable for such waters on account of the amount of "top-hamper" which it offers, and the lack of facility for rapid "snugging down" in the sudden squalls which are common among the islands. The boats, however, are admirably handled; the daring manner in which they are run in among the reefs and shoals along the Pico coast is enough to take one's breath away.

It was one thing, however, to get into our boat, and quite another to get out of it again. Every now and then a huge wave would rush up against the jetty and sweep up the steps carrying all before it. There was of course the customary amount of gesticulating and screaming on the part of those on the jetty, and as usual everybody gave orders at once; but these seemed to be little heeded by our men, who fended their boat with great coolness and dexterity as she rose and fell with the waves. At last watching our chance we scrambled out, one at a time, on to the slippery steps, and were dragged along the quay beyond the reach of the broken water. The formalities of the custom-houses in the Azores are a little trying, and nowhere more so than in Fayal. Even



A Pico Passage-Boat.

when you have taken out a licence to land your baggage (for which you have to pay a small fee), there are quite a number of officials to be seen and a variety of papers to be filled up. The gentlemen of the Alfandega, however, are in no hurry, and there is a quiet formal dignity about them which is eminently provoking to a man whose garments are saturated with salt water. At length we were allowed to depart, and passing under the gateway of the little fort which protects Horta, we found ourselves in the main street of the town, and in due time

were ensconced in comfortable rooms in the Hotel Central.

The arrival of the mail throws Fayal into a state of excitement. Half the population then comes to town, and a hot and steaming crowd packs itself into the one post-office that the island possesses. As the postmaster, plainly conscious of his importance on an occasion which happens only once a fortnight, advances with the letters to the little desk which separates the throng from

the offices, the stranger is struck by the ridiculous disproportion between the size of the crowd and that of the packet, a circumstance which is explained by the fact that every woman expecting tidings from husband or son is accompanied apparently by the rest of the family. The jabber subsides into a buzz of suppressed excitement as the postmaster adjusts his spectacles with the most exasperating composure. He calls out the name on the top-most letter; a shrill voice on the confines of the crowd intimates its destination, when half-a-dozen hands are stretched out to receive it and it

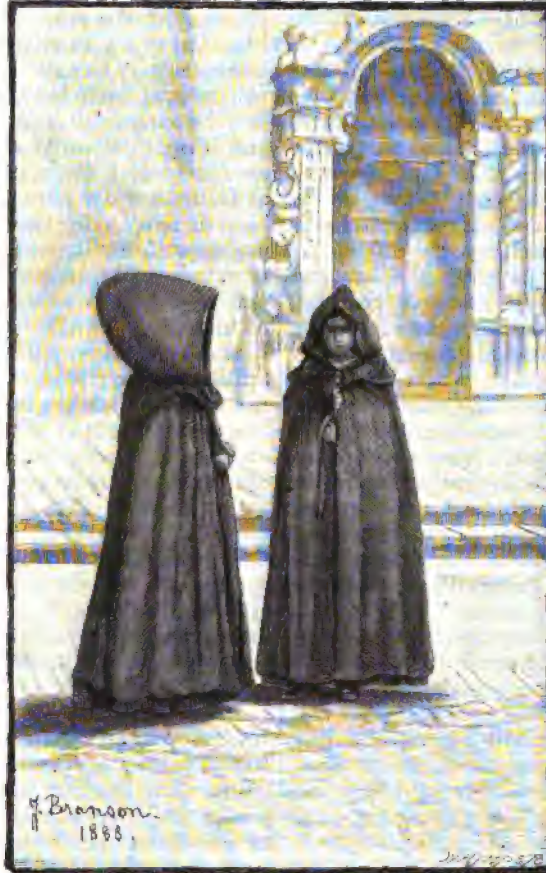
is passed over the heads of the crowd to the fortunate recipient. The buzz is renewed after each announcement; the postmaster has constantly to repeat his demand for silence, in which he is of course joined by such of the crowd as have not yet received a letter. As the delivery proceeds the crowd gets gradually noisier, and the postmaster becomes hot and angry with the exertion of shouting above the din. Although the number of letters is small

—Christmastide brings quite as large a packet to many a country house at home—the work of distribution is long, from the circumstance that each recipient has on the average five or six names, which Portuguese etiquette seems to demand shall be duly set forth on such a formal occasion as the despatch of a letter. During the whole of that day Fayal is disturbed and feverish, and on no other occasion, with the exception perhaps of on the church floor on Sunday, is

there such a commingling of *capotes*; groups of women stand about the doors discussing the information emanating from the one family in the street which has been favoured with a letter, and the men button-hole each other with such cheering intelligence as that João Carroça's son has sent home twenty dollars to the old man; that he is working his passage out from Boston, and means to start a windmill. How true, indeed, is the proverb that, "as cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country!"

We have made mention of the *capote*, and as it is peculiar to the

Azores, or rather peculiar to St. Michael's and Fayal, it needs a word of description. Of all the superstructures which women at various times and in various climes have mounted on or over their heads as articles of attire, none is more astonishing than this. The *capote* is a sort of hooded cloak made of heavy dark blue cloth; it reaches nearly to the ground, and is surmounted by an enormous hood stiffened with buckram and whalebone, and deep enough to conceal the face of the



Fayalese Women with Capotes.

wearer. The capote worn by the Fayalese dames is larger and more cumbersome than that of their Michaelense sisters. At first sight the cloaks seem of uniform type, but the initiated recognise at a glance, from a slight difference it may be in the curve of the hood or the cut of the collar, whether the fashion is of to-day or is that of a year ago. Within the hood is a dainty white kerchief the effect of which is most bewitching. Indeed, from the care which is apparently taken in its arrangement, the maidens of Fayal are doubtless fully conscious of its power. It is of the finest cambric and of snowy whiteness, carefully folded over a high tortoise-shell comb, smoothed across the hair and turned by the earrings so that these may not be hidden, and secured under the chin in such manner that the lace ends may fall into easy folds. No women in the world are so clever with the needle as the Fayalese, and nothing can exceed the delicacy and beauty of their alce-lace and straw embroidery. Dexterity with the distaff and needle is indeed characteristic of Azorean women generally. Even the poorest of their houses can boast of a home-made knitted quilt, and the never-failing cambric altar-cloth, with its edging of lace, bears witness to their skill and industry. Very effective too is the *criva* work, with its pretty blending of white thread with the browns and greys of partially bleached island linen. The pith of the fig-tree constitutes the material for the exercise of the extraordinary imitative faculty and manipulative skill of a certain Fayalese lady whose acquaintance we made. By the aid of a razor, a small pair of scissors, and some gum-water, she produced the most exquisitely delicate imitations of flowers and foliage. She thus made for us a dainty little basket, about a couple of inches high, and filled with a profusion of Lilliputian roses, fuschias, lilies, quaking-grass, and ferns.

The roadstead of Fayal is a frequent resort of American whalers, who call here either to pick up a crew or to land their oil. Every other man, therefore, in Fayal speaks a little English, or rather American, and all of them regard Boston as the veritable "hub of the universe." London has been occasionally heard of, but as a place of comparatively second-rate importance, far below Lisbon in fact. Boston people have indeed been true friends to the Fayalese on more than one occasion, and the action of the Dabneys in standing between famine and the islanders has made their names as

household words in Horta. The island occasionally suffers severely from drought. Owing to the nature of the soil and the volcanic character of the rock, there is an almost complete absence of water-bearing strata; the wells are generally shallow, and their yield is poor. In spite of the exertions and example of the wealthier proprietors, Fayal remains very much in the same condition in this respect as when it was visited by the geographer Edward Wright, nearly three centuries ago. Wright, who was one of the company of the Earl of Cumberland and the historian of his expedition, describes how it was necessary to catch the water as it ran off the land after heavy showers. Graciosa is even more subject to drought than Fayal, and Wright relates that on his company demanding water the islanders replied, "that as for fresh water they could not satisfy our need therein, having themselves little or none saving such as they saved in vessels or cisterns when it rayned, and that they had rather give us two tunnes of wine than one of water."

Horta has few public buildings of any architectural pretensions, although some of the convents are imposing from their size. Most conspicuous of all is the College of the Jesuits; it is now used as a barracks, and, although somewhat woe-begone in look and much in need of repair, will in all probability long outlive the flimsy erections of a later time. We went into the church of St. Francis; there was a profusion of heavily gilded brass work about the altar, and some quaint blue tiles of large size representing incidents in the life of the patron saint.

After a few days' stay in Horta, we seized what appeared to be a favourable opportunity of making the ascent of the Great Caldeira. The morning was perfect. The sky was of the purest azure, and only a few light cirri floated almost motionless overhead. A faint air from the north-west scarcely ruffled the blue streak of sea which lies between Pico and Fayal, and a distant whaler trying to make the roadstead lay almost becalmed. We passed through the little market-place, crowded with busy Pico women, and clambered up the steep and stony streets and out into the suburbs, between high walls lined with canes, and bananas, and richly-scented orange-trees. When clear of the town we branched to the left, and at a slight elevation we saw "beneath our feet a little lovely vale"—the peaceful valley of Flamengoes, backed by the distant Caldeira. The summit

of the mountain was absolutely cloudless, but here and there the sides were flecked with dark, slowly-moving shadows from the lofty clouds. From the high land Graciosa and St. George were plainly visible, whilst behind us towered Pico, supreme and magnificent in his solitary grandeur. The ascent of the Caldeira is singularly easy, and at few points is the inclination greater than fifteen or sixteen degrees. For some distance the way lies along a broken road between fields of maize and wheat, lined with a rich profusion of blue and white hydrangea; but in a short time the track is lost amidst yellow and scarlet heath and long rough grass. Ridge follows ridge with tiresome monotony, until one suddenly finds oneself on the brink of an enormous shaft or hole, almost circular in form, and with nearly precipitous and deeply-fissured sides. As we stood in silent amazement taking in the details of this extraordinary scene, we noticed a movement among the ferns and tree-heath immediately below us, and presently a huge bundle of rushes emerged from the tangle of vegetation. The moving bundle was then seen to be supported on the head of a man who had clambered up with it from the bottom of the crater. From where we stood it was impossible at first sight to see how he could have got up the almost perpendicular sides of the Caldeira. Asked the depth of the crater, the rush-gatherer, measuring distance by time, as is the habit of the peasantry, replied that it was "half an hour deep;" which to us, who were looking over the brink of this stupendous hole, showed a pardonable ignorance of the law of falling bodies. The sides were strangely furrowed, and covered with masses of faya and ferns. The form was almost basin-like in symmetry, and the edge of nearly uniform height, except where it rose slightly towards the south and culminated in the Pico Gorda. The ground at the bottom was uneven, and a well-formed crater could be distinguished near the margin of a small lake of dark-brown water. It was quite impossible to gain an accurate estimate of the diameter and depth of the Caldeira by mere eye observation. The basin is, however, above a mile in width, and is upwards of one thousand seven hundred feet deep. We passed along the Serra Gorda, over which a large hawk, poised in mid-air, was watching for quail; and we traversed a succession of curious little hummocks on the sides of Pico Gorda. The regularity of the internal form of the crater is here disturbed by bold

jutting rocks, which appear to rise almost from the bottom. Looking down the outer slope to the north-west, there is a crater perfectly circular in form, the sides of which are covered with red and brown scorix, so bright in colour as to suggest that the mass must still be hot; beyond this is the Pico do Fogo, the scene of the eruption of 1672. At the north-west side the Caldeira is almost rectangular in form. The view from this point is very striking, especially when the deeply-cleft ridges running down from Pico Gorda are thrown into shadow. The outer slopes of the Caldeira are here much broken into long furrows, which end in black lava reefs. The edge of the crater is barely a yard across, and is so deeply and regularly indented that, as seen from the other side, one appears to be walking along the edge of a saw. The Caldeira again takes a circular form, and on the north the outer side is studded with little hummocks of loose, friable pumice, beyond which are green fields marked out with what seem to be walls of grey stone, but which are in reality hedges of pale blue and white hydrangea.

It was late in the afternoon before we could persuade ourselves to leave this wonderful place. As the sun drew to the west and fell behind the hill, a thin mist gradually stole up from the sea and the clouds began to thicken over Pico. The men scampered after our donkeys, which had been wandering at their own sweet wills amidst the gorse and grass of the outer slopes; and after arranging the ponderous saddles we began the descent towards the village of Flamengoes. Before us lay the long, undulating valley, and over the rising ground beyond the "silver streak" of the Fayal Channel, dotted with the graceful high-peaked lateen sails of Madalena passage-boats, Pico reared his head, now all aglow with evening tints, over the huge ruff of clouds which encircled him. We found ourselves in a narrow lane lined with a tangle of brambles and dog-roses, pink hydrangeas, fuschias, and here and there a small passion-flower, and thickly carpeted with lycopodium. A turn of the way brought us to the edge of a ravine overshadowed by acacias; and after a sharp trot down a steep descent, we clattered over the rough stones of the old bridge which spans the partially dried-up watercourse of the river flowing by the village. Flamengoes is a quaint little place with a history. It derives its name from the circumstance



The Old Bridge at Flamengoos.

of being the settlement of the Flemish immigrants sent out by the Duchess of Burgundy in 1467.

But the finest sight of Horta is undoubtedly Pico. One never tires of looking at the majestic peak, and of watching the ever-changing lights and shadows on his flanks, or the masses of cloud or wreaths of mist which linger round his head.

Our first introduction to Pico left an ineffaceable impression of the mountain on our memory. The strong southerly wind which met us at Horta had wrapped the upper part of the island in a dense, unbroken covering of cloud, beneath which the lower portion, with the towns of Madalena, Arealarga, and the villages along the western shore were plainly visible. The fringe of this canopy of cloud was so symmetrical that, as it rested on the land, the island appeared to be almost flat; the rocky shore gradually rose into low cliffs, which seemed to border an extensive plateau of almost uniform height. Shortly after mid-day the wind changed, when, as in a moment, a great black patch was seen, suspended like an eclipsed sun, in the heavens. The effect was startling in its suddenness. In a few minutes the rift in the clouds showed the summit of the mountain, the sun burst through the grey pall, and great masses of cloud rolled down the slopes of the hill or dispersed in mid-air, and Pico stood revealed as in a

transformation scene, backed by a bright blue sky, and bathed in the brilliant light of the afternoon. So long as the daylight lasted our eyes were seldom off the mountain; and as the sun went down, gilding him with "a heavenly alchemy," and imbuing his flanks with all manner of "hues that blush and glow"—tints of orange, and gold, and red—the effect utterly beggared description.

Pico, in spite of his 8,000 feet and his scarified sides, is not difficult to climb; a good walker in strong boots could get up and down again in a long summer's day. The long summer days were now past, and as we were in no hurry, we determined to give two days to the ascent. This, of course, involved camping out on the mountain. Kind friends in Fayal furnished us with a little tent, big enough for ourselves and guides, together with a well-stocked hamper. We crossed over the narrow strait in one of the big brown-sailed lateeners which ply between the two islands to Arealarga, and in due time were comfort-

ably quartered in a picturesque, low-roofed quinta which, years before, had been the property of certain Carmelites, but was now the summer-house of our friends in Horta.

The appearance of Pico Island from Area-larga is not very prepossessing. The coast literally bristles with partially-submerged

rocks and jutting reefs, and inland there is nothing to be seen but a confused mass of black lava walls, without a single tree to break the sombre monotony of the stony waste. These walls, which rise to a height of about three feet and enclose spaces of a dozen square yards, are intended to shelter the vines which straggle over the black



The Summit of Pico.

ground and among the broken rock. Beyond this wilderness of walls which stretches a couple of miles or so inland, the land begins to rise, and gradually culminates in the mountain, the uniformity of the slope being broken here and there by low conical hills. As we intended to make an early start in the morning, we soon sought the dormitories of the old mendicant friars, and filled as we were by the ceaseless noise of the surf among the rocks and the moan of the wind in the rafters, neither the Vision of Elias nor

the shades of his white-hooded followers troubled our slumbers. Shortly after our breakfast of bread and wine and luscious figs, our guides appeared with the donkeys; these were to help us with the baggage as far as the Serra Gorda. Our leader was Joao Grassi, or Pico John, as he came to be styled—a fellow of plain and uncoined constancy, who never looked in his glass for love of anything he saw there, but, withal, a trusty villain, who lightened our humour with his merry jests. The ascent, after leaving the

village, lay over long, gentle slopes, formerly covered with low trees, but now all bare, every green twig having been converted into charcoal years ago by the villagers below.

A tall, graceful girl of about eighteen years, black-eyed and olive-skinned, in a bright orange-coloured skirt striped with red and blue, and wearing a broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat of straw, round which ran a thin, scarlet cord, met us at the end of the village. This was Aldina—a noted Pico beauty and “a milk-maid half divine”—returning from her morning visit to her cows on the grassy slopes of the Serra. The hat of a Pico woman is worn more as a shade for the face than as a covering for the head. The crown is scarcely big enough for a baby, and is usually filled with a folded cloth to bear the pressure of the burdens which are carried on the head. Indeed, when they are not so laden, the women may be seen striding along the country roads with a stone on their heads in order to keep their hats on.

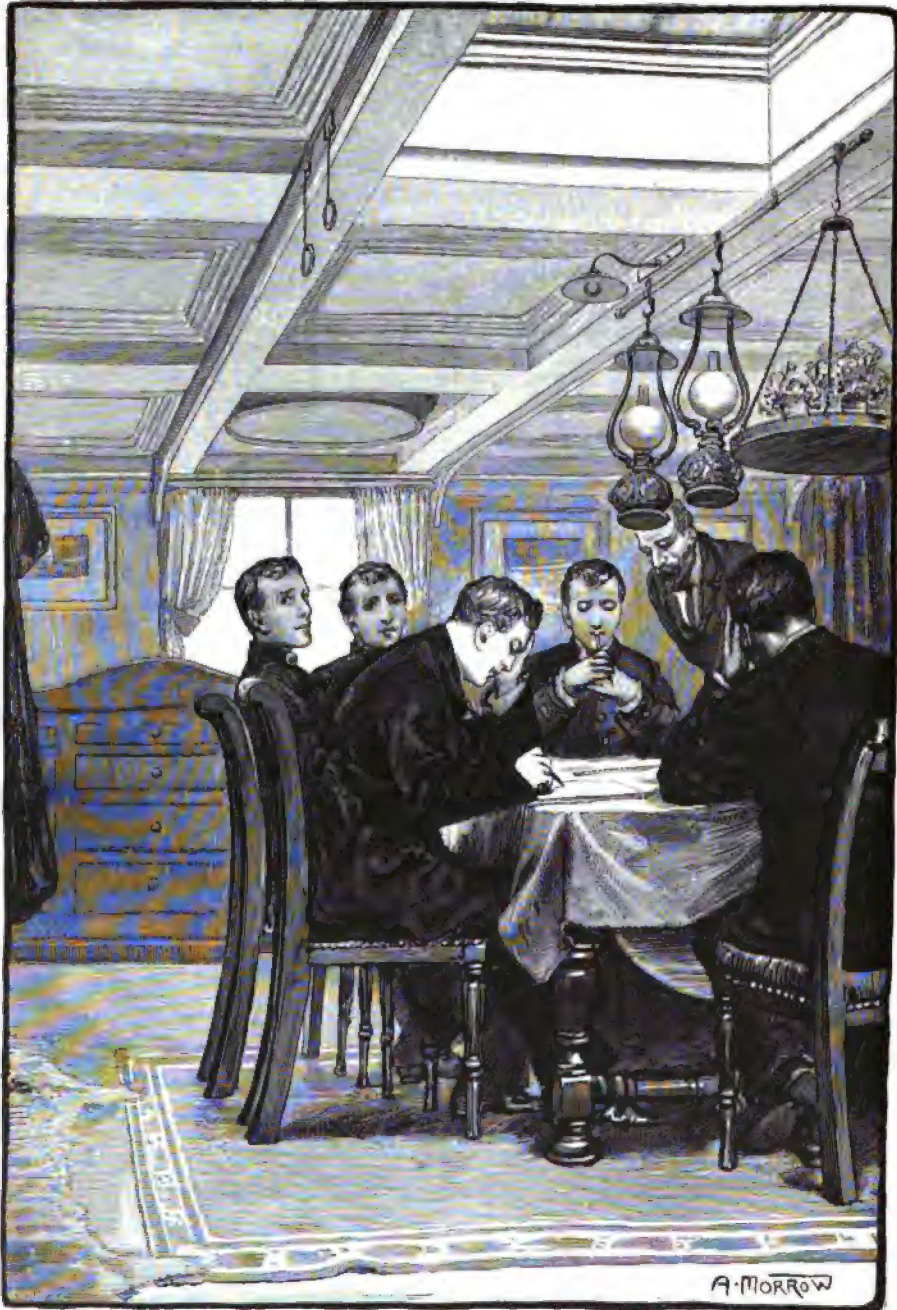
A steady trudge of a couple of hours brought us to the Serra Gorda, where we dismissed the donkeys. The ascent is now

much steeper, for we have arrived at the base of the larger upper cone of the mountain, which is here clothed with abundance of tree-heath and juniper. After climbing for about three hours we came to the place where our men had determined we should spend the night; it was a well-sheltered spot behind a shoulder of the mountain. The tent was securely pitched and strongly roped, and a deep quadrangular trench was cut round it, with openings to the downward slope, so as to carry off the water, should rain come down in the night. Through the opening in the tent we looked down upon the little hamlet of Candelaria in the valley below; Fayal lay a little to the right, with the white cliffs of Castello Branco well open before us. Although it wanted two hours to sunset the temperature had fallen to 45°. The men spread a thick carpeting of heather within the tent, and, as night fell, made a glorious fire before the door, which sent showers of sparks into the black air and threw a yellow glare on the green erica around us. After a “nightcap” of the “mulled” rough red wine of the islands, we rolled ourselves in our rugs, and prepared

for such sleep as we could hope for on a thorny bed, with the temperature down to the freezing-point. As soon as it was light enough to pick our way over the loose scoræ of the upper cone we set out for the summit, and as the sun rose the dark shadow of the mountain was sent sweeping across the sea until it stretched to the horizon. The climbing was very rough, and the “abarcas” or thick leather sandals of our men were almost cut to pieces among the loose slag and cinders. After nearly three hours’ hard work we found ourselves on a broad pavement of black lava, and in a few minutes came to the crater of the volcano. It was about five hundred feet wide and about one hundred feet deep; the walls were roughly circular, but somewhat broken away towards the north-east. We clambered down the steep sides



Pico Woman.



THE SCHOOLROOM.

and across a mass of scattered rock, "In nature's rage at random thrown," up to the highest edge of the wall: this bears the appearance of a second peak about two hundred feet high; its stones were warm in places, and jets of smoke and steam issued from among them. We now looked down on the narrow sea between Pico and St. George; on that side the slope of the mountain is almost precipitous. The blue sky and sunshine seemed to intensify the gloom and blackness of the place. Beyond a few lichens, and here and there a bunch of wild thyme, and the little red nodding flowers of "caira" nestling in the crannies of the little peak, there was an utter absence of vegetation. The dark ledges of barren stone, the naked precipices and black ravines, all recalled Scott's description of Coruisk:—

"Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
Nor aught of vegetative power
The weary eye may ken;
For all is rocks at random thrown.
Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone."

Coruisk, as Scott pictures it, with the wind whirling the eddying mists from the hill-tops of the Coolins and curling the sable waters at their base, is no doubt a wonderful sight, but Coruisk seems the abode of peace and beauty when compared with this frightful pit of Acheron.

The ways of the globe-trotting Englishman are, as the rest of the world knows, past finding out. The peripatetic photographer was hitherto unknown in Pico, and to put one's head under a piece of black velvet for the alleged purpose of getting pictures inside a box, was altogether so eccentric and uncanny a proceeding, that on more than one occasion the islanders drew Joao aside, to receive, after a significant tap on the forehead, the assurance that we were "perfectly harmless." But the crowning proof of our insanity was to pretend that we could measure the height of Pico by boiling water on the top of it. The mountain we found was 7,613 feet above the sea-level.

LIFE ON BOARD A MODERN MAN-OF-WAR

From a Landsman's Point of View.

By COMMODORE A. H. MARKHAM, R.N., A.D.C.

SECOND PAPER.

THERE never was such a busy place as a man-of-war! It would be impossible for anybody to suffer from *ennui* on one of Her Majesty's ships. Everybody, from the captain downwards, seems to be employed—nobody is apparently idle.

On venturing to look into the captain's quarters shortly after we had left Spithead, I found that spacious apartment transformed into a schoolroom! At a long table, which occupied nearly the whole superficial area of the cabin, were seated about a dozen young middies, busily engaged in working out abstruse problems in geometry, algebra, mechanics, and nautical astronomy, under the supervision of the naval instructor, who is also the chaplain of the ship.

When a gentleman combines these two offices in his own person, he is invariably known by the sobriquet of a "double-barrelled man!" so that even a person holding the sacred office of a chaplain, does not escape from Jack's inveterate love of special nomenclature!

I have hitherto omitted to state that we were accompanied, on our way to Portland, by another vessel belonging to the same

fleet as that to which the ship I was taking passage on was attached, and I was much interested in witnessing the marvellous celerity, and accuracy, with which long and important messages were transmitted between the two vessels. There are no less than three different methods, or systems, of signalling, by which communication between ships of war can be carried out; namely, by different parti-coloured flags made to represent all the letters of the alphabet and the numeral figures; by an apparatus called a semaphore, which is provided with two movable arms, by which several combinations can be made; and, thirdly, by the Morse code.

Signalling by flags is invariably adopted when messages of special importance have to be communicated, or when evolutions and exercises have to be executed by ships or squadrons.

Semaphoring is a rapid way of transmitting long vocabulary messages, either public or private, from ship to ship, each word of the signal being spelt letter by letter. For instance, if Mr. Smith wished to ask Mr. Jones to dinner, the following signal would be spelt on the semaphore, addressed of course

to the ship on which the last-named gentleman was serving—"Mr. Smith to Mr. Jones. Will you dine with me this evening?" This single message requires forty-eight separate combinations to be made on the semaphore—viz., one combination for each letter in the message; yet so skilful are the manipulators of the apparatus, and so expert are the men in reading the signal, that the aforesaid message can be transmitted, and understood, in less than a minute.

A still more expeditious way is for one of the sailors to transform himself into a semaphore, and with a small flag attached to a short stick held in each hand, assimilate his move-

ments to those of the arms of a semaphore.

The Morse code is used at night-time, and is made by long and short flashes of a powerful light in a lantern, specially provided with an extinguisher which can readily be moved



Preparing to Signal.

up and down. In thick and foggy weather the same system is observed, but sound is used instead of sight, the signals being made by long and short blasts with a steam whistle, or with a still more noisy instrument, yclept a syren, whose hideous and unearthly shrieks may, in still weather, be heard at long distances.

Observing a man standing on a small platform outside the ship, but secured thereto by a large canvas apron, very busily occupied in swinging a leaden plummet over his head by the aid of a piece of rope, I inquired what his special duties were, and was told that whenever a ship is in what is termed pilotage waters, that is shoal water, or in the immediate proximity of land, men are so employed for the purpose of determining the depth of the sea, by allowing a leaden weight to fall to the bottom attached to a line. This line is marked at certain distances, or rather, so I gathered from the explanation I received, at *uncertain* distances, known only to seafaring men, called "marks." These "marks" are distinguished by various coloured rags and other contrivances, by which means the man is able to ascertain the depth of the water. The line is also divided at certain intervals between the "marks," by what are called "deeps," but these have nothing to distinguish them by, and can only be judged by the "mark" nearest to the surface of the water. Like the majority of nautical appliances, the marking of the lead line is of too subtle and mysterious a nature for the intellect of an ordinary landsman to fathom!

I was cogitating on all the novel, yet deeply interesting, sights I had seen since I embarked in the morning, when I was aroused from my temporary aberration by my friend the "skipper" (I believe this is quite the orthodox appellation for the captain!), who significantly hinted that, in the space of one short hour, we should be outside the Isle of Wight, where, it was more than likely, we should find the sea slightly agitated, therefore if I was desirous of making a few sketches "between decks," it would be as well for me to do so whilst the ship was in fairly smooth water!

I took the hint, and escorted by an old salt, of weather-beaten appearance, whose "wrinkled front" had evidently not been smoothed by "grim-visaged war," or anything else, dived into the regions below.

Here I found everything, as it was upstairs, in apple-pie order—all was neat and clean, and everything was in its place.



Passing by the commodious mess places and cabins appropriated to the use of the officers, and by a number of large white boxes with black lids, which I was informed were the sea-chests of the midshipmen, in which everything was at the top and nothing at hand, I was conducted by my modern Palinurus (who was of the exalted rank of a quartermaster in the Royal Navy), along the deck through doors, which I was told were all water-tight, and could be closed very quickly, to the fore-end of the ship, which my guide designated the "eyes of her!"

In each compartment of the vessel through which I was taken, were rows of scrupulously white tables, so clean that even a Dutch housewife would have been envious of their spotless purity, with long stools, equally clean, on either side of the tables. Along the wall, or perhaps I should be more correct in calling it the side of the ship, were racks and little cupboards, in which were ranged plates, basins, and other useful utensils. These were the mess-places of the sailors, where they had their meals, and where, in the evenings, and at other spare times, they solace

everybody on board,
except the superior
officers, who were
provided with
cabins,
slept in
ham-
mocks.



On the Lower Deck.

I saw
one actu-
ally in use,
its inmate
being a poor
fellow who had
injured his
foot. It cer-
tainly ap-

peared a very snug and cosy contrivance to sleep in, but the difficulty of getting into it seemed to me almost insurmountable; but I suppose, like everything else, it is a feat easily acquired by practice and necessity. These hammocks are taken on deck at about half-past six every morning, and are not allowed to be brought down and hung in their places until half-past seven in the evening, so that the poor sailor has no place to lay his wearied head during the day except on the deck; or, as the quartermaster said, "If he's tired and wants a caulk, he must pick out a nice soft plank to lie on!" The term "caulk" in sailor language, is synonymous with the word "sleep."

their leisure hours during long and weary voyages reading, or perhaps writing long "yarns" of personal adventure, to the loved and cherished dear ones at home.

Not perceiving any bunks or bedsteads on the deck, I ventured to ask my conductor where the sailors slept, and was told that

Seeing a man busily occupied in binding, with rope, a large brown article, in shape something like a huge cigar, I inquired what

he was doing, and was informed that he "was pricking up his baccy." This reply did not convey much information to me relative to the special occupation on which the man was engaged; but I subsequently ascertained that the men of the Royal Navy are permitted to purchase, duty free, on board their own ships, tobacco which is supplied to them *ou naturel*, that is to say, in the leaf. Having obtained from three to four pounds of the weed in this condition, the stems and all extraneous matter are carefully removed, and the remainder, which is nothing but the pure leaf, is then tied up in the shape of an enormous cigar, rolled up in canvas, and then bound round very tightly with a description of brown tarred twine, which, in nautical parlance, is known by the name of "spun-yarn." This process, which the tobacco undergoes in order to render it fit for use, is called "pricking." In a few weeks the tobacco thus prepared is ready for use. The "prick," as it is called, is then cut in halves, and the tobacco used as required, either for smoking or for chewing.

During my peregrinations below I was taken to the caboose, or galley, as it is sometimes called, where the meals of the sailors are cooked. It all looked delightfully clean, and an appetising odour was emanating from the depths of a huge cauldron, into which the cook was vigorously thrusting a large iron two-pronged fork, some three feet in length, which I was informed was called the "cook's tormentor;" this, at any rate, seemed an appropriate name.

In conversation with the cook, who was, he told me, a pensioner, having previously served before the mast for a period of over twenty years, I learnt that the sailors were served with three meals a day, namely, breakfast at half-past six, dinner at noon, and supper at about half-past four.

For breakfast, each man is provided with a pint of excellent cocoa, sweetened with sugar, and half-a-pound of ship's biscuit. The mid-day meal consists, in harbour, of a pound of fresh beef per man, with a proportionate amount of vegetables, and a quarter of a pound of biscuit, or sometimes bread. At sea, a pound of salt pork, accompanied by a pint of pea-soup, is issued every alternate day; and on every other fourth day, alternately, a pound of salt beef with half-a-pound of plum pudding; or a pound of preserved beef or mutton, accompanied by preserved potatoes or rice. For supper each man has a pint of tea sweetened with sugar, and half-a-pound of biscuit.

The allowance that I have specified constitutes their regular daily rations, and these are provided gratuitously by Government. The men are, of course, at liberty to provide themselves, at their own expense, with other articles, such as butter, cheese, sardines, &c., which they obtain in harbour from the bumboat, and at sea from the ship's canteen.

Half-a-gill of spirits, diluted in the proportion of one part of rum to three parts of water, is issued to each man who wishes it at about half-past twelve. It is all mixed in a large vessel called a grog-tub, and served out to



Heaving the Lead.

the messes. Total abstainers, and men who do not care to receive their allowance of spirits, obtain in lieu compensation, in the shape either of money (the value of the spirits), or

an equivalent in chocolate and sugar. The proportion of those who do not drink their spirit allowance is now, I am told, about fifty per cent.

True to Jack's love of quaint phraseology peculiar to himself, he has a nickname for nearly every article of food that



The Galley.

is issued to him. The ship's biscuit he facetiously designates "sea cake," or "midshipman's nuts." Salt beef is, of course, invariably alluded to as "salt horse." His plum pudding he calls "duff" or "stickjaw." Preserved meat is always known as "Fanny Adams." Fresh bread is called "soft tack," in contradistinction, I assume, to the so-called sea-cake, which is sometimes referred to as "hard tack." A stew comprising almost anything that is edible that can be obtained, is called a "sal-ma-gundy" or "lobscouse." His glass of grog he calls his "navy," or his "tot," while

the surplus from the grog-tub or the tea-kettle is called "blue" or "plush."

The origin of these two last terms are doubtless traceable to the French word *plus*.

I was listening most attentively to all my old friend the quartermaster was telling me, relative to the hardships generally of a sailor's life, and his own in particular, when I became sensibly aware that the ship had passed out through the Needles passage into the Channel. In spite of the prediction of the captain, I soon discovered that we were not destined to enjoy what he had been pleased to call a smooth-water passage.

Fortunately I had succeeded in making a few sketches which, with this brief description of my experiences on an English man-of-war, I now present to my readers, with all due diffidence, and drawing a veil over the latter part of my voyage to Portland, beg to wish them, for the present, farewell.

NOT YET.

I MET Content upon a flowery way,
And "Sweet Content," said I, "be thou my friend;
Keep pace with me until the glad day's end.
Fresh are the skies, and all the world is May,
And the wide landscape, like a brimming cup,
Creameth its foam of lavish blossom up."

"Not yet," replied Content, and strode before;
"Dost thou not know, this garish blossom-time
Is but the promise of the after-primé—
A pledge to thee for golden fruit in store?
Less fickle friends than I thy coming stay
To bear thee company upon thy way."

I cried, "Oh, sweet Content! be thou my guest;
The rose is heavy on my perfumed bowers,
The linked circle of the dancing hours
Alone awaits thy coming to be blest.
Dear friends have I, true Love and Labour sweet,
Be thou my guest to make our band complete."

"Not yet," replied Content, nor turned his head;
"The fairest rose grows perfect but to fall,
And while the sun of summer gladdens all
He brings the corn its gold, the wine its red.
Still dearer friends than Love and Toil may grace
Thy proffered board, and fill my vacant place."

I prayed, "Oh, sweet Content! stay with me now,
My fields are cumbered with the ranked sheaves,
My fruits are ruddy 'mid their bronzed leaves,
And leaves of laurel are about my brow,
For Fame has joined my band of comrades brave.
Stay with me, thou, no further boon I crave."

"Not yet," replied Content, and onward strode;
"The spacious barns are gaping for their store,
The flail hangs idle on the threshing-floor.
The fragrant must is waiting to be trod.
Perchance the worthless wreath thou vauntest now
May wax a golden circlet round thy brow."

"Oh, blest Content!" I sobbed, with heavy moan,
As still I followed weary-paced and slow,
"My orchard boughs are black against the snow;
My wreath of bays a thorny crown hath grown;
Of little worth my garnered treasures be
Since thou wilt still refuse to lodge with me."

"Not yet," replied Content, but turned his face
 Radiant upon me from the further side
 Of a dark stream, a river deep and wide.
 "Ne'er on thy confines is my resting-place,
 But when thy feet have touched this distant shore
 Thy home shall be mine own for ever more."

S. REID.

SHOOTING STARS.

By SIR R. S. BALL, LL.D., F.R.S., ASTRONOMER ROYAL FOR IRELAND.

FOURTH (AND CONCLUDING) PAPER.

AMONG the constellations there is a fine sickle-shaped group, forming a part of Leo the Lion, one of the signs of the Zodiac. That part of the sky defined by Leo is curiously related to the meteors of the 12th to 14th of November. Every shooting star truly belonging to that great shower pursued a track across the heavens of which, if the direction were carried back far enough, it was always found to pierce through the sickle of Leo. Indeed, the paths of all the meteors formed a set of rays spreading away from that one point in the constellation. An invariable characteristic of this particular shower is its connection with the constellation of Leo, hence the appropriateness of the name of Leonids.

And now for the explanation—and it is a remarkable one—which astronomers have been able to give of the annual appearance to some extent of the Leonids, and of their majestic displays every thirty-three years.

Picture to yourself a mighty host of small particles out in space. They are organized into a great shoal, but they are so sparsely distributed that each particle is perhaps a dozen miles away from its neighbours on each side. How large each of these particles is we cannot indeed say. No doubt they vary in size, but they are probably not larger than the pebbles on an ordinary gravel walk, and possibly much less. The shape in which this host is marshalled is remarkable. It is a long column, of which the width is small in comparison with the length. The dimension of this celestial host is indeed portentous. We sometimes judge of the length of a procession of carriages by stating how long they take to pass a certain point. We can express the length of this great procession of meteors by saying that, if we were to stand still and watch them file past, not less than a year must elapse before the mighty host would have passed by. This

is, of course, an imperfect conception until we realise the velocity with which the meteoric procession is moving. They travel not with the speed of carriages, nor even of express trains, nor of rifle bullets. Their speed is certainly short of that which flashes through the electric wire, but none the less does it utterly transcend any speed which we can produce mechanically. The velocity of the Leonids sometimes exceeds twenty-six miles a second, a pace which is more than fifteen hundred times swifter than the swiftest express train.

The width of this column as it passes along is prodigious when measured by ordinary standards. A cord that would go four times round our earth would barely suffice to stretch across the meteoric current, which is 100,000 miles from side to side. But this dimension shrinks into insignificance when compared with the length. To realise the true shape of the mighty host, we may use Mr. Stoney's admirable illustration. He says, take a piece of the finest sewing-silk, about a foot and a half long. Then imagine the silk to be magnified, while still preserving its proportions, until its width is about one hundred thousand miles and its length about fifteen thousand times as great. Such is the shape of the mighty shoal which has, for the past thousand years, given us perennial displays of Leonids. It is at this moment and at every moment pursuing a mighty path through space.

Think of a racecourse which is oval-shaped, or elliptical, as it should be more properly called. Think of a number of men who started together on that course to run a race. Let us further suppose that the number of competitors is a large one, and that they have to complete a considerable number of rounds ere the winning tape will be stretched across the track. We should then find that the shape of the group

of athletes was continually being extended. We should also find that some few exceptionally good runners were able to draw ahead in advance of the main body. No doubt a large field would also contain some tardy runners who would inevitably be left far behind, so that as the successive rounds were completed we should see that the first were actually overtaking the last, and thus gaining an entire circuit. After a time a condition of the field would be reached in which the main body of average runners were in a stream occupying a small fraction of the entire course, while the rest of the track would be dotted here and there with those competitors who were either exceptionally swift or exceptionally slow.

Submit this illustration to an imaginary species of transformation and of enlargement. Instead of the small course a fraction of a mile in circumference, let us think of a course still oval in shape, but many hundreds of millions of miles round. Let the competitors be replaced by the small objects which are suitable for the manufacture of shooting stars. Let the number of these be magnified until they attain to untold billions. Thus we obtain a notion of the mighty celestial racecourse on which the Leonids have for a thousand years at least been hurrying along in a race, which is still in a comparatively early stage of its progress. Many circuits have no doubt been accomplished, the original host which started has been drawn out into the long thin line which we have already compared to a piece of silk. This contains the great mass of the Leonids, but there are many of the meteors which have been endowed with the gift of exceptional fleetness. On the other hand, there are some which seem not to have been able to keep up with the tremendous speed of the main body. Thus it happens that all around the mighty racecourse there are stragglers to be found, each of which pursues its journey in its own fashion.

If I have succeeded in giving you a picture of the condition of the Leonids, of enabling you to realise how the greater portion of the meteors form a comparatively dense shoal, while around the rest of the course the meteors are few and far between, it will then be easy to understand the laws of recurrence of the November showers.

It must be borne in mind that we can never see the meteors until the fatal moment when they dive into our atmosphere. We could, indeed, at any time point our telescopes to the spot in the heavens where we

know the great shoal must certainly be located. But the mightiest telescope in the world does not disclose the shoal to us. In fact we would never have seen these Leonids at all, we would never have become conscious that such a shoal of meteors existed, had it not been for a certain circumstance, which, for want of a better expression, I must speak of as accidental.

Our globe pursues a certain definite track around the sun. Year after year with un-deviating regularity, the earth performs the stages of its journey. If it reaches certain points on the 1st of January and the 12th of October in one year, then it reaches the same points on the 1st of January and the 12th of October respectively on next year, or any other year. The same may be asserted with regard to any other dates, so that when a date is given the station at which the earth will then have arrived is at once indicated.

The Leonids and the earth have thus each a certain track which they regularly follow. It might of course have happened that one of these tracks lay quite outside or quite inside the other. It might also have been the case that one of these tracks passed through the other, so that the two orbits were related in the manner of a pair of consecutive links of a chain. Had any of these conditions prevailed, the two tracks would have been quite independent, and the meteors could never have become known to us. It might, however, have happened that the two tracks did actually intersect, and had therefore the point of crossing common to both orbits. This would generally speaking be an unlikely circumstance, but it is an indispensable condition if the meteors are to be visible from the earth. In the case of the Leonids, it has chanced that their orbit does intersect the orbit of the earth, and to this circumstance we are indebted for the glorious displays every thirty-three years.

We shall now be able to explain the chief features exhibited by the famous showers. In the first place a shower can only occur in that precise locality where the earth in its path crosses the path of the meteors. This junction is of course at a definite part of the earth's path. We may conveniently mark such a point in the path by the date at which the earth is to be found there in the progress of its annual voyage. This particular point, or rather region, of crossing happens to be in the place through which the earth passes each year between the 12th and the 14th of November. Hence it follows

that if we are to see any Leonids at all it can only be at these dates, and thus we at once explain that peculiar feature of the shower, which is expressed in the fact that it can only recur on certain special days.

Scattered along the great meteoric highway run those irregular meteors that have forsaken the main host, either by rushing on too fast or by delaying too much. As the earth swoops across the highway it will be very likely, indeed it will be certain, to capture some of these stragglers. They will appear to us who stand on the surface far below to dart in from the constellation of Leo. Thus it is that every 12th to 14th November we witness some of the shooting stars belonging to this particular system. As these stragglers are but few in number, we shall not usually be gratified by any striking spectacle. A diligent observer may note on such an occasion a dozen or twenty Leonids, or sometimes even more, but they are neither brilliant enough nor numerous enough to attract special notice.

Sometimes, however, it will happen that the earth arrives at the critical point of its path on the 13th of November, during the time while the mighty procession of the long meteor stream is filing past. At once our globe plunges into the current, and for a few hours must forge its way across the stream, while all the time it is exposed to a perfect hurricane of meteors. In their untold myriads the little missiles dash themselves with unutterable pace into the comparatively stagnant air case in which this world is enclosed. Destruction swift and complete is the doom of every one of the meteors that has the misfortune to graze our atmosphere. We on the earth's surface, unmindful of the rapid voyage of our globe, only become apprized of the singular cosmical event that is in progress by seeing a beautiful shower of shooting stars.

For a few hours the grand display lasts, that is, until the earth has traversed the stream and once more resumed its way through space comparatively void. Nor can any more Leonids be seen until the following 13th of November, when again in its annual course the earth reaches the scene of the last display of celestial fireworks.

It will generally have happened that the entire of the great shoal will have completely passed by the critical point during the lapse of a twelvemonth, so that the earth will at the next return only capture a few of the stragglers. Sometimes, however, it is found that the long shoal has not had time, even

in a year, to completely hurry past the critical point. Accordingly the earth must take another rush across the stream, and will again encounter a meteoric tempest. We shall thus have two grand displays of shooting stars in two consecutive years. By the time the earth has once again fulfilled its course, and now for a third time approaches the spot so specially pertaining to this shower, the great shoal must certainly have passed, and only a few of the occasional Leonids will this time enter the net. Many years must elapse before we can again encounter the great host. They pursue without interruption their appointed journey. For sixteen or seventeen years they gradually retreat farther and farther away from the neighbourhood of this world, then they begin to turn round, and after the lapse of sixteen or seventeen years more they regain our vicinity, when great showers of Leonids are again to be anticipated. Now we can understand how it is that the great showers come every thirty-three or thirty-four years. This is the period which the swarm of little bodies require for the completion of one circuit around their mighty path.

There are many other periodic showers of shooting stars besides those notable Leonids on which we have dwelt so long. None of the other showers, however, possess the same importance as the Leonids, nor do they ever manifest celestial splendours comparable with those of the 13th of November. The Perseids, for example, which appear from the 9th to the 11th of August, are tolerably constant in their appearance, but have little spectacular interest. There is also another shower called the Andromedes, which occurs on the 27th of November. It has produced, at all events, one remarkable display, which took place in 1872. The meteors were excessively numerous on that occasion, but they were so short in their paths, and so insignificant as to brilliance, that the spectacle, though of great scientific interest, could not be compared as to splendour with that of the Leonids in 1866.

There are also several other showers which appear with greater or less regularity. Each of these possesses two distinct characteristics by which its meteors can be identified. One of these characters is the date on which the shower appears. The other is the constellation or point on the heavens from which all the meteors appear to radiate. Thus when we speak of the Andromedes on the 27th of November, we express that the shower on the 27th November comes from the part of

the heavens marked by the constellation of Andromeda.

A striking discovery has been made which points to a curious connection between comets and shooting stars. We have seen how a shoal of meteors pursues a definite orbit through space. It has been found that the track followed by a great shower of meteors is often identical with the track pursued by a comet. It is wholly beyond the province of mere chance that an orbit such as that of the Leonids should, both as to its size and its position in space, be likewise that of a comet, unless the comet and the meteor swarm were objects related together.

In drawing these papers to their close, I would remind my readers that though we have been occupied in treating of bodies which are often quite insignificant as to dimensions, yet we have been really following

one of the most interesting and instructive branches of modern astronomical research.

The great sun guides our world through its long annual journey. The mighty mass of the earth yields compliance to the potent sway of the ruler of our system. But the sun does not merely exercise a control over the vast planets which circulate around him. The supreme law of gravitation constrains the veriest mote that ever floated in a sunbeam, with the same unremitting care that it does the mightiest of planets. Thus it is that each little meteor is guided in its mighty journeys for untold ages. Each of these little objects hurries along deflected at every moment, to follow its beautifully curved path by the incessant watchfulness of the sun. At last, however, the supreme moment has arrived, the fatal plunge is taken. The long wanderings of the meteor have come to an end and it vanishes in a streak of splendour.

SOME SURVIVALS OF PAGANISM IN SCOTLAND.

By ROBERT MUNRO, B.D.

THE story of the contest between Christianity and Paganism in Scotland, if it could be recalled from the abyss of the past, would be as interesting as anything of the kind ever written. The men who raised those huge monoliths, circles, and towers, which even yet fill us with feelings of mystery and wonderment, were, whatever else they might be, no mere barbarians. "The equals of Saxons and Romans and Greeks, whether in physical beauty or in intellectual vigour" (Max Müller), they possessed, from the earliest times, a culture and civilisation of no mean kind; so that when the struggle was thrust upon them they would rally around their priests and their gods, and defend them with ready zeal and a strong hand. It was an invasion of what was dearest to them—their religious beliefs—and we may be sure they resented it with even more spirit and indignation than they manifested in repelling the lawless incursions of the Viking hordes of the far north.

Indeed, so stubborn a foe did Christianity find in ancient Paganism, that it would seem as if it were forced to make a compromise with it. If it could not perfectly overcome it, it hoped to swallow it up by a gradual process of assimilation. This, with all its leavening tendencies, it found to be no easy task. The old faith, instead of succumbing to the new, held its own side by side with it,

and perpetuated itself in the thought and practice of those who were professedly no longer heathen but Christian, no longer worshippers of the sun but of Christ. A hundred years ago this was more apparent than now; but, as I hope to be able to show, this strange and unnatural alliance has not even yet altogether ceased.

Though Scotland has, perhaps, led the van among the nations in its efforts to set itself free from the trammels of ignorance and superstition, there is scarcely a country district in it which has not got its heathen customs and beliefs. These are no doubt daily dying away, and in some cases there will soon not remain a trace of them; but in other quarters they are holding their ground with a tenacity that is incredible. In the Highlands and the remoter districts of the South omens are still watched, charms are practised, and pagan rites observed. Just as in India every event has got a religious significance attached to it, so in these localities superstitious observances are woven into the whole web of common life. Every occurrence of more importance than ordinary—a journey, a marriage, a birth, or a death—is thus regarded, and the customs connected with it are religiously observed. To meet a hare, a pig, a lame man, or a woman, as one sets out on his way, is unlucky; the passing of a dog between a recently married

couple is an omen of evil; the seeing of the new moon without silver in one's pocket is prophetic of want; and to slip or fall while taking part in a funeral procession forebodes sudden and terrible calamity. Even such incidents as the breaking of a glass, the flight of a bird, the sighing of the wind in the trees, and the sound and the flow of a river, have their own sacred import, and are regarded with religious reverence and superstitious awe.

But besides these beliefs, bearing on the daily events of life, there are other distinctly pagan customs still prevalent which are not of such a harmless character.

Well-worship has always occupied an important place in Paganism. The most cultured of the ancient races—the Egyptians, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans—had their deities of rivers, streams, and fountains; and in our own land, the Druids had their sacred wells and lakes, which possessed infallible virtues of healing or of death. There are in Scotland alone not fewer than six hundred of these; and though many of them bear the names of veritable saints, there can be no doubt as to the purpose they originally served. They were associated with the worship of the Sun-god; and although the Christians adopted them, and endeavoured to assign to their use a new significance, they did not perfectly succeed. The primitive idolatrous rites still continued to be observed, and that in the face of stringent enactments of the State, and resolutions and denunciations of the Church.

In the case of the dozen or more wells that are yet adored in Scotland, the pagan element is clearly traceable. The well of St. Maelrubha, in Loch Marec, Ross-shire, was, perhaps, next to the pool of St. Fillan, the most famous resort of the kind in the country. This well, whose healing virtues are still believed in, was credited with possessing wonderful powers of curing the insane. Some years ago, many hundreds of people, from all quarters, were brought to it before sunrise at stated seasons, but especially on Beltaine and Hallowe'en. The patients were made to kneel before the sacred tree which guarded the well; to present to it an offering of some kind; then to drink of the holy water; and afterwards to dip thrice in the lake. This last part of the ceremony was sometimes performed by towing the patient at the end of a boat three times round the island, *deasuil*, or with the course of the sun. Traces of the offerings left on the oak-tree can still be seen in the countless nails with

which it is studded—to all of which there was formerly attached a piece of garment or ribbon—and the numbers of pennies and halfpennies which are driven edgewise into every available space. An Edinburgh professor, on recently visiting the spot, noticed what he took to be a silver coin embedded in the tree, but which proved when extracted to be a counterfeit shilling! The worshipper—in whom a good deal of the modern pagan must have dwelt—finding that he could not get any value for his coin in the natural world, was no doubt led, as a last resource, to try what effect it might have in the spiritual.

Close to Garth Castle, in Perthshire, there is a well which has a great reputation in the district on account of its virtue in removing infantile troubles, such as measles and whooping-cough. Whenever these diseases make their appearance the children are taken, before sunrise, to the well, and made to drink its healing water. This, however, is not done at the fountain, but at a large boulder near at hand, which has got a natural cavity hollowed out on the east side. To this cavity water is carried from the well, and the patients have then to sip it with a spoon made from the horn of a living cow. This mountain spring has for ages been used in this manner, and there are few, within miles of it, who have not, at some time or other, made trial of its sanative virtues. It is reported that as late as 1882, when an epidemic of whooping-cough prevailed, all the children in the district were taken to the well, and made to drink of its mystical waters.

The well and the loch of Mo-Naire, in Strathnaver, Sutherlandshire, continue to be visited regularly on the first Monday of each season, and are perhaps more frequented at the present time than any of the kind existing in Scotland. The writer, within a recent date, has seen as many as twenty or thirty people wending their way to them, over the hills, on a still Sabbath evening. There is a tradition that a woman, possessing some pebbles which effected miraculous cures, was pursued by one of the Clan Gordon, who wished to secure them for himself; and that, when she found escape was impossible, she threw them into the lake, crying out, in Gaelic, *Mo naire!* (shame!) and declaring that its waters would heal all who bathed in them with the exception of such as bore the name of Gordon. But it is much likelier that the true reference is to *nathair*, a serpent; and that the health-giving properties of the loch and the well were primarily attri-

buted to the *clachan natharaiche*, or *glain' nan Druidh'*, the "adder stones," or crystal beads of healing, supposed to be worn by the Druids, and which are frequently found in sepulchral mounds. This is rendered all the more probable because of the heathen practices performed at the loch and well, and also at the stone circles and long cairns in the vicinity.

But interesting as well-worship is, there is another survival of Paganism which is more interesting still. That sacrifices were offered in Scotland in pre-Christian times is proved by the testimony of Roman writers, and by pictorial representations incised on the old stone monuments. But it is not, perhaps, so well known that they continued to be offered long after the introduction of Christianity, and that they are occasionally engaged in even in our own day. From a writer of the twelfth century we learn that bulls were sacrificed in Galloway as an oblation to St. Cuthbert, the patron saint of Kircudbright; and the records of the Presbytery of Dingwall testify that the same barbarous custom was celebrated by the people of Applecross, in honour of St. Maclrubha, so late as 1678. In both of these cases the sacrifices had a religious significance, and were offered by those who had long been under the influence of Christianity. It is scarcely possible, therefore, to account for this extraordinary phenomenon in any other way than as a relic of that primitive Scottish Paganism whose wondrous power the moral forces of the culture and enlightenment of centuries were not able completely to overcome.

In case, however, we should be inclined to explain the matter as the direct result of the ignorance of those darker days, it must be remembered that instances of sacrifices of a more recent date are not wanting. Dr. Arthur Mitchell, in a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries in Scotland, in 1861, mentions that not many years ago, in the county of Elgin, one of a herd of cattle was buried alive as an offering to the spirit of the murrain. Sir James Y. Simpson, in an address delivered before the same Society, also notices that this heathen ceremony was witnessed, not long since, within twenty miles of Edinburgh. This relic of undisguised Paganism—which is likewise met with in England and Wales, where it is known as "casting a captive to the devil"—is certainly a singular one, and is an additional proof of the strength of custom, and of the superstition and credulity of man.

There is another kind of sacrifice existing

in the north of Scotland which has come under my own observation, and it is, in its way, as distinctly pagan as any of the above. In cases of epilepsy and insanity it is not uncommon, even yet, to bury a live cock as an offering to the demon that is supposed to dwell in those afflicted by these terrible maladies. This abominable rite is engaged in as secretly as possible, but, as far as I have been able to notice, these are the ceremonies practised. The patient and the cock are taken to a sacred well, and are made to go round it three times, in the direction of the sun; the victim is then buried alive, that his crowing may exorcise the demon; and the patient, after washing in the well, throws a piece of money into it, and must leave the place before the break of day.

It may be interesting to notice in this connection that the cock has always played a prominent part in Eastern and Western Paganism. In India and Ceylon he is still offered in sacrifice. He has been honoured in the same way by the Arabs till the time of Mohammed; and even the Jews have not despised him. Among the Greeks and Romans he was regarded as especially sacred to the Sun-god and to the god of medicine; and in the sorcery and witchcraft of the British Islands his sacrifice has formed one of the most potent spells. It is also matter of notoriety that in our land, as in other countries, his crowing is believed to have the effect of driving away the malevolent spirits that wander under the cover of night.

Latham, in his "Descriptive Ethnology," remarks that all Christian nations retain more of their original Paganism than they care to own. We have the evidence of Cæsar, Tacitus, and other equally reliable authorities, to the effect that human sacrifices constituted part of the religious ceremonies observed in pagan Britain. Anything more horrible can scarcely be imagined; yet, revolting as the custom is, there are facts which show it was not unknown in the Highlands of Scotland, and that, too, within comparatively recent times. Cæsar mentions that when the Gauls were afflicted by disease, or exposed to danger, the Druids sacrificed human victims in the belief that the lives thus consecrated would preserve the lives of the rest. The trial of Hector Munro, the 17th Baron of Fowlis, in 1590, recorded in Pitcairn's "Ancient Criminal Trials," proves that faith in this tenet of Druidism prevailed in the Scottish Highlands till the beginning of the seventeenth century. The baron, during a sudden illness, consulted Marion McIngaruch, "ane of the

maist notorious and rank wichis in all this realme," as to the nature of his sickness. After experimenting on him with some of her incantations, the hag declared that his disease was incurable unless the chief man of his kindred should die in his stead. Unnatural as the proposal was, Hector agreed that effect should be given to it, and George Munro, his step-brother, as being nearest of kin, was singled out as the victim. The awful act was preceded by the following observances. The witch, and the wretches who were associated with her, repaired before midnight to a spot near high-water mark which defined the boundary between episcopal and crown lands. There they dug a grave, to which they bore the sick man, wrapped in blankets, and placed him in it. They then rolled turf over him, and fastened it down with wands of the rowan-tree, presumably that the evil spirits might not enter and frustrate their efforts. This done, Hector's foster-mother, one of the accomplices, ran thrice the breadth of nine ridges, and on returning each time asked the witch, "which was her choice, Hector or George?" Each time the oracle replied, "Hector shall live, but his brother George must die in his stead." The ceremony being then ended, they carried Hector Munro back from the grave to his bed, and in a few days he recovered. The witch meanwhile assured the others that if the substitute were to die suddenly the event would give rise to suspicion; and so George's death did not take place until seventeen months later. This, as came out in the trial which followed soon afterward, was brought about by poisoning. The wretched hag had to resort to this base expedient in order to sustain her black and unhalloed reputation.

Dark and incredible as this sad episode may appear it does not stand alone. In 1739, an event occurred in Sutherlandshire, which, if not so fatal in its consequences, was equally pagan in its intention. A few years before that date a very unpopular minister was appointed to the charge of the Parish of Farr, with the result that many of the best of the people withdrew from his ministrations, and held devotional meetings on their own account. At one of these unauthorized meetings held at Halmdary, then a lonely village at the head of Strathnaver, the lay preacher, Fear Halmdary as he was called, spoke with more than usual fervour, and held his audience entranced by his eloquence and power. The service was protracted till the evening, still the preacher

went on, and his influence was unbroken. The messengers sent by those at home to inquire for their friends did not return, for they, too, came under the same spell. When this spiritual enthusiasm was at its height, Fear Halmdary declared, in his most solemn and awful manner, that the devil, in the shape of a raven, was glaring fiercely down upon them, and that he would not go away until he had obtained a sacrifice. This, he proposed they should, as they valued their souls, at once proceed to offer. There, sure enough, on looking up the company beheld, to their horror, the form of evil omen sitting overhead on a beam in the barn where they worshipped; and with fervent prayers they supported their spiritual leader's terrible proposal. An altar was forthwith extemporized, Fear Halmdary's own infant son, on whom the lot had fallen, was laid upon it; the knife was drawn, and the deed was about to be done, when the child's nurse, no longer able to suppress her womanly instincts, uttered a piercing shriek, which had the effect of dispelling the Satanic delusion. Then, it was found that the object of their fears was a hen which had taken its place to roost for the night; and the assembly broke up in shame and humiliation.

This lamentable excess of fanaticism is still known in Sutherlandshire as *Tuiteam Halmdari*, or the Lapse of Halmdary. It is authenticated not only by those who were personally acquainted with the intended victim, but by the records of the Presbytery of Tongue, in which there is distinct reference to this "melancholy scene."

Though it is nearly a hundred and fifty years since this event occurred, we are not to suppose that the people who took part in it were ignorant or uneducated. There are facts, it would be tedious to mention, which show that they had an education, if not in advance of, at least equal to, that of any peasantry in Scotland. We cannot, therefore, help thinking that if the education and religious principles of the people of Halmdary were high, there kept pace with them another cult or worship in which there were dark and inhuman elements. This view is further confirmed by the superstitious homage which is still rendered to the many pre-historic remains that are met with in the neighbourhood of what was once the thickly populated village of Halmdary, but which is now part of a wild, solitary sheep-run.

In the Duke of Sutherland's museum at Dunrobin there is a stone on the one side of

which there is a highly finished Celtic cross extending the whole length of the stone. The limbs and the margin are filled with panels of varied and artistically interlaced decoration. As a work of ornamental skill this cross is one of the most beautiful existing anywhere. Yet on the other side there is incised, in the centre, a representation of a rudely dressed man in the act of sacrificing a bull. In his right hand there is an up-lifted axe, and in his left a knife. On the same side there are also the double disc, the crescent, with the rod bent like the letter V, the serpent, and other well-known symbols of Paganism. Just as this stone monument,

like many another in the country, points to an age of adaptation and compromise, so the memorials of faith and practice which we have cursorily glanced at indicate that the elements taken up, at that transition period, into Christianity have not, even yet, been thoroughly assimilated. A thousand years and more have passed since then. But life is not now so slow as it was; and, in less than a hundred years, it may be safely predicted, there will not remain in Scotland, even in the remotest parts of it, a single trace of the primitive Paganism which, till lately, disgraced it, and which, in some districts, still drags on a feeble and fitful existence.

STRAY VERSICLES.

PESSIMISM.

If you let your fancy feed
On every shape and size of evil,
Soon you'll slide into a creed
That earth is hell and God the devil.
Be wise, and what good things you get
Sharply seize, and gently tend them;
But for all evils cease to fret,
Or yours or mine, if you can't mend them!

VANITAS VANITATUM!

O weary, weary woes of life,
O toilsome round of strife and struggle,
When all my strength is broken reeds
And all my wisdom seems a juggle!

Thus said I in an evil hour,
When darksome skies had curtained round me,
And with strong bonds of discontent
A hell-born prideful demon bound me.

Next day the sun shone forth, and I
Cried, "Earth, dear earth, how art thou lovely!
How brightly green thy fields below,
How blithely blue the skies above thee!"

And then I knew myself a fool,
Who knew not in an hour of sorrow,
That clouds were born to pass and leave
More lightsome breadth of blue to-morrow.

MAN.

"Poor creature, man!"—and yet in this
Some greatness well may lie,
That being born of earth he dares
Claim kinship with the sky.

Were he a worm, all worm, believe
He would not dream of wings,
But creep through grass and bore the clay,
Like other slimy things.

WAIT.

You blame the world, for that they turn
 Deaf ears to your reforming cry,
 And not like greedy troutlings jump
 At the first angler's random fly.
 Be wise, and, when with liberal hand
 The seed of truth you largely sow,
 Know that all fruitful seeds demand
 God's touch of kindly rain to grow.

TOLERATION.

Look not for wings in worms, or eyes in moles,
 Give lame men crutches, and give children dolls,
 And so at Rome be wise, nor make wry faces,
 At men and manners, gestures and grimaces.

J. S. BLACKIE.

UNSILENT NIGHT.

A Reminiscence.

By HELEN K. MELDRUM.

THE long line of sweet singers who have chanted the praises of silent night, has evidently been unbroken by any "Cantigos" from the wilds of Brazil; for there "the voiceless earth and silent air" are all unknown, and night is but another name for—noise.

The approach of sun-down is announced by the cicada, which, after a preliminary noise like the winding of a clock, sends forth into the air a long shrill sound, like the whistle of a locomotive. From all directions the strange note shrieks in different keys, recalling the far-off Carlisle or Clapham, and waking thoughts of "home" in the stranger's heart. The "cigarra," as it is called in Brazil, is an immense brown beetle, about four or five inches long, with large and beautifully transparent wings. It flies rapidly from tree to tree, and rarely utters its unmelodious note except at sun-down, on account of which fact it has received from the English the appropriate name of "the six-o'clock express." So wonderfully close is the resemblance, that in districts where they abound, it has been found necessary so to vary the locomotive whistle as to distinguish it from the note of the cicada.

No sooner have the "cigarras" heralded the night, than the sun sinks in a splendour undreamt of in the cold north, even by our most imaginative artist, the brilliant colouring of Turner being often rivalled or rather surpassed.

At times, the sun presents exactly the appearance of a globe of fire; blood-red, and almost terrible in its brilliancy, it lights up the sky with a crimson glory, bringing out into marvellous relief whatever stands against the horizon, it may be the waving branches of the coco-palm or the long hart's-tongue-shaped leaves of the banana.

Rapidly through many an opalescent tint, the sky fades into darkness, no sweet twilight interposing a shadowy border-land, but in a quarter of an hour day has become night, and then—the time for the singing of insects is come!

Not insects alone, birds are equally active; one which the natives call "Pétique" is an evening rather than a night bird, and usually sings just as the sun is setting, beginning with a very prolonged note, and then rapidly descending an octave in regular chromatic intervals, a species of bird-music which has rather an extraordinary effect.

Sometimes from far-off is heard a sound, doleful and eerie in the extreme, like the cry of a human being in distress, Oh! Oh!! Oh!!! Oh!!!! four notes descending the scale, in long-drawn sighs or rather moans of agony, and when heard for the first time, one is inclined to fly to the rescue; but the poor victim is only a bird, said to be a kind of goat-sucker, which amuses itself in this peculiar fashion.


The whish, whish of the bat is varied by the whistle or gurgle of a distant cobra, which

sends a shudder through the listener. The popular term "hiss" of the serpent is surely founded on a delusion, or else the species which produces the *hiss* is not South American, for I never heard it, nor met with any one who had. My acquaintance with snakes ranged from the slender whip-snake to the brilliant coral, from the deadly rattle-snake and the enormous cobra de viado, down to the tiny "Rainha," so called, "Queen of the Snakes," on account of a mark somewhat resembling a crown on the top of its delicate head. I well remember the first time I saw a Rainha. We were riding through the woods, and my horse started aside to avoid putting his foot on the creature, when my husband leaped from his saddle, killed it with his riding-whip, and I carried it home in my saddle-bag in triumph.—But I am digressing. "Ee-oy! Oi-la! Oi-oi! Ee-oy!" cry one species of frogs from the lagoa, while another enriches the chorus from time to time with a *basso-profundo* which would be worth money at Italian opera.

Heard from a distance, especially at the beginning of the rains, the clank clanking sound which certain kinds of these frogs make has much the same effect as the hammers of a ship-building yard or an engineering shop; so much for the music of the sound. Though I have even heard people affirm, after a long strike, that the noise of these said tools was like music in their ears; but, alas! the frogs never strike work, and so the noise goes on till habit makes that, as well as the other sounds, unheeded if not unheard.

But those are all more or less distant sounds, and not so aggravating as those that come to closer quarters.

The innocent tick-tick of the lizard upon the walls is varied by the buzz of countless *bissouros* (beetles), and the chirp, chirp of many varieties of crickets goes on, with a weary monotony, through all the watches of the night, and if by the evil fortune cynically called "good luck" some of them chance to take up their abode in the dwelling, then woe to the sensitive nerves or the over-worked brain waiting at the Ivory Gate.

During the night a bird, the name of which I was unable to ascertain, is especially irritating, maddening almost, in its weary iteration of two notes  at about intervals of a minute; the effect of the monotonous repetition can scarcely be realised without experiencing it.

But the loudest noise in that land of many noises is as nothing to the fine, small, delicate

song which sweetly insinuates the fact that a mosquito is about to operate on you with his, or rather her, marvellously tiny, yet all too powerful, set of tools. The song is a note of warning—it is the *cessation* of the song that is the moment of danger, and tells that the tools are being used.

The microscopic researches of Dr. Dalinger have acquainted us with the wonderfully suitable nature of those tools; but the method (or rather order) in which the insect uses these tools is slightly different from the theory usually adopted.

It is conjectured that the mosquito uses his poison-tube last as a final cruel fling at his poor victim, the fact being that the insect, after inserting his first instruments to open up the flesh, next makes use of his poison-tube in order to quicken the circulation of blood, and sucking away the blood also draws away the poison. I have tested the thing again and again—have watched one alight on my hand and have allowed it quietly to proceed to operations—have seen the delicate whitish skin of its stomach become crimson with the absorbed fluid, and then, after the insect had gorged its fill, *no irritation* is left in the skin, merely a small red mark to show the sphere of operation. But strike off a "morissoco" as it proceeds to business, and large blisters full of inflammation irritate and annoy one for days, sometimes for weeks.

I have inadvertently used the name common in the interior of Brazil, where, if you remark to a native that you have been bitten by a mosquito he will lift his eyebrows with a polite incredulous stare and not deign to offer the slightest sympathy on the melancholy occasion. "Mosco" is the Portuguese for "fly," and mosquito, merely one of the numerous diminutives for which that language is famous, the word conveying no such meaning as it does in English, and being applied vaguely and indiscriminately to all tiny and inoffensive flies, while the stinging pests which we know by that name are called "morissocos," or "moriçocos," so various is the orthography of a word which the dictionary does not recognise, and which is probably of Indian origin.

Notwithstanding these and many more noises, some irritating, and others painful, yet night in the tropics is beautiful, with a beauty all its own; the stars have a brighter radiance and the moon seems larger and more brilliant, so that one can read with perfect ease by its light.

Under the orange-trees many varieties of

fire-flies flit about as if on fairy wings, with their magic light, the sharp click of one species adding their little quota to the many noises. Far off in the interior lightning-flashes at the rate of thirty per minute, and one is never weary of watching the different

kinds and colours as the flashes dart and play in the darkness.

How is it that the ear becomes accustomed to the medley of noises, but to the eye the many glorious beauties of southern night are ever fresh and ever enchanting?

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.—IN THE BLACK SHADOW.

MRS. VAN HELDRE let her work fall in her lap and gazed across at her husband.

"I suppose Harry Vine will walk home with Madelaine?" she said.

"Eh? Maddy? I'd forgotten her," said Van Heldre laying down his pipe. "No; I'll go up and fetch her myself."

"Do dear, but don't stay."

"Not I," was the reply; and going out of the dining-room, where he always sat when he had his evening pipe, the merchant went into the study, where by the dim light he saw that his writing-table drawer was open.

"How's that?" he thought. "Did I—No."

He ran out into the passage, saw that his office-door was open, and entered to receive the blow which laid him senseless before the safe.

Van Heldre did not lie there long.

Crampton came away from the old inn, stick in hand, conscious of having done a good evening's work over the business of the Fishermen's Benefit Club, the men having paid up with unusual regularity; but all the same, he did not feel satisfied. Those pedlar sailor men troubled him. They had been hanging about the town for some time, and though he knew nothing against them, he had, as a respectable householder, a confirmed dislike to all nomadic trading gentry. To him they were, whether Jew or Gentile, French or German, all gipsies, and belonging to a class who, to use his words, never took anything out of their reach.

He felt sure that the man he had seen in the darkness was one of these, and blaming himself now for not having taken further notice of the matter, he determined to call at his employer's on his way home to mention the fact.

"Better late than never," he said, and he stumped steadily down the main street as a man walks who is possessed of a firm determination to do his duty.

As he went on he peered down every one of the dark, narrow alleys which led to the water-side places, all reeking of tar and old cordage, and creosoted nets, and with more than a suspicion of the celebrated ancient and fish-like smell so often quoted.

"If I had my way," said Crampton, "I'd have a lamp at each end of those places. They're too dark—too dark."

But though he scanned each place carefully, he did not see any lurking figure, and he went on till he reached his employer's house, where, through the well-lit window, he could see Mrs. Van Heldre looking plump, rosy, and smiling, as she busied herself in putting away her work.

Crampton stopped at the opposite side, took off his hat and scratched his head.

"Now if go and tell him what I think, he'll call me a nervous old fool, and abuse me for frightening his wife."

He hesitated, and instead of going to the front door, feeling that perhaps, after all, he had taken an exaggerated view of things, he went on to the corner of the house and lane, with the intention of having a look round and then going on home.

He had just gone about half-way, when there was a loud rap given by the gate leading down into Van Heldre's yard. Some one had thrown it violently back against the wooden stop, and that somebody had sprung out and run down the lane in the opposite direction to that by which the old clerk had come.

"Hah!" he ejaculated, and hurrying on he hastily descended the steps, entered the passage, and trembling now in every limb, made his way into the office, where, with all the regular method of the man of business, he quickly took a box of matches from the chimney-piece, and turned on and lit one of the gas-burners.

The soft light from the ground-glass globe showed nothing wrong as he glanced round.

Yes: something was missing—the heavy ebony ruler which always reposed on the

two brass hooks like a weapon of war at the end of his desk. That was gone.

Crampton's brow knitted, and his hands shook so that he could hardly strike a second match, as he pushed open the door and entered the inner office, where, forcing himself not to look round, he lit another gas jet before taking in the scene at a glance.

There lay Van Heldre, bleeding profusely from a terrible cut on the forehead, the safe was open, and in a very few minutes the old clerk knew that the packet of bank-notes was gone.

"But I've got all their numbers entered," he said to himself, as he went down on his knee by his master's side, and now, knowing the worst, growing moment by moment more calm and self-contained.

His first act was to take his voluminous white cravat from his neck, and bind it tightly round Van Heldre's temples to staunch the bleeding.

"I knew no good would come of it," he muttered. "I felt it from the first. Are you much hurt, sir?" he said aloud, with his lips close to the injured man's ear.

There was no reply: just a spasm and a twitching of the hands.

"What shall I do?" thought Crampton. "Give the alarm? No: only frighten those poor women into fits. Fetch the doctor."

He hurried out by the back way as quietly as he could, and caught the principal medical man just as he was going up to bed for a quiet night.

"Eh? Van Heldre?" he said. "Bless my soul! On directly. Back way?"

"Yes."

Crampton hurried out, displaying wonderful activity for so old a man, and took the police station on his way back.

The force in Hakemouth was represented by a sergeant and two men, the former residing at the cottage which bore the words "Police Station" over the door.

"Where is your husband?" said Crampton to a brisk-looking woman.

"On his rounds, sir."

"I want him at our office. Can I find him? Can you?"

"I know where he'll be in about ten minutes, sir," said the woman promptly, as if she were a doctor's helpmate.

"Very well," said Crampton. "Get him and send him on."

The divergence had taken so long that he had hardly reached the office and poured out some water from a table filter, to bathe the

injured man's face, when he heard the doctor's step.

"Hah!" said the latter, after a brief examination, "we must get him to bed, Mr. Crampton."

"Is he much hurt, sir?"

"Badly. There is a fracture of the skull. It must have been a terrible blow. Thieves, of course?"

"Or thief, sir," said the old clerk, with his lip quivering. "My dear master! what would his poor father have said?"

"Hush! Be firm, man," said the doctor, who was busy readjusting the bandage. "Does Mrs. Van Heldre know?"

Crampton shook his head.

"I found him like this, sir, and came over to fetch you at once."

"But she must be told."

"John, John dear, are you there? I thought you had gone on to fetch Madelaine."

Crampton rose hastily to try and bar the way; but he was too late. Mrs. Van Heldre was at the door, and had caught a glimpse of the prostrate man.

"Doctor Knatchbull! what is the matter—a fit?"

The trouble was culminating, for another voice was heard in the glass corridor.

"Papa! papa! here is Mr. Vine. He walked home with me. I made him come in. Oh, what a shame to be at work so late!"

"Keep her—keep her back," gasped Mrs. Van Heldre, and then with a piteous sob she sank down by Van Heldre's side.

"John, my husband! speak to me, oh, speak," she moaned as she raised his head to her lap.

"Ah, you want Brother Luke to you, John Van," cried Vine, as with Madelaine on his arm he came to the door of the inner room.

There was a moment's silence, and then Madelaine uttered a wild cry, and ran to her father's side.

"Good heavens! Crampton, what is it?" cried Vine excitedly,— "a fit?"

"No, sir, struck down by a villain—a thief—and that thief——"

Crampton stopped short in the midst of his excitement, for there was a heavy step now in the passage and the sergeant of police and one of his men came in.

"Yes. I've had my eye on a couple of strangers lately," he said, as he took out a book and gave a sharp look round. "P'raps Mr. Crampton, sir, you'll give me the information I want."

"Mr. Crampton will give you no information at all," said the keen-looking doctor angrily. "The first thing is to save the man's life. Here, sergeant, and you, my man, help me to carry him up to his bed—or no—well, yes, he'll be better in his own room. Pray, ladies, pray stand aside."

"Yes, yes," cried Madelaine excitedly, as she rose. "Mother, dear, we must be calm and helpful."

"Yes; but—but—" moaned the poor woman.

"Yes, dearest," cried Madelaine, "afterwards. Dr. Knatchbull wants our help."

"Good girl," said the doctor, nodding. "Get the scissors, some old linen, and basin, sponge and water, in the bedroom."

"Yes, doctor," said Madelaine, perfectly calm and self-contained now. "Mother, dear, I want your help."

She knelt down and pressed her lips for a moment to her father's cheek, and then placed her arm round her mother, and led her away.

An hour later, when everything possible had been done, and Mrs. Van Heldre was seated by her husband's pillow, Vine being on the other side holding his friend's hand, Madelaine showed the doctor into the next room.

"Tell me," she said firmly. "I want to know the truth."

"My dear child," said the doctor, "you know all that I know. Some scoundrel must have been surprised by your father, and——"

"Doctor," said Madelaine quietly, and with her clear matter-of-fact eyes gazing into his, "I have been praying for strength to help my mother and my poor father in this terrible affliction. I feel as if the strength had been given to me, so speak now as if I were a woman whom you could trust. Tell me the whole truth."

The doctor gazed at her with a look full of admiration, and taking her hand, he said kindly:

"I was treating you as if you were a girl, but I will tell you the truth. I am going to telegraph to town for Mr. Reston; there is a fracture and pressure on the brain."

"And great danger, doctor?"

"Yes," he said, after a pause, "and great danger. But, please God, my child, we will save his life. He is a fine, strong, healthy man. There: I can say no more."

"Thank you," said Madelaine calmly, and she quietly left the room.

"Any one might think that she did not

feel it," said the doctor slowly; "but I know better than that. It's wonderful what a woman will suffer without making a sign. I cannot telegraph till eight o'clock, but I may as well write my message," he muttered, as he went down-stairs. "Humph! the news is spreading. Somebody come."

CHAPTER XXI.—HARRY LOOKS THE FACT IN THE FACE.

HARRY VINE checked his headlong pace as soon as he was out of the lane, and walked swiftly along by the harbour till he reached the sea. Here, in the shelter of a rock, he stooped down and lit a cigar, before throwing himself on a patch of shingle, and holding his temples with his hands, as he tried to quell the tumult in his brain and to think calmly.

But it was in vain. He felt half mad, and as if the best way out of his difficulty was to go and leap into the sea.

"Curse Pradelle!" he groaned. "I wish I had never seen him—coward, thief, cheat! Oh, what am I talking about? Why didn't I face it, and tell Van Heldre the honest truth? I was innocent. No, no: I was as bad as Pradelle, and he shall disgorge. Every penny shall go back. If he says no, come what may, I'll out with the whole truth."

"I couldn't help it," he groaned after a pause. "I'd give anything to have frankly told the truth."

He walked quickly home, and assuming a calmness he did not feel, entered the drawing-room, where Louise was seated reading.

"Your company gone?" he said roughly.

"Yes, dear. Papa has walked home with Madelaine."

Harry turned sharply round, for he mentally pictured in one agonising thought the scene at Van Heldre's home.

"Is anything the matter?" asked Louise.

"Matter? No. It's very dark outside, and the light makes one's eyes ache. Seen Pradelle?"

"No, dear," said Louise gravely. "I thought he went out with you."

"Yes, of course, but he likes to go wandering about the town. I wanted a quiet smoke by the water-side. I'm tired. I think I shall go up to bed."

"Do, dear. I'll wait till papa comes."

"Good night."

"Good night, Harry dear," she said, rising, and, putting her arms round his neck, she laid her cheek to his. "Good night, dear. Harry darling, don't worry about the work.

Do it like a brave, true man; it will make father so happy."

There was a sudden catching sob in Harry Vine's throat, as, like a flash, the memory of old happy boy and girl days came back. He caught his sister to his breast, and held her tightly there as he kissed her passionately again and again.

"My darling brother!" cried Louise as she tightened her grasp about his neck. "And you will try for all our sakes?"

"Yes, yes," he said in a hoarse whisper.

"Never mind what poor Aunt says. Be a man—a frank, honourable man, Harry. It is the order of the true *haute noblesse* after all. You will try?"

"Please God, yes, Lou—so hard—ah, so hard."

"That's like my dear brother once again," she cried, fondling him. "There, darling, I'm speaking to you like our mother would. Let me be young mother to you as well as sister. You will begin again?"

"Yes, yes, yes," he whispered hoarsely; "from this moment, Lou, I will."

"May I say more?" she said gently, as her hand played about his brow.

"Yes, anything, Lou; anything. I've been a fool, but that's all over now."

"Then about Mr. Pradelle?"

"Curse Mr. Pradelle," he cried passionately. "I wish I had never brought him here."

"Don't curse, dear," said Louise, with a sigh of relief. "Yes, there has been an ugly cloud over this house, but it is lifting fast, Harry dear, and we are all going to be very happy once again. Good night."

He could not speak; something seemed to choke him; but he strained her to his heart, and ran out of the room.

"Oh!" ejaculated Louise; and throwing herself into a chair, she burst into a passion of weeping; but her tears were those of joy, and a relief to her overburdened heart.

"Is it too late?" said Harry to himself, as a cold chilly hand seemed to grasp his heart. "No; I can keep my own secret, and I will turn over a new leaf now, and old Crampton shall rule it for me. What an idiot I have been!"

He shuddered as he recalled the scene in Van Heldre's office, and involuntarily held his hands close to the landing-lamp.

"Poor old fellow!" he said, as his hand involuntarily went towards his vest; "but he'll soon get over that. He couldn't have known me in the dark. I—— My locket!"

He turned like ice as he gazed down to

see that the gold locket he wore at his watch-chain had been torn off.

"No, no; I lost it when I threw myself down on the shingle," he muttered, as he fingered the broken link. "I could not have lost it there."

Just then he started, for there was a faint cough on his left.

"Then he has come back," he cried hastily; and going a few steps along the passage he tapped sharply, and entered Pradelle's room.

CHAPTER XXII.—THE PUNISHMENT BEGINS.

PRADELLE was seated in a low chair with his head resting on his hand. He looked up curiously at Harry as the young man hastily closed and locked the door.

"You've come at last, then," said Pradelle sourly, as he winced from the pain he was in.

"Yes, I've come at last," replied Harry. "Now, Pradelle, no nonsense! There has been enough of this. Where is the money?"

"Where's what?"

"The money—those notes?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"Then I'll tell you plainly. I want five hundred pounds in Bank of England notes, stolen by you from Mr. Van Heldre's safe."

Pradelle sank back in his chair.

"I like that," he said, with a low, sneering laugh.

"No nonsense. Give me those notes."

"You mean you want to give me the notes."

"I mean what I say," cried Harry, in a low, angry voice.

"Why, you went and got them, as we agreed."

"I did not go and get them as we agreed."

"Yes, you did, for I saw you."

"How dare you, you lying cur!" cried Harry, seizing him by the throat and holding him back against the chair. "Give me the notes."

"Don't! don't! You've hurt me enough once to-night. Look! my head's bleeding now."

Harry loosened his grasp, for the fact was patent.

"I—I hurt you?"

"Yes, with that ruler. What made you hit me like that? Take me for old Van Heldre?"

Harry's jaw dropped, and he stared wildly at his companion.

"I—I hit you!" he faltered, as he struggled with his memory and asked him-

self whether he had stricken Pradelle down and not the old merchant.

"Well, I've got a cut two inches long and my head all swollen up. What made you do it?"

"I—do it! Here, what do you mean?"

"Mean? Why, that you were so long getting the loan——"

"Say stealing the notes. It would be more like the truth," said Harry shortly.

"I won't. I say you were so long getting the loan that I came to see what you were about, and you flew at me and knocked me down with the big ruler. Took me for a watchman, I suppose."

"But when?—where?" cried Harry excitedly.

"Where? By the safe; inner office. What a fool you were!"

"Impossible!" thought Harry, as his confusion wore off. "Look here," he cried aloud, "this is a mean, contemptible lie. You have the money; give it me, I say."

"Supposing I had it," snarled Pradelle, "what for?"

"To restore it to its owner."

"Well, seeing that I haven't got the money I say you shall not give it back. If I had got it I'd say the same."

"You have got it. Come, no excuses."

"I tell you I haven't got a penny. You struck me down after you had taken it from the safe."

"It's a lie!" cried Harry fiercely. "I was not going to do the accursed work, and I did not strike you down."

"Then look here," cried Pradelle, pointing to his injured head.

"I know nothing about that. You have the money, and I'll have it before I leave this room."

"You'll be clever, then," sneered Pradelle.

"Will you give it me?"

"No. How can I?"

"Don't make me wild, Pradelle, for I'm desperate enough without that. Give me those notes, or, by all that's holy, I'll go straight to the police and charge you with the theft."

"Do," said Pradelle, "if you dare."

The man's coolness staggered Harry for the moment.

"If I'd got the money do you think I should be fool enough to make all this fuss? What do you mean? What game are you playing? Come, honour among—I mean, be square with me. You've got the notes."

"Ah!" ejaculated Harry, with a look of disgust. "I tell you I have not."

"Harry! Harry!"

It was his sister's voice, and he heard her knocking sharply at his door.

"Look here, Pradelle, you've got those notes, and I tell you once more, you have to give them up or it's a case of police."

He had been moving towards the door, which he unfastened and threw open.

"I'm here, Louy," he said.

"Quick, dear! A message from papa. We are to go on to Mr. Van Heldre's at once."

"Van Heldre's?" faltered Harry, whose legs seemed to give way beneath him.

"Yes, dear; a policeman brought the message."

"A policeman?"

"Something is wrong. No, no, don't turn like that. It is not father, but Mr. Van Heldre, so the man said. I think it is a fall."

Harry Vine's breath came thick and short. What should he do? Fly at once? No; that meant being taken and brought ignominiously back.

"Don't hesitate, dear," said Louise; "pray come quickly."

"Yes," said Harry huskily. "Of course, I'll come on. Will you—you go first?"

"Harry, what are you thinking, dear? Why do you look so shocked? Indeed I am not deceiving you."

"Deceiving me?"

"No, dear: I am sure it is not papa who is hurt. There, come along, and see—for Madelaine's sake."

She said these last words very softly, almost in a whisper; but the only effect they had upon him was to make him shudder.

What should he do—face the danger or go? He must face it; he knew he must. It was his only hope, and already his sister was hurrying him to the door—his sister, perhaps unconsciously to hand him over to the police.

"No," he said to himself, with an attempt to be firm, "he could not have seen me; but was it after all Pradelle I struck down?"

A chill shot through him.

The locket torn from his watch-chain?

"Why, Harry dear, you seem quite upset."

"Upset—I—yes, it is so sudden. I am a bit—there, I'm all right now."

"Poor Madelaine! she must be in sad trouble."

Greater than the speaker realised.

She was in the dining-room with the elder Vine, and hung for a few moments on Louise's neck to sob forth her troubles when

she entered. Then, without a word or look at Harry, she hurried up-stairs.

"Why did you not speak to her, Harry?" whispered Louise.

He made no reply, but sat listening to his father, his eyes dilated and throat dry.

"And—and do they suspect any one?" whispered the young man in a voice he did not know for his own.

"No: the police have been away since, and they think they have a clue—two pedlars who have been about the place lately."

"And Mr. Van Heldre—is—is he badly hurt?"

"Very badly. It is doubtful whether he can recover."

The young man's breath came and went in a strange labouring way as he sat rigidly upon his seat, while his father went on telling him fact after fact that the son knew only too well.

"Poor Van Heldre! First the ship, then this terrible calamity. Crampton tells me that there was a sum of money deposited in the safe—five hundred pounds in notes, and all gone—every penny—all gone. Poor old Crampton! he almost worshipped Van Heldre. He is nearly wild with grief. One minute he scowled at me savagely; the next minute he was apologetic. It's a terrible business, children. I thought you had better both come on, for, of course, I could not leave now."

Just then Mrs. Van Heldre came down, looking red-eyed and pale, to take Louise to her breast.

"Thank you, my dear, thank you," she sobbed; "it was like you to come. And you too, Harry Vine." She took and pressed the young man's hand, which was dank and cold. Then, in a quick access of gratitude, she laid her hands upon his shoulders, and kissed him.

"Thank you, my dear," she said in a voice broken with sobs. "You seem always to have been like Maddy's brother. I might have known that you would come."

If ever man suffered agony, that man was Harry Vine as he listened to the poor simple-hearted woman's thanks. His punishment had commenced, and every time the door opened he gave a guilty start, and turned white as ash.

"Don't take it like that, Harry," said Louise tenderly. "There is always hope, dear."

She looked lovingly in his eyes, and pressed his hand, as their father went on talking in

a low voice, and giving utterance to his thoughts.

"The scoundrels, as far as I can make out, Harry, my boy, seem to have got in by the back. The door was unfastened, and they must have known a good deal about the place—by watching I suppose, for they knew where to find the keys, and how to open the safe."

Harry's breath came in a spasmodic way, as he sat there chained, as it were, to his place.

"Five hundred pounds. A very heavy sum. I must not blame him, poor fellow, but I should have thought it a mistake to have so large a sum in the house."

At last the doctor descended looking very grave.

"Ah, Knatchbull," said Vine in an excited whisper as he rose and caught the doctor's hand; "how is he?"

The doctor shook his head.

"Has he recovered his senses?"

"No."

"Nor said a word about who his assailants were?"

"No, sir, nor is he likely to for some time to come."

Harry Vine sat with his eyes closed, not daring to look; and, as the doctor's words came, a terrible weight of dread seemed to be lifted from his brain.

"I may go up now, may I not?"

"No, sir, certainly not," said the doctor.

"But we are such old friends; we were boys together, Knatchbull."

"If you were twin-brothers, sir, I should say the same. Why, do you know, sir, I've forbidden Mrs. Van Heldre to go into the room. She could not control her feelings, and absolute silence is indispensable."

"Then he is alone?"

"No, no; his daughter is with him. By George! Mr. Vine, if I had been a married man instead of a surly old soured bachelor, I should be so proud and jealous of such a girl as Miss Van Heldre that I should have been ready to poison the first young fellow who dared to think about her."

"We are all very proud of Madelaine," said Vine slowly. "I love her as if she were my own child."

"Humph! your sister is not," said the doctor drily.

"No, my sister is not," said the old man slowly.

"Then, now, Mr. Vine, if you please, I am going to ask you people to go."

"Go?" said Vine, in angry remonstrance.

"Yes; you can do nothing. No change is likely to take place perhaps for days, and

with Miss Van Heldre for nurse and Cramp-ton to act as my help if necessary, there will be plenty of assistance here. What I want most is quiet."

"Harry, take Louise home," said the old man quickly.

"And you will go with them, sir."

"No," said Vine quietly. "If I lay in my room stricken down John Van Heldre would not leave me, Knatchbull, and I am not going to leave him. Good night, my children. Go at once."

"But Madelaine, father."

"I shall tell her when she comes down that you were driven away, but I shall send for you to relieve her as soon as I may."

Louise stifled a sob, and the old doctor took and patted her hand.

"You shall be sent for, my dear, as soon as you can be of use. You are helping me in going. There, good night."

A minute later, hanging heavily on her brother's arm, Louise Vine was walking slowly homeward through the silent night. Her heart was too full for words, and Harry uttered a low hoarse sigh from time to time, his lips never once parting to speak till they reached the house.

To the surprise of both, on entering they were confronted by Aunt Marguerite.

"What does all this mean?" she said angrily. "Why did every one go out without telling me a word?"

Louise gently explained to her what had befallen her father's friend.

"Oh," said Aunt Marguerite, with a slight shrug of the shoulders. "Well, it might have been worse. There, I am very tired. Take me up, child, to bed."

"Good night, Harry; you will go and lie down," whispered Louise. "Good night, dear."

She clung to him as if the trouble had drawn them closer, and then went into the hall to light a candle.

"Good night, Henri," said Aunt Margaret, holding her cheek for the young man's mechanical kiss. "This is very sad, of course, but it seems to me like emancipation for you. If it is, I shall not look upon it as a calamity, but as a blessing for us all. Good night."

The door closed upon her, and Harry Vine sat alone in the dining-room with his hands clasped before him, gazing straight away into his future, and trying to see the road.

"If I had but thrown myself upon his

mercy," he groaned; but he knew that it was impossible all through his regret.

What to do now? Where to go? Money? Yes; he had a little, thanks to his regular work as Van Heldre's clerk—his money that he had received, and he was about to use it to escape—where?

"God help me!" groaned the unhappy man at last; "what shall I do?"

He started up in horror, for the door handle turned. Had they found out so soon? Was he to be arrested now?

"Harry—Harry!"

A quick husky whisper, but he could not speak.

"Harry, why don't you answer? What are you staring at?"

"What do you want?"

"Look here, old fellow; I've been waiting for you to come up—all these hours. What have you found out?"

"That John Van Heldre was robbed to-night of five hundred pounds in notes, and you have that money."

"I haven't, I tell you again, not a shilling of it. Look here, what about the police? Have they put it in their hands?"

"The police are trying to trace the money and the man who struck Van Heldre down. Where is that money? It must be restored."

"Then you must restore it, for I swear I haven't a single note. Hang it, man, have I ever played you false?"

Harry was silent. His old companion's persistence staggered him.

"I tell you once more, I went to the office to see if you had got the loan, and was knocked down. Curse it all! is this true or is it not?"

He placed his head close to the light, and Harry shuddered.

"Don't believe me unless you like. I wish I had never come near the place."

"I wish so too," said Harry, coldly.

"There, don't talk like that, man. It has turned out a failure, unless you have got the coin—have you?"

"Have I?" said Harry with utter loathing in his voice, "No!"

"You can believe me or not, as you like, but I always was your friend, and always will be, come what may. Now, look here; we are safe to get the credit of this. If you didn't tell me, some one else did. Van Heldre, I suppose; and now some one must have knocked him down. Of course you'll say it wasn't you."

"No," said Harry coldly. "I shall not say it. I was by the safe, and he caught

hold of me. In my horror I hit at him. I wish he had struck me dead instead."

"Don't talk like a fool. Now look here; the game's up and the world's wide. We can start at once, and get to St. Dree's station in time to catch the up train; let's go, and start afresh somewhere. You and I are safe to get on. Come."

Harry made no reply.

"I've packed up my bag, and I'm ready. Get a few things together, and let's go at once."

"Go—with you?"

"Yes. Look sharp. Every minute now is worth an hour."

Go with Pradelle! the man who had been his evil genius ever since they had first met. A feeling of revulsion, such as he had never felt before, came over Harry Vine, and with a voice full of repressed rage he cried:—

"I'd sooner give myself up to the police."

"Don't be a fool. I tell you to come at once. It's now half-past two. Plenty of time."

"Then in heaven's name go!" said Harry; "and never let me see your face again."

"You'll talk differently to-morrow. Will you; once more?"

"No."

"Then I'm off. What do you mean to do?"

"Wait."

"Wait?"

"Yes. I shall not try to escape. If they suspect me, let them take me. I shall face it all."

"You'll soon alter your tune. Look here: I've been true to you; now you be true to me. Don't set the police on to me. No, you will not do that. You'll come after me; and mind this, you will always hear of me at the old lodgings, Great Ormond Street."

Harry stood gazing straight at him, believing, in spite of his doubts, that Pradelle had not taken the money.

The idea was strengthened.

"Look here; I've only three half-crowns. I can't go with that. How much have you?"

"Thirty shillings."

"Then come, and we'll share."

"No."

"Lend me half then. I'll manage with that."

For answer Harry thrust his hand into his pocket and took out all he had.

"What, all?" said Pradelle, as he took the money.

There was no reply.

"Once more. Will you come?"

Silence!

"Then I'm off."

Harry Vine stood gazing at vacancy; and once more tried to see his own path in the future, but all was dark.

One thing he did know, and that was that his path did not run side by side with Victor Pradelle's. His sister's words still rang in his ears; her kisses seemed yet to be clinging to his lips.

"No," he said at last, moodily; "I'll face what there is to come alone. No," he groaned, "I could not face it, I dare not."

He started guiltily and scared, for there was the sound of a door closing softly.

He listened, and there was a step, but it was not inside the house, it was on the shingle path; and as he darted to the old bay window, he could see a shadowy figure hurrying down the path.

"Gone!" he said in a low voice, "gone! Yes, I'll keep my word—if I can."

He opened the casement window, and stood there leaning against the heavy stone mullion, listening to the low soft beating of the waves far below. The cool air fanned his fevered cheek, and once more the power to think seemed to be coming back.

He had had no idea of the lapse of time, and a flash of broad sunlight came upon him like a shock, making him start away from the window; now lit up with the old family shield and crest a blaze of brilliant colour.

"*Roy et Foy*," he read silently; and the words seemed to mock him.

Henri Comte des Vignes, the plotter in a robbery of the man who had been his benefactor. Perhaps his murderer.

"Comte des Vignes!" he said, with a curious laugh. "Boy! vain, weak, empty-headed boy! What have I done—what have I done?"

"Harry!"

He started round with a cry to face his sister.

"Not been to bed?"

"No," he said wearily. "I could not sleep."

She laid her hands upon his shoulders and kissed him.

"Neither could I," she said, "for thinking of it all. Harry, if he should die!"

He looked down into the eyes gazing so questioningly into his, but his lips framed no answer.

He was listening to the echoing of his sister's words, which seemed to go on and on thrilling through the mazes of his brain, an

infinitesimally keen and piercing sound at last, but still so plain and clear—

"If he should die!"

CHAPTER XXIII.—UNCLE LUKE GROWS HARDER.

"I WOULD not stop over these, my dears," said Vine, as they sat at breakfast, which was hardly tasted, "but if I neglect them they will die."

He had a glass globe on the table, and from time to time he went on feeding with scraps of mussel the beautiful specimens of actinæ attached to a fragment of rock.

"We'll all go on directly and see if we can be of any use. I'm glad Knatchbull called as he went by."

"But what news!" said Louise sadly. "It seems so terrible. Only yesterday evening so well, and now——"

She finished her remark with a sob.

"It is very terrible," said her father; "but I hope we shall soon hear that the villains are caught."

Harry sat holding the handle of his teacup firmly, and gazing straight before him.

"You'll go up to the office, of course, my boy?" said Vine.

"Eh? Go up to the office?" cried Harry, starting.

"Yes, as if nothing had happened. Do all you can to assist Crampton."

"Yes, father."

"He was very quiet and reserved when I went in at seven; quite snappish, I might say. But he was too much occupied and troubled, I suppose, to be very courteous to such an old idler as I am. Ah!" he continued, as a figure passed the window, "here's Uncle Luke."

A cold chill had run through Harry at the mention of Crampton—a chill of horror lest he should suspect anything; and now, at the announcement of his uncle's approach, he felt a flush run up to his temples, and as if the room had suddenly become hot.

"Morning," said Uncle Luke, entering without ceremony, a rush basket in one hand, his strapped-together rod in the other. "Breakfast? Late for breakfast, isn't it?"

"No, Luke, no; our usual time," said his brother mildly.

"You will sit down and have some, uncle?"

"No, Louy, no," he replied, nodding his head and looking a little less hard at her. "I've had some bread and skim milk, and I'm just off to catch my dinner. The idiot know?"

"My dear Luke!" said his brother mildly, as Uncle Luke made a gesture upward towards Aunt Marguerite's room; "why will you strive to increase the breach between you and our sister?"

"Well, she tells every one that I'm mad. Why shouldn't I call her an idiot? But nice goings on, these. Wonder you're all alive."

"Then you have heard?"

"Heard? Of course. If I hadn't I could have read it in your faces. Look here, sir," he cried, turning sharply on his nephew, "where were you last night?"

Harry clutched the table-cloth that hung into his lap.

"I? Last night?" he faltered.

"Yes; didn't I speak plainly? Where were you last night? Why weren't you down at Van Heldre's, behaving like a man, and fighting for your master along with your henchman?"

"Uncle, dear, don't be so unreasonable," said Louise, leaning back and looking up in the old man's face—for he had thrown his basket and rod on a chair, and gone behind her to stand stroking her cheek—"Harry was at home with Mr. Pradelle."

"Pradelle, eh?" said the old man sharply. "Not up?"

"Mr. Pradelle has gone," said Louise.

"Gone, eh?" said Uncle Luke sharply.

"Yes," said his brother. "Mr. Pradelle behaved very nicely. He left this note for me."

"Note, eh? Bank note——"

Harry winced and set his teeth.

"No, no, Luke. Nonsense!"

"Nonsense? I mean to pay for his board and lodging all the time he has been here."

"Absurd, Luke!" said his brother, taking up a liberal meal for a sea anemone on the end of a thin glass rod. "He said that under the circumstances he felt that he should be an encumbrance to us, and therefore he had gone by the earliest train."

"Like the sneak he is, eh, Harry?"

The young man met his uncle's eyes for the moment, and then dropped his own.

"You'll kill those things with kindness, George. Any one would think you were fattening them for market. So Master Pradelle has gone, eh? Don't cry, Louy; perhaps we can coax him back."

He chuckled, and patted her cheek.

"Uncle, dear, don't talk like that. We are in such trouble."

"About Van Heldre, that boy's master. Yes, of course. Very sad for Mrs. Van and

little Madelaine. Leslie was down there as soon as one of the miners brought up the news, trying to comfort them."

Harry's teeth gritted slightly, but he relapsed into his former semi-cataleptic state, as if forced to listen, and unable to move.

"I like Leslie," said Vine sadly.

"So do I. At least, I don't dislike him so much as I do some folks. Now if he had been there, he'd have behaved better than you did, Master Harry."

"Uncle, dear, don't be so hard on poor Harry."

"Poor Harry! Good job he is poor. What's the good of being rich for thieves to break through and steal?"

"Ah! what indeed!" said his brother sadly.

"Look at Van Heldre, knocked on the head and going to die."

"Uncle!"

"Well, I dare say he will, and be at rest. Knocked on the head, and robbed of five hundred pounds. My money, every penny."

"Yours, Luke?" said his brother, pointing at him with the glass rod.

"Thanks, no, George; give it to the sea anemone. I don't like raw winkle."

"But you said that money was yours?"

"Yes; a deposit; all in new crisp Bank of England notes, Harry. Taking care of it for me till I got a fresh investment."

"You surprise me, Luke."

"Always did. Surprised you more if Margaret had had five hundred pounds to invest, eh?"

"Then the loss will fall upon you, uncle," said Louise sympathetically, as she took the old man's hand.

"Yes, my dear. But better have the loss fall upon me than Crampton's heavy ebony ruler, eh, Harry?"

The young man looked once more in the searching malicious eyes, and nodded.

"Bad job though, Louy. I'd left poor Harry that money in my will."

"Oh, uncle!" cried Louise, holding his hand to her cheek.

"Yes; but not a penny for you, pussy. There, it don't matter. I shan't miss the money. If I run short, George, you'll give me a crust, same as you do Margaret."

"My dear Luke, I've told you a hundred times, I should be glad if you would give up that—that—"

"Dog kennel!" sneered the old cynic.

"That hut on the cliff, and come and share my home."

"Yes, two hundred times, I'll swear,"

said Uncle Luke. "You always were weak, George. One idiot's enough for you to keep, and very little does for me. There's my larder," he continued, pointing toward the sea; "and as to Harry here, he won't miss the money. He's going to be the Count des Vignes, and take Aunt Marguerite over to Auvergne, to live in his grand château. Five hundred pound's nothing to him."

The perspiration stood on Harry's brow, cold and damp, and he sat enduring all this torture. One moment he felt that his uncle suspected him, the next that it was impossible. At times a fierce sensation of rage bubbled up in his breast, and he felt as if he would have liked to strangle the keen-eyed old man; but directly after he felt that this was his punishment called down by his weakness and folly, and that he must bear it.

"Going, Harry?" said his father, as the young man rose.

"Yes; it is time I went on to the office."

"Good boy. Punctuality's the soul of business," said Uncle Luke. "Pity we have no corporation here. You might rise to be mayor. Here, I don't think I shall go fishing to-day. I'll stop, and go on with you two, to see old Van. Louy, dear, go and tell your aunt I'm here. She might like to come down and have a snarl."

"Uncle, dear," said Louise, rising and kissing him, "you can't deceive me."

She went out after Harry.

"Not a pair, George," said Uncle Luke, grimly. "Louy's worth five hundred of the boy."

"He'd drive me mad, Lou, he'd drive me mad," cried Harry, tearing his hand from his sister's grasp, and hurrying away; but only to run back repentant and kiss her fondly before hurrying away.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE TRIFLE THAT TELLS TALES.

As Harry Vine left his father's house, and hurried down the slope, he gazed wildly out to sea. There were no thoughts of old Huguenot estates, or ancient titles, but France lay yonder over that glistening sea, and as he watched a cinnamon-sailed lugger gliding rapidly south and east, he longed to be aboard.

Why should he not do as Pradelle had done, escape from the dangers which surrounded and hemmed him in? It was the easiest way out of his difficulties.

There were several reasons.

To go would stamp him with the crime,

and so invite pursuit. To do this was to disgrace father and sister, and perhaps be taken and dragged back.

When he reached the harbour, instead of turning down to the left, by the estuary, he made his way at once on to the shore, and after a little hesitation, picked out the spot where on the previous night he had thrown himself down, half mad with the course he had been called upon to take.

The engraved gold locket with which his nervous fingers had so often played, would be lying somewhere among the stones; perhaps caught and wedged in a crevice. It was so easy when lying prone to catch such an ornament and snap it off without knowing. He looked carefully over the heap of stones, and then around in every direction; but the locket was not there.

"It must be somewhere about," he said angrily, as if he willed that it should; but there was no sign of the glittering piece of well-polished gold, and a suspicion that had for a long time been growing, increased rapidly in force, till he could bear it no longer, and once more something seemed to urge him to fly.

He had clung so to that hope, shutting his eyes to the truth, and going down to the beach to search for the locket. Even when he had not found it, he said that perhaps some child had picked it up; but there was the truth now refusing to be smothered longer, and he walked on hastily to reach Van Heldre's office, so as to search for the locket there. For it was the truth he had felt that sudden snatch, that tug when the old merchant dashed at him, and then fell. The locket was torn off then. He might not be too late. In the hurry and confusion it might not have been seen.

The ordinary door of entrance to the offices was closed, and at the house the blinds were half drawn down. He felt that he could not go to the front door. So after a little hesitation, he went round into the back lane, and with a strange sensation of dread, passed through the gateway and down the steps into the neatly kept garden yard.

Everything was very still; and Harry Vine, with an attempt to look as if entirely bent upon his ordinary task, went up to the door, entered the glass corridor, as he had entered it the night before, and by a tremendous effort of will walked quickly into the outer office.

The inner door was open, and after a hasty glance round, he was in the act of crossing to it when he found himself face to face with

the old clerk. For some moments neither spoke—the old man gazing straight at Harry with a peculiar, stony glare, and the latter, so thrown off his balance that no words would come.

"Good morning," he said at last.

The old man continued to stare as if looking him through and through.

"What do you want?" he said at last.

"Want? It is past nine o'clock, and——"

"Go back. The office is closed."

"Go back!" said Harry, troubled by the old man's manner more than by the announcement; for it seemed natural that the office should be closed.

"Yes, young man; you can go back."

"But——"

"I said, go back, sir—go back! The office is closed," said the old man fiercely; and there was something menacing in the manner of his approach, as he backed his junior to the closed door, and unlocked it and pointed to the street.

"Mr. Crampton—" began Harry.

The old man looked at him as if he could have struck him down, waved him aside, and closed and locked the door.

Harry stood for a few moments thinking. What could he do to gain an entrance there, and have a quiet search of the place? The only plan open seemed to be to wait until Crampton had gone away.

He had just come to this conclusion, after walking a short distance along the street and returning, when a fresh shock awaited him. Van Heldre's front door was open, and Duncan Leslie came out, walking quickly towards him, but not noticing whom he approached till they were face to face.

"Ah, Mr. Vine," he said, holding out his hand; "I had some thought of coming up to you."

"What for?"

"What for? Surely at a time like this there ought not to be a gap between friends. I am afraid you misunderstood me the other night. I am very sorry. There is my hand."

But trembling with that other anxiety, Harry Vine had still the old sting of jealousy festering in his breast. Leslie had just come from Van Heldre's; perhaps he had been talking with Madelaine even there; and, ignoring the proffer, Harry bowed coldly and was passing on, but Leslie laid his hand upon his arm.

"If I have been more in the wrong than I think, pray tell me," said Leslie. "Come, Vine, you and I ought not to be ill friends."

For a moment the desire was upon him to grasp the extended hand. It was a time when he was ready to cling to any one for help and support, and the look in his eyes changed.

"Ah, that's better!" said Leslie frankly. "I want to talk to you."

Why not go with him? Why not tell Leslie all, and ask his help and advice? He needed both sorely. It was but a moment's fancy, which he cast aside as mad. What would Leslie say to such a one as he? And how could he take the hand of a man who was taking the place which should be his?

Leslie stood still in the narrow seaport street for a few moments, looking after Harry, who had turned off suddenly and walked away.

CHAPTER XXV.—ON THE RACK.

How was he to pass that day? At home in a state of agony, starting at every word, trembling at every knock which came to the door? He felt that he could not do that, and that he must be engaged in some way to crush down the thoughts which were fermenting in his brain.

Certain now that he had lost the locket in the slight struggle in the office, he literally determined to leave no stone unturned, and walked once more down to the beach, where he went on searching, till glancing up he saw Poll Perrow, the old fish-woman, resting her arm on the rail at the edge of the cliff, looking down at him, and apparently watching him.

That was sufficient to turn him from his quest, and he went off hastily, and without intent, to find himself upon the long, narrow, pier-like point which acted as a breakwater to the harbour.

He went on and on, till he reached the end, where with the sea on three sides, and the waves washing at his feet, he sat down on one of the masses of rock as his uncle so often took up his position to fish, and watched the swirling current that ran so swiftly by the end of the point.

"How easy it would be," he thought, "to step down off the end of the rock into the sea, and be carried right away."

"And disgrace them by acting like a coward," he said half aloud; and leaping up he walked swiftly back to the cliff, and then went up the path that led to home.

At the door he met Louise and his father.

"Back again, Harry?" said the latter, wonderingly.

"Yes; the place is shut up. No business to-day," he said hastily.

"Did you see Madelaine?" asked Louise, anxiously.

He shook his head.

"Or poor Mrs. Van Heldre?" said his father.

"No; I thought it would worry them."

"But you asked how Van Heldre was?"

"No," said Harry, confusedly. "I—it seemed a pity to disturb them."

"Come back and make amends," said Vine rather sternly. "They must not think we desert them in their trouble."

"But both you and Louise have been on this morning."

"Yes, and would have stayed if it would have helped them," said Vine. "Come."

Harry hung back for a moment, and then, in the hope that he might be able to slip away from them, and search the office in Crampton's absence, he went on by their side.

To the surprise of all, as they reached the house the door was opened by Crampton, who stood scowling in the doorway, and barred the way.

"How is he now, Crampton?" said Vine, as Harry's heart began to palpitate with the fear that all this was intended for him.

"Dying," said the old man, shortly.

"No, no, not so bad as that," cried Louise and her father in a breath. "Doctor Knatchbull said——"

"What doctors always say, Miss Louise, that while there's life there's hope. 'Tisn't true. There's often life and no hope, and it's so here."

"Crampton, you are taking too black a view of the matter," said Vine, quickly. "It's very good of you to be so much moved as his old and faithful servant, but let's all, as a duty, look on the best side of things."

"There is no best side," said Crampton, bitterly. "The whole world's corrupt. Well: what do you people want to say?"

"To say? We have come to be of help if we can. Come, Louise, my dear."

He took a step forward, but the old man stood fast.

"You know all there is to know," said the old clerk sourly, as he looked half angrily at Vine, and then, totally ignoring Harry, he turned his eyes on Louise, when the hard look softened a little. "Send in by-and-by if you want to hear, or I'll send to you—if he dies."

"Dies!" cried Vine, with a start of horror.

"No, no; he is not so bad as that."

"As bad as a man can be to live."

"You forget yourself, Crampton," said Vine, with dignity. "You forget yourself. But there, I can look over it all now. I know what you must feel. Go and tell Mrs. Van Heldre or Miss Madelaine that we are here."

The old man hesitated for a few moments, and then drew back to allow Louise and her father to pass; but as Harry stepped forward hastily to follow, the old man interposed, and fiercely raised his hand.

"No," he said. "I'm master now. Go back! Go back!"

Harry shrank from him as Crampton stood pointing down the street, and then strove hard to master the abject sensation of dread which made him feel that all the old man said was true. He was master now; and with an angry gesture he turned and walked swiftly away, to turn as he reached the end of the street and see Crampton watching him from the doorstep, and with his hand still raised.

"Am I such an abject coward that I am frightened of that old man?" he muttered, as he recalled how only a few hours back he used to treat him with a flippant condescending contempt. "Yes, he's master now, and means to show it. Why did I not go in boldly?"

He knew why, and writhed in his impotence and dread. The task of keeping a bold face on the matter was harder than he thought. He wandered about the town in an objectless way hour after hour, and then went home. His father and sister had not returned, but Aunt Marguerite was down, ready to rise in her artificial manner and extend her hand.

"Ah, Henri, my child," she said; "how pale and careworn you look! Where are they all?"

"Van Heldre's," said Harry shortly.

"Ah, poor man! Very bad, I hear. Yes, it's very sad, but I do not see why his accident should so reverse our regular lives at home. Henri, dear, you must break with Mr. Van Heldre after this."

"I have broken with him, aunt," cried the young man fiercely.

"Ah! that's right; that is spoken as one of our race should speak. Good boy. And, Henri, my darling, of course there will be no more silly flirtings with your sister's friend. Remember what I have told you of the fair daughters of France, and let the fraûlein marry that man Leslie."

"Aunt, you'll drive me mad," exclaimed

Harry, grinding his teeth; and without another word he dashed out of the house. His first thought was to go up the cliff-path on to the wild granite plain and moors which overlooked the town, but he could not stir in that direction. There was the haunting dread of that locket being found, and he went on down again into the town, and looked about the shore for hours.

The afternoon was growing old, and his mind was becoming better able to bear the brunt of all that was to come.

He raised his eyes, and was on the point of going back home to see if his father and sister had returned, when he caught sight of old Crampton coming out of the post-office, after which the old man walked on in the direction of his home.

The opportunity at last! The office would be unguarded; and, walking swiftly in the direction of Van Heldre's, he turned round into the back lane, and, strung up to act firmly and determinedly, he pressed the back gate.

It was fast.

Desperate and determined now, he went round to the principal office-door, but it was locked. Harry drew a long breath, and walked straight to the front door and rang. The maid who opened drew back to let him pass.

"My father—sister here?"

"In the drawing-room; in with my mistress."

"No, no," said Harry hastily, as the maid moved towards the door; "never mind me; I'll go in soon."

The woman left him in the hall, and he waited till he heard the kitchen-door close, when he walked swiftly and softly to the glass window, and hurried into the office.

The inner office-door was open, and he darted in, to hastily look all round, under table, chairs, beneath the bookshelves, among the newspapers that lay in places in a heap; but there was no sign of the missing trinket, and an icy feeling of dread began to grow upon him.

The waste-paper basket!

It was half full, and the locket might easily have dropped in there, but a hasty examination was without avail.

The fireplace!

He looked there, in the ready-laid fire, beneath the grate, in the fender; he even raised it, but without avail.

"It must be here somewhere," he muttered fiercely; and he looked round again, and in amongst the papers on the table.

Still without avail.

"It is in the waste-paper basket," he said, with a feeling of conviction upon him, as, trembling in every limb, he went to the other side of the table where it stood.

"What's that?"

A faint sound. Was it Crampton returning?

He stood listening, his brow glistening with the cold perspiration; and as he remained breathless and intent, he seemed to see again the office as it was on the previous night, almost totally dark, the safe opened, and the shadowy figure of Van Heldre dashing at him.

Was it fancy, or was the place really dark? A curious mist was before his eyes, but all was silent; and he went down on his knees, turned the waste-paper basket upside down—the torn letters, envelopes, and circulars forming a heap on the well-worn Turkey carpet; but no piece of metal fell out with a low pat.

"It is here; it is here; it shall be here," he panted; and then he sprang to his feet shivering with shame and dread, face to face with Madelaine Van Heldre, who, pale with emotion, heavy-eyed with weeping, but erect and stern, flashed upon him a look full of anger and contempt.

"Ah, Madelaine!" he stammered, "have you seen a half-written letter—must be here somewhere—left on my desk?"

"Henri des Vignes—the soul of honour!" she said bitterly. "Have you fallen so low as this?"

"I—I don't understand you."

"You coward! And you can lie to me—the woman you professed to love!"

"Madelaine, for pity's sake."

"Let me tell you what you are looking for."

"I—looking for?"

"Yes; you are looking for something for fear it should fall into the hands of the police."

"I don't know what you mean."

"Oh! is it possible that a man can be so base? Let me tell you, then. You are looking for the locket snapped from your chain when my poor father was stricken down."

"Madelaine! what are you saying?"

"Stricken down by the wretch whom, in my pity and love, I had asked him to receive into his house, that he might redeem his character, and prove to the world that he had only been weak."

"You—you did this!" he gasped.

"I did this; and found that in his love for his old friend my father had already determined to be a second father to his son."

"Oh!"

"And for what? To bring him where he might play the part of serpent on the hearth, and sting him to the quick."

"Madelaine, for God's sake, mercy!"

She could have none then.

"To give shelter, ah! and, some day, the hand of the weak, trusting girl who loved him, and said, 'Give him time, father, and he will change'—to give him some day her hand and love, and welcome him as a son."

"Madelaine!" he cried, throwing himself on his knees to clasp the hem of her dress and literally grovel at her feet.

"To the man who could stoop to be a vile contemptible thief!"

"No, no, no!" cried Harry, springing to his feet; "not that—not that."

"And rob him."

"No; anything but that. I swear I did not do that."

"And when detected in the act did not scruple to play the would-be murderer."

"Madelaine, have pity!"

"And cruelly struck him down."

"Madelaine. All you say is not true."

"Not true? Go up to where he lies hovering between life and death, and see your work. Coward! Villain! Oh, that I should ever have been so weak as to think I loved such a wretch as you!"

He drew himself up.

"It is not true," he said. "I did not commit that theft; and it was in my agony and shame at being found before the safe that I struck him down."

"You confess you were there—that you were a partner in the crime?"

"Yes, I was there," said Harry slowly; "and I sinned. Well, I am ready. Take your revenge. I am in your hands. You have the evidence of my crime. Denounce me, and let me go out of your sight for ever."

"And my father's old friend—my second father? And Louise, my more than sister. What of them?"

He quailed before her as she stood, her eyes flashing, a hectic flush on either cheek; and he felt that he had never known Madelaine Van Heldre till then.

"Oh!" he groaned as he covered his face with his hands, "I am guilty. Let me suffer," he said slowly. "They will soon forget, for I shall be as one who is dead."

"No," she said; "I cannot speak. If he who is hovering between life and death

could advise, he would say, 'Be silent; let his conscience be his judge.' I say the same. Go. The locket is not there."

"The police?" he cried in a questioning tone.

"No," she said; "the secret was mine. I found it tightly clasped in my poor father's hand."

"Then the secret is safe."

"Safe?" she said scornfully. "Safe? Yes, it is my secret. You asked for mercy. I give it you, for the sake of all who are dear to me; and because, if he lives, my poor father would not prosecute the son of his old friend. There is your locket. Take it, and I pray heaven we may never meet again. Crampton!"

"Yes, Miss Maddy, Crampton—old Crampton, who held you in his arms when you were one hour old."

"What are you doing here?"

"Watching my master's interests—watching over you."

"Then you have heard?"

"Every word, my child."

"You cursed spy!" cried Harry fiercely, as he seized the old man by the throat.

"You've done enough, Master Harry Vine, enough to transport you, sir; and if he dies to send you to your death."

"Crampton!" shrieked Madelaine, as Harry drew back trembling.

"Be merciful, like you, my dear? No, I cannot."

"Then you'll go and tell——"

"What I've heard now, my dear? No; there is no need."

"What do you mean?"

"To watch over you, whether my poor master lives or dies. I know you! You'd forgive him if he asked."

"Never! But Crampton, it is our secret. He must go—to repent. Dear Crampton," she cried, throwing her arms about his neck, "you must be merciful too!"

"Too late, my dear," said the old man sternly; "too late."

He placed his arm round her and drew her to his breast, as if to defend her from Harry.

"When I went home that night," he continued in a slow, solemn voice, "I felt that something was not right, and I came on here—in time to see——"

"Oh!" cried Madelaine.

"In time to see that shivering, guilty wretch flee from where he had struck my poor master down; and if I had been a young man and strong I could have killed him for his crime."

"You saw him?"

"Yes, my dear. No need for the locket to bear witness. I had my duty to do, and it is done."

"Done?"

"Yes; to punish him for his crime."

"Crampton, what have you said? Harry! before it is too late!"

"It is too late, my child. See here." He held out a scrap of reddish paper. "From the London police. I could not trust those bunglers here."

Madelaine snatched the paper from his hand and read it.

"Oh!" she moaned, and the paper dropped from her hand.

Harry snatched it from the floor, read it, let it fall, and reeled against the table, whose edge he grasped.

Madelaine struggled and freed herself from the old man's detaining arm.

"Harry!" she panted—"it would be my father's wish—escape! There may yet be time."

He leaned back against the table, gazing at her wildly, as if he did not grasp her words. Then he started as if stung by a sudden lash as old Crampton said:

"I have done my duty. It is too late."

ABIDING IN CHRIST.

Short Sunday Readings for May.

By JOHN CLIFFORD, M.A., D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalm lxxx. 8—19; Isaiah v. 1—7; Jeremiah ii. 21; Ezekiel xix. 10—14.

GOD'S CARE OF HIS VINES.

"**A**BIDE in Me" falls on the ears of the disciples of Jesus as a "hard saying." His recent talk is laden with farewells. "A

little while and ye shall see Me no more." "Whither I go ye cannot come." All things, words and events alike, pointed to His speedy disappearance, and yet He persisted in saying, with a tender persuasion that showed the intensity of His desire for their love and His sense of the gravity of their situation, "Abide in Me." All will be well for you if

only you "Abide in Me;" light and joy, peace and hope, power and victory are in Me. Strenuously persist in loving fellowship with Me. Abide close to and incorporate with Me, as the fruitful branch and sap-giving stem in the one living Vine.

When He said, "Come to Me," He was still in sight, and no hint of His withdrawal had been heard. His strong, sweet, winning humanness cast a spell over their hearts, and they went to Him wistfully and gladly, as a weary child to its mother's arms. When He said, "Follow Me," He was the recognised and admired leader whose thrilling tones and magnetic personality allured their steps along unknown and rugged paths. They felt they *must* follow where He led, and resented the suspicion of disloyalty with an outleap of indignant repudiation, saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." But when He said, "ABIDE IN ME," it was as though we should tell a belated pilgrim to abide in the sunlight when he could only see a rim of golden radiance fast sinking out of sight.

"Abide in Me" is our Lord's advice for us, urged with increased energy, and creative, I fear, of even greater difficulties. We have not known Christ after the flesh. The cross on which He died is the accepted symbol of our religion; His death is the vital centre of our theology, and His ascension out of sight the birth of our hope; and yet to us also He says, "Abide in Me," faithfully persist in trustful fellowship with Me. Oh! the unsearchable wealth of that saying! the fascinating depths of that mystery! soul inter-fused with soul, one personality inspiring, quickening, swaying, ruling another! Socrates uttered many pathetic and profound sayings when he was about to die, but there was no intimation of the perpetuity of his presence, no summons to his disciples to continue in him after his death. It is the unique prerogative of the Redeemer to say to men, as He dies for them, "Cling to Me, continue in Me, live by and in and for Me. For you, that is all and in all."

"How can these things be?" is the question which rises to our bewildered minds. Does the Master conduct us to the land of shadows or to sober, solid, and verifiable experience? Are we face to face with facts or with fervid yearnings and bright fancies, full of beauty and fascination, but not to be vindicated by reason or demonstrated in human life? Certainly I do not expect to fathom this mysterious advice, but if we can get behind it to the convictions from which

it springs, the bases on which it rests, we shall not miss all He meant, and may find by it a more vivid realising of His gracious presence in our heart and life.

Studying the opulent allegory of the Vine, we cannot doubt for a moment that the mind of our Lord is full of the conviction that it is the *Father's purpose to create a race of signally fruitful men*. This is the divine world-aim. The Kingdom of Heaven, i.e. the rule of God, in and over and through man, is like to a householder who planted a vineyard and set a hedge about it, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, Himself being the Chief Husbandman. For Jesus says in language at once original and significant, "I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman." That is the thought of Jesus about God, and about the life of humanity; about the relation of the Eternal to souls, and the work of the Eternal for and in souls. He is *Father*; that is the tender, loving, healing, redemptive bond between Him and man, His child; and as Father, in and through and because of that relationship He discharges the self-chosen task of *Husbandman*, Cultivator of Souls, Vine-dresser. A nobler and more inspiring conception of God and of life has never found expression. It is Christ's own, and is perfect and entire, wanting nothing. God is more compassionate and gracious, tender and loving than the best of fathers; and yet withal not so weak and unwise as to suffer us to spend our days in an isolating selfishness or indolent uselessness. He prunes as well as plants His vines, so that they may bring forth more and more fruit. The goal of His providence is ethical. The aim of His ministry is noble character, boundless use, self-denying service, increasing holiness, which is helpfulness.

Great personalities are God's distinguished vines: Aaron and Moses, David and Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea, Peter and Paul, Origen and Augustine. He elects Abram in Ur of the Chaldees, transplants him into a more favourable soil, prunes him by demanding the sacrifice of his son, and after a severe discipline matures his character until he becomes one of the most fruitful sons of God.

Great nationalities are God's vines. "Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt. Thou didst drive out the nations and plantedst it" that it might adorn, refresh and quicken the whole earth. "Israel was a luxuriant vine which put forth its fruit." And when Israel erred and strayed God said by His prophet, "I had planted thee a noble

vine, a wholly right seed. How then art thou turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" But God's purposes cannot be broken off, nor do the fractious ways of men frustrate His aims. His counsel stands sure and the thought of His heart to all generations. Abraham and David, Egypt and Israel, Assyria and Greece fail, but last of all, and completing all, He sends His Son, who takes up the broken threads of the world's history and weaves them into His perfect life; filling up all that is behind in the service and fruitfulness of men and nations. So He is at once the perfect substitute for them, and the full realisation of all they aimed to be.

How blessed a gospel is this for perplexed and suffering souls! Our culture is God's chief care, and fruitful living the end of all His manifold ministries! "Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God," in Him as Father and as vine-dresser. This is the key to history, the true philosophy of the past, the transfiguration of all our monotonous and humdrum life. As the keel of the ship binds the whole vessel together, so this purpose binds into unity all the work of God in the ages. Our Father watches over humanity as a divine organism, preserves and tends, directs and develops it, towards an ever-increasing fruitfulness. Let us trust Him in dark and cloudy days, when friends of the heart are gone, the silvery prattle of the beloved child is hushed in the stillness of death, and our spirits are burdened to breaking with the contradictions and cares of life. Trust Him, the loving Father, the patient and gentle Husbandman, and trust Him wholly and always.

"Trust Him when dark doubts assail thee,
Trust Him when thy strength is small,
Trust Him when to simply trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all,"

and you will live to sing

"O joy, that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be."

"O Cross, that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read John xv. 1-4; John xiv. 12; 1 John ii. 18-23

WITH OR WITHOUT CHRIST.

Looking further into the mind of Our Lord as He gives this advice, it is manifest that according to His own estimate of Him-

self *He discharges an absolutely unique and indispensable function in realising the sublime world-aim of the Fatherly Husbandman.* In fact He bids His disciples abide in Him, because apart from Him they cannot possibly execute the task He has set them, and live a largely fruitful life. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye except ye abide in me."

With the audacity which so often distinguishes the speech of the meek and lowly Jesus about Himself he says, "I am the true vine," the reality foreshadowed in all the illustrious leaders of Israel, the substantive spring and source of holiness typified in Israel's most elect souls, the complementary and final Vine of God, planted in humanity, at its very centre, and made perfect by the divine training, so that through Me all nations may live. With a positivism that knows no misgiving He claims to be at once the consummation of all the past and the vital starting-point of a fruitful future. Was Israel essentially a missionary people, charged to carry salvation to the ends of the earth? To His disciples He says, "Go into all the world and preach my gospel to every creature." Were the sons of Jacob seers and prophets? On the day of Pentecost the spirit was poured out, and old men dreamt dreams, and young men saw visions; and bond and free alike felt the beginnings of a new life. Did Aaron and his sons minister before the Lord? "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood." Was it to Abraham God said, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"? In Christ, Son of Abraham and Adam, and of God, the promise is being fulfilled. He is the true vine.

But as His grace-filled words remind us, the Vine is not the Christ without the disciples, nor the disciples without the Christ. "I am the Vine, and ye are the branches." The Saviour exalts His disciples into association with Himself in the vital organism, and affirms their total oneness in spirit and mission, in aim and relation. Root, trunk, and branch are one living fruit-bearing tree. It is Christ's habit to give such distinction to those who trust Him, and to represent them as the organs of His visible efficiency, the instruments of His conquering energy. He not only said, "I am the Light of the world," but also, "Ye are the Light of the world." Not merely did He speak of God as His Father; but "to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to those that believe on His name."

If he is the Head of the Church we are His body, and derive our dignity and honour, moral efficiency and spiritual fruitfulness from His indwelling life. As He is in heaven, so are we on the earth.

But is our abiding in Christ really indispensable to the most manly and fruitful living? Does the word of Christ "apart from Me ye can do nothing" mean that superlative excellence of character, the maximum of individual serviceableness, the fullness and glory of society can only be obtained through fellowship with the Lord Jesus?

Nothing less; and nothing less is the veritable fact. Take Christ away from Peter, and James, and John, and what have you left? Empty their preaching of the name and power of the Nazarene, and what do you hear? Abstract Him from their life, and where are their great hopes, sublime venturesomeness, undespairing courage, and overflowing joy? Without Christ they are frames without pictures, bodies without souls, a world without the sun. Even Paul, a man who, by inherited abilities and cultured gifts, had the most to offer to any new enterprise, tells us that all he had gained before, he counted as worthlessness and refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and asserted that Christ Jesus had taken such complete possession of his whole nature that He dominated his thought, formed his purpose, gave him his plan, subordinated his will, fired his zeal; in short *made up* his whole life so absolutely that he had no life of his own, but Christ *lived* in him, as spirit in body, and used him as His bondsman; and he was proud and exultant for the slightest chance of furthering His aims and working out His mission. Apart from Christ Paul was no more than a repetition of Gamaliel; with Christ he was the apostle of the Gentiles, the fulfilment of Hebrew prophecy, the purification of Judaism, the builder of Churches, the vanquisher of heathenism, and the missionary of the nations.

Again, contrast the state of society at the beginning of the century before Christ with its condition towards the close of the first century after his appearing. Read the first in the lurid glare of disinterred Pompeii and Herculaneum. Look at the second in the softened light of the frescoes, symbols, and inscriptions gathered out of the catacombs of subterranean Rome. In one you see Pagan sensuality triumphant, in the other Christian charity is supreme. There is despair; here limitless hope. In the life of these cities are revelry, riot, debauchery; in that figured in

the catacombs peace, serenity, trust, love, and the hope of heaven. Whence this radical change? Whence—but from the Christ of Peter and John? It is He who has appeared and taken hold of the hearts of men, emptied them of cruelty and inhumanity and filled them with faith in God, hope in life and death, and consecrated service for humanity. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

And this is, by the admission of unbelieving critics of all schools, substantially true of all the centuries. The author of "Robert Elsmere" says, "That the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth underlie our institutions as the alphabet underlies our literature—that the life of Jesus is wrought ineffaceably into the higher civilisation, the nobler social conceptions of Europe," and that "we are what we are as Englishmen and as citizens largely because a Galilean peasant was born and grew to manhood, and preached, and loved, and died."

The same conclusion is reached by another process. Select from the Christian centuries those eras in which the consciousness of the indwelling Christ has been most dim, the recognition of the Saviour's exclusive authority over the individual conscience most hesitant; where the truth as it is in Jesus has been most heavily laden with the accretions of human prejudice and tradition, and you will see that they are the unfruitful eras of the Church, "the dark ages," the feeblest, and poorest, and meanest in aim, in tone, and in spiritual achievement. Indeed, the miracle of history is the fruitfulness of the Christianity of Christ Jesus. The one unanswerable argument for the divinity of our religion is the contribution it has made to the moral efficiency of men as moral agents and as spiritual helpers of one another.

Jesus "knew what was in man," and what *ought* to be in him when He said, "Abide in Me and I in you." It is unanswerably true that apart from Him we do nothing. We start at zero. Faculties and functions are ours, but the forces in us are due to the appropriation and use of what is beyond us. We live by bread, and air, and light. Energy comes from without. Eyes are useless without light. We are mentally fruitful through the knowledge evolved and stored by the generations of mankind. We live socially in and by love of others. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye except ye abide

in Me." It is a law rooted in the life of nature, and revealed in its highest application in the dependence of the soul of man on Christ for its strongest motive and highest inspiration to consecrated usefulness. "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this law."

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read John xv. 4; 1 Cor. i. 16-37; Gal. ii. 20.

WHAT IS ABIDING IN CHRIST?

But there is another and brighter side to this law of Christian fruitfulness. When Jesus bids us "abide in Him," he adds "*and I in you.*" thereby declaring that His indwelling follows naturally, necessarily and unavoidably. Set the sails to catch the breezes, and your vessel is wafted over the waves; plant living seed in the soil, and the nutritive elements of the earth penetrate it and become part of its growing structure; live in the sunshine and you share the warmth and enjoy the light. Abide in Christ, and as surely as fire burns and water quenches thirst, Christ abides in you.

Who, then, are they who keep this law and gain this exceeding great reward? What is it to abide in Christ?

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God." To him Jesus is Lord and master, and his will is fixed with unrelaxed steadfastness and unquivering serenity to do what Christ bids, and all He bids, leaving issues, black or bright, in His hands, without a tremor of fear, or a throb of apprehension. Of life, He says, "Lo! I am come" to it—and all it offers of painful duty, keen suffering, heroic endurance and strenuous services—"to do thy will," in it and by it. Abiding in Christ means for him the daily reference of his choices to Christ's unchallenged authority, of his behaviour to His perfect standard, of his motives to His searching inspection, and of his character to His flawless judgment. It involves persistent preference for His will, pure joy in surrendering personal desires for the sake of His Kingdom and righteousness, and even a coveting of hard and trying places in which, like the martyr, Ignatius, he can testify his sincerity and zeal in obeying the best of all masters. "My meat," he says, "is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work."

James Hinton, a thinker, who more than most men of our century has seen into the heart of Christianity, says, "If God could give us the best and greatest gift, that which

above all others we might long for and aspire after, even though in despair, it is this, that He must give us the privilege He gave His Son, to be used and sacrificed for the best and greatest end." How few of us are able to drink of that cup! And yet we cannot abide in Christ without realising that self-sacrifice is the fountain of life, the spring of noble service, the living sap of the vine, which is laden with clusters of refreshing grapes. For the thorough Christian, self—the isolating self—has no place. "Whosoever shall seek to gain his life," to make himself safe, to live without trouble, to be free from all hazard, to retain power and pleasure in his own hands and for himself, "shall lose it." He lives what Goethe would call an "anticipated death." "But whoso shall lose his life shall bring it to a new birth" (Luke xviii. 33), enter upon a higher, larger, and more reproductive existence. History and experience demonstrate at once, first, that "self-sacrifice alone is fruitful," and, next, that no one creates and inspires a spirit of self-effacement in adventurous effort to bless others in the degree accomplished by Him who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Without doubt he in whom that spirit is supreme abides in Christ.

Few signs of the spiritual dwelling-place of the early saints are more arresting than their quenchless joy and boundless hope, as they go forth in a world of deepening despair and crowding antagonisms, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. The crushing force of their attack upon the old paganism told men that they struck their foes with the confidence of victory, and marched from field to field as the possessors of exhaustless resources. And with justifiable warrant, for their Leader had said, "These things are spoken unto you that my joy may *abide* in you, and that your joy may be full." And that joy did abide. Of all men they were the most buoyant. "Who shall separate us," was their defiant challenge, "from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." A Quaker lady said to one who went to her in some perplexity, "What you have seen in the light never doubt in the darkness." These men had seen "the light of the world," they dwelt in it, and in its light they saw light; light enough to understand the darkness, fighting against it without fear, and bearing its oppres-

sive gloom without despair. Men are at the springhead of joy who continue in persistent fellowship with Christ. They tread the weary flats of life with elastic step, and though no star shines on their path, and no song gladdens their spirit, in Him they have an undimmed hope and an unfailing joy. They are optimists. They will not despair of goodness and right, for all the forces of God and His Christ are on their side. They cannot despair of His Church, for the energies of the living Head of that Church never fail. The great sun is decaying, and physicists suggest that in some far-off era he will become cold and dead as yonder moon that attends our earth; but Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, liveth for evermore, and sends forth His life-giving forces with undiminished fullness from age to age.

Another sign of the life that roots itself deeper and deeper in the Christ is a steadfast retention of Christ's ideals of character and service, and an unbroken effort to actualise them. After a quarter of a century Paul's passionate cry is, "Not that we have already obtained, or are already made perfect; but we press on if so be that we may apprehend that for which also we were apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, we count not ourselves yet to have apprehended, but one thing we do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, we press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Associated with Christ, trusting Christ, communing with Him, His matchless character grows upon us more and more.

Like nature it is simple and strong, steadfast and calm, not explaining itself, but moving forward with a grand and exhaustless fullness. It is like the refulgent richness of the earth in the full summertime of her glories, bracing as the air of mountain summits, fresh as the perennial streams, and transparently pure as the morning light. We know Him as we know it; that is, never fully and out and out.

One man studies the stars and introduces us to their society, makes us acquainted with their kinship with our planet, and reads in their history the possible career of our home. Another interprets the story of the rocks, and tells us how our world has grown. A third is in his laboratory disentangling the forces around us, telling us their significance, and multiplying in countless forms their applicability to our needs. So is it with the character of Jesus. Paul sets it out in its grand missionary enthusiasm, in its burning

ardour and divine daring, in its philosophical grip of truths and its conquest of the foes of righteousness. John expresses it in its tender winsomeness, "sweet reasonableness" and power to bathe us with an atmosphere of love. James reveals it in its blended freedom and order, a law demanding obedience, and yet a law of liberty, to be freely chosen and loyally served in a spontaneous love. But *all* the men down the centuries, our apostles and confessors and martyrs and saints, have revealed to us only bits, mere fragments of the inexhaustible fullness of Jesus Christ. Christ grows with our growing knowledge. The clearer and more capable our vision, the more there is to be seen. We thought we knew it some time ago, as it said to us, "Be brave and always brave," and we stood upright and dared the world, the flesh, and the devil, strengthened by the word of Christ. But it came to us again when a beloved friend had bruised and wounded us in our most cherished interests; and the voice of the suffering, crucified man said, "Forgive and always forgive." But no; in an instant we struck out our revengeful hand. And it was not till a fresh sense of our own need of forgiveness had arisen within us, and the waters of penitence had cleansed our vision, that we learned that "forgiveness" is also a part of the law of Christ. Abiding in Christ is a "ceaseless growth in the knowledge of" and conformity to "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read John xv. 8-7; 1 John iv. 7-31; John xiv. 13-27.

HOW TO ABIDE IN CHRIST.

Encouraged by the Christ-given assurance that God Himself works to keep us in His Son, that it is His eternal pleasure to make us fruitful through Him, we ask with hope and with eagerness, *How may we keep this holy law of the fruitful life, "Abide in me"?*

Clearly we must vividly and fully realise our part in Christ, and in the exercise of a strong faith appropriate His available energies for our life, use His resources for our difficulties, and accept His adequate help in our efforts towards self-renunciation. We share His life. "Because He lives we live also." In Him are all the forces of faith, of self-control, of insight, of enthusiasm, of dedicated will, of sustained obedience. All is in Him. In Him we are made alive to God. In Him we are justified. He is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption. In Him we are made

strong for all suffering and service. It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, and lives to make intercession for us, to afford the very help we need, to give us the benefits of His perfect human sacrifice, to manifest through us His victorious energies, and to identify us with His aims, and mission, and kingdom. Hence, says Christ, "Abide in me;" in Him rather than in the truths about Him, though they are amongst the chief means of abiding in Him; in Him rather than in any system of truths formed out of His teaching, and created to give a balanced representation of His revelation; in Him rather than in the Church, with its sacraments and services; in Him, for He is the truth itself, in whom all real truths find their harmony and exposition; in Him, for all the Churches are nothing without Him, and every Church owes its distinction and exaltation to His indwelling presence and glory. It is Himself, the living Saviour, we need:—

* 'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for! my flesh that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me
Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever; a Hand like this
hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the
Christ stand!"

"As for you, let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning," says John; "for if that which you heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son and in the Father." This is, then, one of the chief means of continuing in Christ, breathing His bracing atmosphere, and sharing His renewing spirit. The truth given at "the beginning of the gospel" as fundamental, reveals the heart of the Father, lays bare His gracious and redeeming purpose, shows His will concerning us and His way of saving us, and so inspires an unhesitating confidence in His love. It is also the ideal of our human life as God willed it, the revelation of perfect man and completed humanity. You cannot hold these truths, which are the very heart of the gospel, and be very far from Christ. They inhere in Him. He is in them, and works through them for the service of humanity. "Now are ye clean through the word that I have spoken unto you." The word is the instrument of daily self-judgment, initiates an austere self-discipline, and imparts the principle of purity. The ideas of Christ create hallowed purpose, generate high resolves, sustain endeavour, feed self-sacrifice, inspire generous and noble service. Let, therefore,

the words of Christ dwell in you richly, and you will abide in Him.

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light," and God is light. One of our famous writers assures us that you cannot seek to heal a broken-winged linnnet without losing a little of that isolating selfishness that is death; how much more shall we rise into the very life of God by ministering healing to broken-winged souls struggling to escape from sin and unrest into the purity and calm of God. We are not far from Christ when the passion of the cross throbs in us and we are fired with a self-crucifying zeal to save lost men.

Men grow by association. Human lives mould each other. Husband and wife, father and child, friend and friend—each acts and reacts on the other, aiding or retarding our conformity to the image of God's first-born Son. Beware of avoiding the society that fosters courtesy and kindness, meekness and gentleness, self-control and heroism, hope and love. Fellowship with the Church of Christ, sharing its responsibilities and duties, ought to be one of the most efficient aids to our abiding in Christ.

I fear many of us are yielding to the temptation to neglect the use of the powers placed within our reach. The words of Christ are pushed aside for the invading and absorbing literature of the day. The work of Christ is forgotten in our quest for ease and luxury. The workers for the world's salvation are supported by money-gifts; but their tasks and discipline are not shared by loving toil and cordial co-operation; and so, though we are branches of the vine, there is but little fruit, and that very poor. May God forgive us, and prune us that we may bring forth more fruit! Let us beg Christ to abide in us in all the pitifulness of His mercy and energy of His spirit. We grow like the one to whom we hourly turn with confiding devotion. Communion cleanses, vivifies, and inspires. O for more heart-fellowship with our ascended Redeemer!

"That mystic word of Thine, O sovereign Lord,
Is all too pure, too high, too deep for me;
Weary with striving and with longing faint,
I breathe it back in prayer again to Thee.

"Abide in me, I pray, and I in Thee!
From this good hour O leave me never more!
Then shall the discord cease, the wound be healed,
The life-long bleeding of the soul be o'er.

"Abide in me; o'ershadow by Thy love
Each half-formed purpose and dark thought of sin;
Quench, ere it rise, each selfish, low desire,
And keep my soul as Thine, calm and divine."

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALTHOUGH it was the middle of August a bitterly cold wind blew round the dreary little posting station of Hjerkin, on the Dovrefield, and at the very time when Frithiof lay dying in the intolerable heat of London, Sigrid, shivering with cold, paced drearily along the bleak mountain road with her aunt. They had come to the Dovrefield a fortnight before for the summer holiday, but the weather had been unfavourable, and away from home, with nothing very particular to occupy their time, Fru Grönvold and Sigrid seemed to jar upon each other more than ever. Apparently the subject they were discussing was not at all to the girl's taste, for as they walked along there were two ominous little depressions in her forehead, nor did her black fur hat entirely account for the shadow that overspread her face.

"Yes," said Fru Grönvold emphatically, "I am sorry to have to say such a thing of you, Sigrid, but it really seems to me that you are playing the part of the dog in the manger. You profess absolute indifference to every man you meet, yet you go on absorbing attention, and standing in Karen's light, in a way which I assure you is very trying to me."

Sigrid's cheek flamed.

"I have done nothing to justify you in saying such a thing," she said angrily.

"What!" cried Fru Grönvold. "Did not that Swedish botanist talk to you incessantly? Does not the English officer follow you about whenever he has the opportunity?"

"The botanist talked because we had a subject in common," replied Sigrid. "And probably the officer prefers talking to me because my English is more fluent than Karen's."

"And that I suppose was the reason that you must be the one to teach him the *spring dans*? And the one to sing him the 'Bridal Song of the Hardanger'?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Sigrid with an impatient little stamp of the foot, "am I to be for ever thinking of this wretched scheming and match-making? Can I not even try to amuse a middle-aged Englishman who is disappointed of his reindeer, and finds himself

stranded in a dreary little inn with a handful of foreigners? I have only been courteous to him—nothing more; and if I like talking to him it is merely because he comes from England."

"I don't wish to be hard on you," said Fru Grönvold, "but naturally I have the feelings of a mother, and do not like to see Karen eclipsed. I accuse you of nothing worse, my dear, than a slight forwardness—a little deficiency in tact. There is no occasion for anger on your part."

Sigrid bit her lip hard to keep back the retort that she longed to make, and they walked in silence towards the little cluster of wooden buildings on the hillside, the lowest of which contained the bedrooms, while farther up the hill the kitchen and dining-room stood on one side of the open courtyard, and on the other the prettily-arranged public sitting-room. In warm weather Hjerkin is a little paradise, but on this windy day, under a leaden sky, it seemed the most depressing place on earth.

"I shall go in and write to Frithiof," said Sigrid at length. And escaping gladly from Fru Grönvold, she ran up to her room.

"Here we are at Hjerkin," she wrote, "for a month, and it is more desolate than I can describe to you, uncle and Oscar out shooting all day long, and scarcely a soul to speak to, for most of the English have been driven away by the bad weather, and two girls from Stockholm who were here for their health are leaving this afternoon, unable to bear the dulness any longer. If something doesn't happen soon I think I shall grow desperate. But surely something will happen. We can't be meant to go on in this wretched way, apart from each other. I am disappointed that you think there is no chance of any opening for me in London. If it were not for Swanhild I think I should try for work—any sort of work except teaching—at Christiania. But I can't bear to leave her, and uncle would object to my trying for anything of the sort in Bergen. I can't help thinking of the old times when we were children, and of the summer holidays then. Don't you remember when we had the island all to ourselves, and used to rush down the fir-hill, and frighten poor old Gro?"

She stopped writing because the thought of those past days had blinded her with tears, and because the longing for her father's presence had overwhelmed her; they had been so much to each other that there was not an hour in the day when she did not miss him. The dreary wind howling and whistling round the little wooden house seemed to harmonize only too well with her sadness, and when the unwelcome supper-bell began to ring she wrapped her shawl about her, and climbed the steep path to the dining-room slowly and reluctantly, with a look on her pale face which it was sad to see in one so young.

Swanhild came dancing to meet her.

"Major Brown has got us such beautiful trout for supper, Sigrid, and uncle says I may go out fishing, too, some day. And you'll come with us, won't you?"

"You had better take Karen," said Sigrid listlessly. "You know I never did care much for fishing. You shall catch them and I will eat them," she added with a dreary little smile. And throughout supper she hardly spoke, and at the first opportunity slipped away quietly, only, however, to be pursued by Swanhild.

"What is the matter?" said the child, slipping her arm round her sister's waist. "Are you not coming to the sitting-room?"

"No," said Sigrid, "I am tired, and it is so cold in there. I am going into the kitchen to buy some stamps. Frithiof's letter ought to go to-morrow."

As she spoke she opened the door of the roomy old kitchen, which is the pride of Hjerkin. Its three windows were shaded by snowy muslin curtains, its spotless floor was strewn with juniper, the walls, painted a peacock blue, were hung with bright dish covers, warming pans, quaint old bellows and kitchen implements. There was a tall old clock in a black and gold case, a pretty corner cupboard in shaded brown, and a huge old-fashioned cabinet with cunning little drawers and nooks and corners, all painted in red and blue and green, with an amount of gilding which gave it quite an eastern look.

"Ah, how cosy the fire looks!" cried Swanhild, crossing over to the curious old grate which filled the whole of one corner of the room, and which certainly did look very tempting with its bright copper kettles and saucepans all glowing in the ruddy light.

"Bless your heart," said the kind old landlady, "sit down and warm yourself."

And one of the white-sleeved servant girls brought a little chair which stood by a long

wooden settle, and put it close by the fire for the child, and Sigrid, her purchase made, joined the little group, and sat silently warming her hands, finding a sort of comfort in the mere physical heat, and in the relief of being away from her aunt. The landlady told Swanhild stories, and Sigrid listened dreamily, letting her thoughts wander off now and then to Frithiof, or back into the far past, or away into the future which looked so dreary. Still the kindness of these people, and the interest and novelty of her glimpse into a different sort of life, warmed her heart and cheered her a little. Sitting there in the firelight she felt more at home than she had done for many months.

"Come, Swanhild," she said at last reluctantly, "it is ten o'clock, and time you were in bed."

And, thanking the landlady for her kindness, the two sisters crossed over the courtyard to the sitting-room, where Fru Grönvold was watching the progress of a rubber in which Karen was Major Brown's partner, and had just incurred his wrath by revoking.

"Where in the world have you been?" said Fru Grönvold, knitting vehemently. "We couldn't think what had become of you both."

"I went to the kitchen to get some stamps," said Sigrid coldly. She always resented her aunt's questioning.

"And it was so lovely and warm in there," said Swanhild gaily, "and Fru Hjerkin has been telling me such beautiful stories about the Trolde. Her mother really saw one, do you know?"

After this a cold good-night was exchanged, and Fru Grönvold's brow grew darker still when Major Brown called out in his hearty way—

"What, going so early, Miss Falck? We have missed you sadly to-night." Then, as she said something about the English mail, "Yes, yes, quite right. And I ought to be writing home, too, instead of playing."

"That means that he will not have another rubber," thought Sigrid as she hurried down the hill to the *dependence*, "and I shall be blamed for it."

She fell into a state of blank depression, and long after Swanhild was fast asleep she sat struggling with the English letter, which, do what she would, refused to have a cheerful tone forced into it.

"The only comfort is," she thought, "that the worst has happened to us; what comes now must be for the better. How the wind is raging round the house and shrieking at

the windows! And, oh, how dreary and wretched this life is!"

And in very low spirits she blew out the candle, and lay down to sleep as best she might in a bed which shook beneath her in the gale.

With much that was noble in Sigrid's nature there was interwoven a certain fault of which she herself was keenly conscious. She could love a few with the most ardent and devoted love, but her sympathies were not wide; to the vast majority of those she met she was absolutely indifferent, and though naturally bright and courteous and desirous of giving pleasure, yet she was too deeply reserved to depend at all on the outer circle of friends; she liked them well enough, but it would not greatly have troubled her had she never met them again. Very few had the power to call out all the depths of tenderness, all the womanly sweetness which really characterized her, while a great many repelled her, and called out the harder side of her nature.

It was thus with Fru Grönvold. To her aunt, Sigrid was like an icicle, and her hatred of the little schemes and hopes and anxieties which filled Fru Grönvold's mind blinded her to much that was worthy of all admiration. However, like all the Falcks, Sigrid was conscientious, and she had been struggling on through the spring and summer, making spasmodic efforts to overcome her strong dislike to one who in the main was kind to her, and the very fact that she had tried made her now more conscious of her failure.

"My life is slipping by," she thought to herself, "and somehow I am not making the most of it. I am harder and colder than before all this trouble came, I was a mere fine-weather character, and the storm was too much for me. If I go on hating auntie perhaps I shall infect Swanhild, and make her turn into just such another narrow-hearted woman. Oh, why does one have to live with people that rub one just the wrong way?"

She fell asleep before she had solved this problem, but woke early and with a restless craving, which she could not have explained, dressed hastily, put on all the wraps that she possessed, and went out into the fresh morning air.

"I have got to put up with this life," she said to herself, "and I shall just walk off this stupid discontented mood. What can't be cured must be endured. Oh, how beautiful it is out all alone in the early morning! I am glad the wind is quite gone down, it has just cooled the air so that to breathe it

is like drinking iced water. After all, one can't talk of merely enduring life when there is all this left to one."

Leaving the steep high road, she struck off to the left, intent on gaining the top of Hjerkinshö. Not a house was in sight, not a trace of any living being; she walked on rapidly, for, although the long upward slope was in parts fairly steep, the grey lichen with which the ground was thickly covered was so springy and delicious to walk on that she felt no fatigue, the refreshing little scrunch that it made beneath her feet seemed in itself to invigorate her. By the time she reached the top of the hill she was glowing with exercise, and was glad to sit down and rest by the cairn of stones. All around her lay one great undulating sweep of grey country, warmed by the bright sunlight of the summer morning, and relieved here and there by the purple shadow of some cloud. Beyond, there rose tier above tier of snowy peaks, Snehaeten standing out the most nobly of all, and some eighty attendant peaks ranged round the horizon line as though they were courtiers in attendance on the monarch of the district. At first Sigrid was so taken up by this wonderful panorama that she had not a thought for anything beyond it, but after a while the strange stillness roused her; for the first time in her life she had come into absolute silence, and what made the silence was the infinite space.

"If one could always be in a peace like this," she thought, "surely life would be beautiful then! If one could get out of all the littleness and narrowness of one's own heart, and be silent and quiet from all the worries and vexations and dislikes of life! Perhaps it was the longing for this that made women go into convents; some go still into places where they never speak. That would never suit me, out of sheer perversity I should want to talk directly. But if one could always have a great wide open space like this that one could go into when one began to get cross——"

But there all definite thought was suddenly broken, because nature and her own need had torn down a veil, and there rushed into her consciousness a perception of an infinite calm, into which all might at any moment retire. The sense of that Presence which had so clearly dawned on her on the night of her father's death, returned to her now more vividly, and for the first time in her life she was absolutely at rest.

After a time she rose and walked quietly home, full of an eager hopefulness, to begin

what she rightly felt would be a new life. She stopped to pick a lovely handful of flowers for her aunt; she smiled at the thought of the annoyance she had felt on the previous night about such a trifle, and went forward almost gaily to meet the old troubles which but a few hours before had seemed intolerable, but now looked slight and easy.

Poor Sigrid! she had yet to learn that with fresh strength comes harder fighting in the battle of life, and that of those to whom much is given much will be required.

They were very cheerful that morning at breakfast; Fru Grönvold seemed pleased with the flowers, and everything went smoothly. Afterwards, when they were standing in a little group outside the door, she even passed her arm within Sigrid's quite tenderly, and talked in the most amiable way imaginable of the excursion which was being planned to Kongswold.

"Look! look!" cried Swanhild merrily, "here are some travellers. Two carriages and a stolkjaerre coming up the hill. Oh! I hope they will be nice, and that they will stay here."

The arrival caused quite a little bustle of excitement, and many speculations were made as to the relationship of the two sportsmen and the two ladies in the stolkjaerre. Major Brown came forward to do the honours of the place as the landlord happened not to be at hand.

"Is there any one of the name of Falck here?" asked one of the travellers as he dismounted from his carriage. We were at Dombaas last night and promised to bring this on; we told the landlord that we meant to sleep at Fokstuen, but he said there was no quicker way of delivery. Seems a strange mode of delivering telegrams, doesn't it?"

"Why, Miss Falck, I see it is for you," said Major Brown, glancing at the direction.

She stepped hastily forward to take it from him with flushed cheeks and trembling hands; it seemed an eternity before she had torn it open, and the few words within half paralysed her.

For a moment all seemed to stand still, then she became conscious of the voices around.

"Oh, we were almost blown away at Fokstuen," said one.

"But such *fladbrod* as they make there!" said another, "we brought away quite a tinfull."

"Nothing wrong, my dear, I hope?" said Fru Grönvold. "Child, child, what is it? Let me read."

Then came an almost irresistible impulse to burst into a flood of tears, checked only by the presence of so many strangers, and by the necessity of explaining to her aunt.

"It is in English," she said in a trembling voice. "From Mr. Boniface. It says only, 'Frithiof dangerously ill. Come.'"

"Poor child! you shall go at once," said Fru Grönvold. "What can be wrong with Frithiof? Dangerously ill! See, it was sent from London yesterday. You shall not lose a moment, my dear. Here is your uncle, I'll tell him everything, and do you go and pack what things you need."

The girl obeyed; it seemed as if when once she had moved she was capable only of the one fear—the terrible fear lest she should miss the English steamer. Already it was far too late to think of catching the Thursday steamer from Christiania to London, but she must strain every nerve to catch the next one. Like one in a frightful dream she hastily packed, while Swanhild ran to and fro on messages, her tears falling fast, for she, poor little soul, would be left behind, since it was impossible that she should be taken to London lodgings where, for aught they knew, Frithiof might be laid up with some infectious illness. In all her terrible anxiety Sigrid felt for the child, and with a keen pang remembered that she had not set her the best of examples, and that all her plans for a new life, and for greater sympathy with her aunt, were now at an end. The old life with all its lost opportunities was over—it was over, and she rightly felt that she had failed.

"I have murmured and rebelled," she thought to herself, "and now God is going to take from me even a chance of making up for it. Oh, how hard it is to try too late!"

"We have been looking out the routes, dear," said Fru Grönvold, coming into the room, "and the best way will be for you to try for the Friday afternoon boat from Christiania, it generally gets to Hull a little before the Saturday one from Bergen, your uncle says."

"When can I start?" asked Sigrid eagerly.

"You must start almost at once for Lille-elvedal; it will be a terribly tiring drive for you I'm afraid—eighty-four kilometres and a rough road. But still there is time to do it, which is the great thing. At Lille-elvedal you will take the night train to Christiania, it is a quick one, and will get you there in ten hours, quite in time to catch the afternoon boat, you see. Your uncle will take

you and see you into the train, and if you like we can telegraph to some friend to meet you at the Christiania station; the worst of it is, I fear most people are away just now."

"Oh, I shall not want any one," said Sigrid. "If only I can catch the steamer nothing matters."

"And do not worry more than you can help," said Fru Grönvold. "Who knows? You may find him much better."

"They would not have sent unless they feared—" Sigrid broke off abruptly, unable to finish her sentence. And then with a few incoherent words she clung to her aunt, asking her forgiveness for having annoyed her so often, and thanking her for all her kindness. And Fru Grönvold, whose conscience also pricked her, kissed the girl, and cried over her, and was goodness itself.

Then came the wrench of parting with poor Swanhild, who broke down altogether, and had to be left in the desolate little bedroom sobbing her heart out, while Sigrid went down-stairs with her aunt, bade a hurried farewell to Major Brown, Oscar, and Karen; then, with a pale, tearless face she climbed into the stolkjaerre, and was driven slowly away in the direction of Dalen.

Her uncle talked kindly, speculating much as to the cause of Frithiof's illness, and she answered as guardedly as she could, all the time feeling convinced that somehow Blanche Morgan was at the bottom of it all. Were they never to come to the end of the cruel mischief wrought by one selfish woman's vanity? One thing was clear to her, if Frithiof was spared to them she could never leave him again, and the thought of a possible exile from Norway made her look back lingeringly at the scenes she was leaving. Snehaetten's lofty peaks still appeared in the distance, rising white and shining into the clear blue sky; what ages it seemed since she had watched it from Hjerkinshö in the wonderful stillness which had preceded this great storm! Below her, to the right, lay a lovely smiling valley with birch and fir-trees, and beyond were round-topped mountains, with here and there patches of snow gleaming out of black rocky clefts.

But soon all thought of her present surroundings was crowded out by the one absorbing anxiety, and all the more because of her father's recent death hope seemed to die within her, and something seemed to tell her that this hurried journey would be in vain. Each time the grisly fear clutched at her heart, the slowness of their progress drove her almost frantic, and the easy-going people

at Dalen who leisurely fetched a horse which proved to be lame, and then after much remonstrance, leisurely fetched another, tried her patience almost beyond bearing. With her own hands she helped to harness the fresh pony, and at the dreary little station of Kroghaugen, where all seemed as quiet as the grave, she not only made the people bestir themselves, but on hearing that it was necessary to make some sort of a meal there, fetched the faggots herself to relight the fire, and never rested till all that the place would afford was set before Herr Grönvold.

At length the final change had been made. Ryhaugen was passed, and they drove on as rapidly as might be for the last stage of their journey. At any other time the beautiful fir forest through which they were passing would have delighted her, and the silvery river in the valley below, with its many windings and its musical ripple, would have made her long to stay. Now she scarcely saw them; and when, in the heart of the forest, the skydsgut declared that his horse must rest for half an hour, she was in despair.

"But there is plenty of time, dear," said her uncle kindly. "Come and take a turn with me; it will rest you."

She paced to and fro with him, trying to conquer the frenzy of impatience which threatened to overmaster her.

"See," he said at length, as they sat down to rest on one of the moss-covered boulders, "I will give you now while we are quiet and alone the money for your passage. Here is a cheque for fifty pounds, you will have time to get it cashed in Christiania;" then as she protested that it was far too much, "No, no; you will need it all in England. It may prove a long illness; and, in any case," he added awkwardly, "there must be expenses."

Sigrid, with a horrible choking in her throat, thanked him for his help, but that "in any case" rang in her ears all through the drive, all through the waiting at the hotel at Lille-elvedal, all through that weary journey in the train.

Yet it was not until she stood on board the *Angelo* that tears came to her relief. A great crowd had collected on the quays, for a number of emigrants were crossing over to England *en route* for America. Sigrid, standing there all alone, watched many a parting, saw strong men step on to the deck sobbing like children, saw women weeping as though their hearts would break. And when the crowd of those left behind on the quay began

to sing the songs of the country, great drops gathered in her eyes and slowly fall. They sang with subdued voices, "For Norge, Kjaempers foderland," and "Det Norske Flag." Last of all, as the great steamer slowly moved off, they sang with a depth of pathos which touched even the unconcerned foreigners on board, "Ja vi elsker dette landet."

The bustle and confusion on the steamer, the busy sailors, the weeping emigrants, the black mass of people on shore waving their hats and handkerchiefs, some sobbing, some singing to cheer the travellers, and behind, the beautiful city of Christiania with its spires and towers, all this had to Sigrid the strangest feeling of unreality; yet it was a scene that no one present could ever forget. Bravely the friends on shore sang out, their voices bridging over the widening waters of the fjord, the sweet air well suiting the fervour of the words:—

"Yes, we love with fond devotion Norway's mountain domes,
Rising storm-lashed o'er the ocean, with their thousand homes—

Love our country when we're bending thoughts to fathers grand,

And to saga night that's sending dreams upon our land.

Harald on its throne ascended by his mighty sword;

Hakon Norway's rights defended, helped by Oyvind's sword;
From the blood of Olaf sainted, Christ's red cross arose."

But there the distance became too great for words to traverse it, only the wild beauty of the music floated after the outward-bound vessel, and many a man strained his ears to listen to voices which should never again be heard by him on earth, and many a woman hid her face and sobbed with passionate grief.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON the following Monday afternoon, Roy Boniface, pale and worn with all that he had been through, paced the arrival platform at King's Cross station. Already the train from Hull was signalled and he longed for Sigrid's advent, yet dreaded unspeakably the first few moments, the hurried questions, the sad answers that must follow. The steamer had been hindered by a fog, and the passengers had not been landed at Hull until that morning, so that Sigrid had only had time to telegraph the hour of her arrival, and had been unable to wait for a reply to tell her of Frithiof's state. He should have to tell her all—tell her amid the unsympathising crowd which jarred upon him even now; for during the last few days he had lived so entirely with his patient that the outer world seemed strange to him. His heart beat quickly as the engine darted into sight and one carriage after another flitted past him. For a minute

he could nowhere see her; but hastening up the platform, and closely scanning the travellers, he at length caught sight of the golden hair and black dress which he had been imaging to himself, and heard the clear voice saying, with something of Frithiof's quiet decision,

"It is a black trunk from Hull, and the name is Falck."

Roy came quickly forward, and the instant she caught sight of him all her calmness vanished.

"Frithiof?" she asked, as he took her hand in his.

"He is still living," said Roy, not daring to give an evasive answer to the blue eyes which seemed to look into his very heart. Whether she had feared the worst, or had hoped for better news he could hardly tell, she turned deathly white, and her lips quivered piteously.

"I will see to your luggage," he said, "but before you go to him you must have something to eat; I see you are quite worn out with the long journey, and unless you are calm you will only agitate him."

She did not speak a word, but passively allowed him to take her to the refreshment-room and get her some tea; she even made a faint effort to attack the roll and butter which had been placed before her, but felt too completely tired out to get on with it. Roy, seeing how matters were, quietly drew the plate away, cut the roll into thin slices, and himself spread them for her. It was months since they had parted at Balholm as friendly fellow-travellers, yet it seemed now to Sigrid the most natural thing in the world to depend on him, while he, at the first glimpse of her questioning face, at the first grasp of her hand, had realised that he loved her. After her lonely journey, with its lack of sympathy, it was inexpressibly comforting to her to have beside her one who seemed instantly to perceive just what she needed. To please him, she tried hard to eat and drink, and before long they were driving to Vauxhall, and all fear lest she should break down was over.

"Now," she said at last, "tell me more about his illness. What brought it on?"

"The doctor says it must have been brought on by a great shock, and it seems that he heard very sad news that day of Lady Romiaux."

"I knew it was that wretched girl in some way," cried Sigrid clenching her hand.

"I wish she were dead!"

He was startled by her extreme bitterness,

for by nature she was gentle, and he had not expected such vehemence from her.

"She is, as Frithiof incessantly says, 'Worse than dead,'" replied Roy. "It is a miserable story. Apparently he got hold of some newspaper, read it all, and was almost immediately broken down by it. They say he was hardly himself when he left the shop that night, and the next evening, when I saw him, I found him delirious."

"It is his brain that is affected, then?" she faltered.

"Yes; he seems to have been out of health for a long time, but he never would give way. All the troubles of last autumn told on him, and this was merely, as they say, the last straw. But if only we could get him any sleep he might even now recover."

"How long has he been without it?"

"I came to him on Tuesday evening; it was on the Monday that he read that paragraph, just this day week, and he has never slept since then. When did my telegram reach you, by-the-bye?"

"Not until Thursday. You see, though you sent it on Wednesday morning, yet it had to be forwarded from Bergen, as we were in an out-of-the-way place on the Dovrefield."

"And you have been travelling ever since? You must be terribly worn out."

"Oh, the travelling was nothing; it was the terrible anxiety and the slowness of everything that almost maddened one. But nothing matters now. I am at least in time to see him."

"This is the house where he is lodging," said Roy as the cab drew up. "Are you fit to go to him now, or had you not better rest first?"

"No, no, I must go to him directly," she said. And, indeed, it seemed that the excitement had taken away all her fatigue; her cheeks were glowing, her eyes, though so wistful, were full of eagerness. She followed him into the gloomy little house, spoke a courteous word or two to Miss Charlotte, who stood in the passage to receive her, and then hastily mounted the stairs, and entered the darkened room where, instead of the excitement which she had pictured to herself, there reigned an ominous calm. A hospital nurse, whose sweet, strong face contrasted curiously with her funereal garments, was sitting beside the mattresses, which for greater convenience had been placed on the floor. Frithiof lay in the absolute stillness of exhaustion, and Sigrid, who had never seen him ill, was for a moment almost overcome. That he who had always been so strong, so daring, so full of

life and spirit should have sunk to this! It seemed hardly possible that the thin, worn, haggard face on the pillow could be the same face which had smiled on her last from the deck of the steamer when he had started on that fatal visit to the Morgans. He was talking incoherently, and twice she caught the name of Blanche.

"If she were here I could kill her!" she thought to herself; but the fierce indignation died down almost instantly, for all the tenderness of her womanly nature was called out by Frithiof's need.

"Try if you can get him to take this," said the nurse, handing her a cup of beef-tea.

He took it passively, but evidently did not in the least recognise her. It was only after some time had gone by that the tone of her voice and the sound of his native tongue affected him. His eyes, which for so many days had seen only the phantoms of his imagination, fixed themselves on her face, and by degrees a light of recognition dawned in them.

"Sigrid!" he exclaimed, in a tone of such relief that tears started to her eyes.

She bent down and kissed him.

"I have come to take care of you. And after you have been to sleep we will have a long talk," she said gently. "There, let me make your pillows comfortable."

Her presence, instead of exciting him to wonder or to ask questions, acted upon him like a soothing spell.

"Talk," he said. "It is so good to hear Norse once more."

"I will talk if you will try to sleep. I will sit here and say you some of Bjørnsen's songs." And, with his hand still in hers, she said, in her quieting voice, "Jeg har sogt," and "Olaf Trygvason," and "Prinsessen."

This last seemed specially to please him, and while, for the sixth time, she was repeating it, Roy, who had been watching them intently, made her a little sign, and, glancing down, she saw that Frithiof had fallen asleep. No one stirred, for they all knew only too well how much depended on that sleep. The nurse, who was one of those cheerful and buoyant characters that live always in the present—and usually in the present of others—mused over her three companions, and settled in her practical mind the best means of relieving Sigrid without disturbing the patient.

Sigrid herself was living in the past, and was watching sadly enough Frithiof's altered face. Could he ever again be the same strong, hardy, dauntless fellow he had once been?

She remembered how in the old days he had come back from hunting fresh and invigorated when every one else had been tired out. She thought of his room in the old home in Kalvedalen with its guns and fishing-tackle, its reindeer skins and bear skins, its cases of stuffed birds, all trophies of his prowess. And then she looked round this dreary London room, and thought how wretched it must have felt to him when night after night he returned to it and sat working at translations in which he could take no sort of interest.

As for Roy, having lived for so many days in that sick-room with scarcely a thought beyond it, he had now plunged into a sudden reaction; a great weight had been lifted off his shoulders. Sigrid had come, and with one bound he had stepped into a bright future; a future in which he could always watch the fair womanly face now before him; a future in which he should have the right to serve and help her, to shield her from care and turn her poverty to wealth. But that last thought brought a certain anxiety with it. For he fancied that Sigrid was not without a share of Frithiof's independent pride. If once she could love him the question of money could, of course, make no difference, but he feared that her pride might perhaps make out of her poverty and his riches a barrier which should shut out even the thought of love.

Of all those who were gathered together in that room, Frithiof was the most entirely at rest, for at last there had come to his relief the priceless gift of dreamless and unbroken sleep. For just as the spiritual life dies within us if we become absorbed in the things of this world and neglect the timeless calm which is our true state, so the body and mind sink if they cannot for brief intervals escape out of the bonds of time into the realms of sleep. The others lived in past, present, or future, but Frithiof was in that blissful state of entire repose which builds up, all unconsciously to ourselves, the very fibres of our being. What happens to us in sleep that we wake once more like new beings? No one can exactly explain. What happens to us when

"We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power"?

No one can precisely tell us. But the facts remain. By these means are body and spirit renewed.

For the next day or two Frithiof realised little. To the surprise and delight of all he slept almost incessantly, waking only to take food, to make sure that Sigrid was with

him, and to enjoy a delicious sense of ease and relief.

"He is out of the wood now," said Dr. Morris, cheerfully. "You came just in time, Miss Falek. But I will give you one piece of advice; if possible stay in England and make your home with him, he ought not to be so much alone."

"You think that he may have such an attack again?" asked Sigrid wistfully.

"No, I don't say that at all. He has a wonderful constitution and there is no reason why he should ever break down again. But he is more likely to get depressed if he is alone, and you will be able to prevent his life from growing too monotonous."

So as she lived through those quiet days in the sick-room, Sigrid racked her brain to think of some way of making money, and searched, as so many women have done before her, the columns of the newspapers, and made fruitless inquiries, and wasted both time and money in the attempt. One day Roy, coming in at his usual hour in the morning to relieve guard, brought her a fat envelope which he had found waiting for her in the hall. She opened it eagerly, and made a little exclamation of disappointment and vexation.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

She began to laugh, though he fancied he saw tears in her eyes. "Oh," she said, "it seems so ridiculous when I had been expecting such great things from it. You know I have been trying to hear of work in London, and there was an advertisement in the paper which said that two pounds a week might easily be realised either by men or women without interfering with their present occupations, and that all particulars would be given on the receipt of eighteenpence. So I sent the money, and here is a wretched aluminium pencil in return, and I am to make this two pounds a week by getting orders for them."

The absurdity of the whole thing struck her more forcibly and she laughed again more merrily; Roy laughed too.

"Have you made any other attempts?" he asked.

"Oh yes," said Sigrid, "I began to try in Norway and even attempted a story and sent it to one of our best novelists to ask his opinion."

"And what did he say?"

"Well," she said, smiling, "he wrote back very kindly, but said that he could not conscientiously recommend any one to write stories whose sole idea in taking up the pro-

fession was the making of money. My conscience pricked me there and so I never tried writing again and never will. Then the other day I wrote to another place which advertised, and got back a stupid bundle of embroidery patterns. It is mere waste of money answering these things. They say women can earn a guinea a time for shaving poodles, but you see I have no experience in poodles," and she laughed merrily.

Roy sat musing over the perplexities of ordinary life. Here was he with more money than he knew what to do with, and here was the woman he loved struggling in vain to earn a few shillings. Yet, the mere fact that he worshipped her, made him chivalrously careful to avoid laying her under any obligation. As far as possible he would serve her, but in this vital question of money it seemed that he could only stand aside and watch her efforts. Nor did he dare to confess the truth to her as yet, for he perceived quite plainly that she was absorbed in Frithiof and could not possibly for some time to come be free even to consider her own personal life. Clearly at present she regarded him with that frank friendliness which he remembered well at Balholm, and in his helpfulness had discerned nothing that need be construed as the attentions of a lover. After all he was her brother's sole friend in England and it was natural enough that he should do all that he could for them.

"My father and mother come home to-night," he said at length, "and if you will allow me I will ask them if they know of anything likely to suit you. Cecil will be very anxious to meet you again. Don't you think you might go for a drive with her to-morrow afternoon? I would be here with your brother."

"Oh, I should so like to meet her again," said Sigrid, "we all liked her so much last summer. I don't feel that I really know her at all yet, for she is not very easy to know, but she interested me just because of that."

"I don't think any one can know Cecil who has not lived with her," said Roy, "she is so very reserved."

"Yes; at first I thought she was just gentle and quiet without very much character, but one day when we were out together we tried to get some branches of willow. They were so stiff to break that I lazily gave up, but she held on to hers with a strong look in her face which quite startled me, and said, 'I can't be beaten just by a branch.'"

"That is Cecil all over," said Roy smiling;

"she never would let anything daunt her. May I tell her that you will see her to-morrow?"

Sigrid gladly assented, and the next day both Mrs. Boniface and Cecil drove to the little house at Vauxhall. Roy brought Sigrid down to the carriage, and with a very happy satisfied feeling introduced her to his mother, and watched the warm meeting with Cecil.

"I can't think what would have become of Frithiof if it had not been for all your kindness," said Sigrid. "Your son has practically saved his life, I am sure, by taking care of him through this illness."

"And the worst is over now, I hope," said Mrs. Boniface. "That is such a comfort."

At the first moment Sigrid had fallen in love with the sweet-natured, motherly old lady, and now she opened all her heart to her, and they discussed the sad cause of Frithiof's breakdown, and talked of past days in Norway, and of the future that lay before him, Cecil listening with that absolute command of countenance which betokens a strong nature, and her companions little dreaming that their words, though eagerly heard, were like so many sword-thrusts to her. The neat brougham of the successful tradesman might have seemed prosaic enough, and an unlikely place in which to find any romance, but nevertheless the three occupants with their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears, were each living out an absorbing life story. For every heart has its own romance, and whether living in the fierce glare of a palace, in the whirl of society, in a quiet London suburb, or in an East-end court, it is all the same. The details differ, the accessories are strangely different, but the love which is the great mainspring of life is precisely the same all the world over.

"What makes me so miserable," said Sigrid, "is to feel that his life is, as it were, over, though he is so young: it has been spoiled and ruined for him when he is but one-and-twenty."

"But the very fact of his being so young, seems to me to give hope that brighter things are in store for him," said Mrs. Boniface.

"I do not think so," said Sigrid. "That girl has taken something from him which can never come again: it does not seem to me possible that a man can love like that twice in a lifetime."

"Perhaps not just in that way," said Mrs. Boniface.

"And besides," said Sigrid, "what girl would care to take such love as he might now be able to give? I am sure nothing

would induce me to accept any secondary love of that kind."

She spoke as a perfectly heart-whole girl, frankly and unreservedly. And what she said was true. She never could have been satisfied with less than the whole; it was her nature to exact much; she could love very devotedly, but she would jealously demand an equal devotion in return.

Now Cecil was of a wholly different type. Already love had taken possession of her, it had stolen into her heart almost unconsciously and had brought grave shadows into her quiet life, shadows cast by the sorrow of another. Her notion of love was simply freedom to love and serve; to give her this freedom there must of course be true love on the other side, but of its kind or of its degree she would never trouble herself to think. For already her love was so pure and deep that it rendered her almost selfless. Sigrid's speech troubled her for a minute or two; if one girl could speak so, why not all girls? Was she perhaps less truly womanly that she thought less of what was owing to herself?

"It may be so," she admitted, yet with a latent consciousness that so infinite a thing as love could not be bound by any hard and fast rules. "But I cannot help it. Whether it is womanly or not I would die to give him the least real comfort."

"Tell Harris to stop, Cecil," said Mrs. Boniface. "We will get some grapes for Mr. Falck."

And glad to escape from the carriage for a minute, and glad, too, to be of use even in such a far-off way, Cecil went into the fruiterer's, returning before long with a beautiful basket of grapes and flowers.

CHAPTER XIX.

"SEE what I have brought you," said Sigrid, re-entering the sick-room a little later on.

Frithiof took the basket and looked, with a pleasure which a few weeks ago would have been impossible to him, at the lovely flowers and fruit.

"You have come just at the right time, for he will insist on talking of all the deepest things in heaven and earth," said Roy, "and this makes a good diversion."

"They are from Mrs. Boniface. Is it not kind of her? And do you know, Frithiof, she and Dr. Morris have been making quite a deep plot; they want to transplant us bodily to Rowan Tree House, and Dr. Morris thinks the move could do you no harm now that you are getting better."

His face lighted up with something of its former expression.

"How I should like never to see this hateful room again!" he exclaimed. "You don't know how I detest it. The old ghosts seem to haunt it still. There is nothing that I can bear to look at except your picture of Bergen, which has done me more than one good turn."

Sigrid, partly to keep him from talking too much, partly because she always liked to tell people of that little act of kindness, gave Roy the history of the picture, and Frithiof lay musing over the curious relative power of kindness and cruelty, and was obliged, though somewhat reluctantly, to admit to himself that a very slight act of kindness certainly did exert an enormous and unthought-of influence.

Physical disorder had had much to do with the black view of life which he had held for the last few months, but now that the climax had been reached and rest had been forced upon him his very exhaustion and helplessness enabled him to see a side of life which had never before been visible to him. He was very much softened by all that he had been through. It seemed that while the events of the past year had embittered and hardened him, this complete break down of bodily strength had brought back something of his old nature. The bright enjoyment of mere existence could of course never return to him, but still, notwithstanding the scar of his old wound, there came to him during those days of his convalescence a sense of keen pleasure in Sigrid's presence, in his gradually returning strength, and in the countless little acts of kindness which everybody showed him.

The change to Rowan Tree House seemed to work wonders in him. The house had always charmed him, and the recollection of the first time he had entered it, using it as a shelter from the storm of life, much as Roy and Cecil had used his father's house as a shelter from the drenching rain of Bergen, returned to him again and again through the quiet weeks that followed. The past year looked now to him like a nightmare to a man who has awakened in broad daylight. It seemed to him that he was lying at the threshold of a new life, worn and tired with the old life it was true, yet with a gradually increasing interest in what lay beyond, and a perception that there were many things of which he had as yet but the very faintest notion.

Sigrid told him all the details of her life in Norway since they had last seen each other, of her refusal of Torvald Lundgren, of

her relations with her aunt, of the early morning on Hjerkinshö. And her story touched him. When, stirred by all that had happened into unwonted earnestness, she owned to him that after that morning on the mountain everything had seemed different, he did not, as he would once have done, laughingly change the subject, or say that religion was all very well for women.

"It was just as if I had worn a crape veil all my life," she said, looking up from her work for a moment with those clear, blue, practical eyes of hers. "And up there on the mountain it seemed as if some one had lifted it quite away."

Her words stirred within him an uneasy sense of loss, a vague desire, which he had once or twice felt before. He was quite silent for some time, lying back idly in his chair and watching her as she worked.

"Sigrid!" he said at last, with a suppressed eagerness in his voice, "Sigrid, you won't go back again to Norway and leave me?"

"No, dear, I will never leave you," she said warmly. "I will try to find some sort of work. To-night I mean to talk to Mr. Boniface about it. Surely in this huge place there must be something I can do."

"It is its very hugeness that makes one despair," said Frithiof. "Good God! what I went through last autumn! And there are thousands in the same plight, thousands who would work if only they could meet with employment."

"Discussing the vexed question of the unemployed?" said Mr. Boniface, entering the room in time to hear this last remark.

"Yes," said Sigrid, smiling. "Though I'm a wretched foreigner come to swell their number. But what can be the cause of such distress?"

"I think it is this," said Mr. Boniface, "population goes on increasing, but practical Christianity does not increase at the same rate."

"Are you what they call a Christian Socialist?" asked Sigrid.

"No; I am not very fond of assuming any distinctive party name, and the Socialists seem to me to look too much to compulsion. You can't make people practical Christians by Act of Parliament; you have no right to force the rich to relieve the poor. The nation suffers, and all things are at a dead-lock because so many of us neglect our duty. If we argued less about the 'masses,' and quietly did as we would be done by to those with whom life brings us into contact, I believe the distress would soon be at an end."

"Do you mean by that private alms-

giving?" asked Frithiof. "Surely that can only pauperise the people."

"I certainly don't mean indiscriminate almsgiving," said Mr. Boniface; "I mean only this. You start with your own family; do your duty by them. You have a constant succession of servants passing through your household; be a friend to them. You have men and women in your employ; share their troubles. Perhaps you have tenants; try to look at life from their point of view. If we all tried to do this the cure would indeed be found, and the breach between the rich and poor bridged over."

How simply and unostentatiously Mr. Boniface lived out his own theory Frithiof knew quite well. He reflected that all the kindness he himself had received had not tended to pauperise him, had not in the least crushed his independence or injured his self-respect. On the contrary, it had saved him from utter ruin, and had awakened in him a gratitude which would last all his life. But this new cure was not to depend only on taxation or on the State, but on a great influence working within each individual. The idea set him thinking, and the sense of his own ignorance weighed upon him.

One morning it chanced that, sitting out in the verandah at the back of the house, he overheard Lance's reading-lesson, which was going on in the morning room. Sounds of laborious wrestling with the difficulties of "Pat a fat cat," and other interesting injunctions, made him realise how very slow human nature is to learn any perfectly new thing, and how toilsome are first steps. Presently came a sound of trotting feet.

"Gwen! Gwen!" shouted Lance, "come here to us. Cecil is going to read to us out of her Bible, and it's awfully jolly!"

He heard a stifled laugh from Cecil.

"Oh, Lance," she said, "Gwen is much too young to care for it. Come, shut the door, and we will begin."

Again came the sound of trotting feet, then Cecil's clear, low voice. "What story do you want?"

"Read about the three men walking in the fender and the fairy coming to them," said Lance promptly.

"Not a fairy, Lance."

"Oh, I mean an angel," he replied apologetically.

So she read him his favourite story of Nebuchadnezzar the king, and the golden image and the three men who would not bow down to it.

"You see," she said at the end, "they

were brave men; they would not do what they knew to be wrong. We want you to grow like them."

There was a silence, broken at last by Lance.

"I will only hammer nails in wood," he said gravely.

"How do you mean?" asked Cecil, not quite seeing the connection.

"Not into the tables and chairs," said Lance, who had clearly transgressed in this matter, and had applied the story to his own life with amusing simplicity.

"That's right," said Cecil. "God will be pleased if you try."

"He can see us, but we can't see him," said Lance, in his sweet childish tones, quietly telling forth in implicit trust the truth that many a man longs to believe.

A minute after he came dancing out into the garden, his short sunny curls waving in the summer wind, his cheeks glowing, his hazel eyes and innocent little mouth beaming with happiness.

"He looks like an incarnate smile," thought Frithiof.

And then he remembered what Roy had told him of the father and mother, and he thought how much trouble awaited the poor child, and felt the same keen wish that Cecil had felt that he might be brought up in a way which should make him able to resist whatever evil tendencies he had inherited. "If anything can save him it will be such a home as this," he reflected.

Then, as Cecil came out into the verandah, he joined her, and they walked together down one of the shady garden paths.

"I overheard your pupil this morning," he began, and they laughed together over the child's quaint remarks. "That was very good, his turning the story to practical account all by himself. He is a lucky little beggar to have you for his teacher. I wonder what makes a child so ready to swallow quite easily the most difficult things in heaven and earth?"

"I suppose because he knows he can't altogether understand, and is willing to take things on trust," said Cecil.

"If anything can keep him straight when he grows up it will be what you have taught him," said Frithiof. "You wonder that I admit that, and a year ago I couldn't have said as much, but I begin to think that there is after all a very great restraining power in the old faith. The difficulty is to get up any sort of interest in that kind of thing."

"You talk as if it were a sort of science," said Cecil.

"That is precisely what it seems to me; and just as one man is born with a love of botany, another takes naturally to astronomy, and a third has no turn for science whatever, but is fond of hunting and fishing, so it seems to me with religion. All of you, perhaps, have inherited the tendency from your Puritan forefathers, but I have inherited quite the opposite tendency from my Viking ancestors. Like them, I prefer to love my friend and hate my enemy, and go through life in the way that best pleases me. I am not a reading man; I can't get up the faintest sort of interest in these religious matters."

"We are talking of two different things," said Cecil. "It is of the mere framework of religion that you are speaking. Very likely many of us are born without any taste for theology, or sermons, or Church history. We are not bound surely to force up an interest in them."

"Then if all that is not religion, pray what is it? You are not like Miss Charlotte, who uses phrases without analysing them. What do you mean by religion?"

"I mean knowing and loving God," she said after a moment's pause.

Her tone was very gentle, and not in the least didactic.

"I have believed in a God always—more or less," said Frithiof slowly. "But how do you get to know Him?"

"I think it is something in the same way that people get to know each other," said Cecil. "Cousin James Horner, for instance, sees my father every day, he has often stayed in the same house with him, and has in a sense known him all his life. But he doesn't really know him at all. He never takes the trouble really to know any one. He sees the outside of my father—that is all. They have hardly anything in common."

"Mr. Horner is so full of himself and his own opinions that he never could appreciate such a man as your father," said Frithiof. Then, perceiving that his own mouth had condemned him, he relapsed into silence. "What is your receipt, now, for getting to know a person?" he said presently with a smile.

"First," she said thoughtfully, "a desire to know and a willingness to be known. Then I think one must forget oneself as much as possible, and try to understand the feelings, and words, and acts of the one you wish to know in the light of the whole life, or as much as you can learn of it, not merely of the present. Then, too, I am quite sure that you must be alone together, for it is only alone that people will talk of the most real things."

He was silent, trying in his own mind to fit her words to his own need.

"Then you don't think, as some do, that when once we set out with a real desire all the rest is quite easy and to be drifted into without any special effort."

"No," she said, "I do not believe in drifting. And if we were not so lazy I believe we should all of us know more of God. It is somehow difficult to take quite so much pains about that as about other things."

"It can't surely be difficult to you; it always seems to be easy to women, but to us men all is so different."

"Are you so sure of that?" she said quietly.

"I have always fancied so," he replied.

"Why, the very idea of shutting oneself in alone to think—to pray—it is so utterly unnatural to a man."

"I suppose the harder it is the more it is necessary," said Cecil. "But our Lord was not always praying on mountains; he was living a quite ordinary shop life, and must have been as busy as you are."

Her words startled him; everything connected with Christianity had been to him lifeless, unreal, formal—something utterly apart from the every-day life of a nineteenth century man. She had told him that to her religion meant "knowing" and "loving," and he now perceived that by "loving" she meant the active living of the Christ-life, the constant endeavour to do the will of God. She had not actually said this in so many words, but he knew more plainly than if she had spoken that this was her meaning.

They paced in silence the shady garden walk. To Frithiof the whole world seemed wider than it had ever been before. On the deadly monotony of his business life there had arisen a light which altogether transformed it. He did his best even now to quench its brightness, and said to himself, "This will not last; I shall hate desk and counter and all the rest of it as badly as ever when I go back." For it was his habit since Blanche had deceived him to doubt the lastingness of all that he desired to keep. Still, though he doubted for the future, the present was wonderfully changed, and the new idea that had come into his life was the best medicine he could have had.

Sigrid watched his returning strength with delight; indeed, perhaps she never realised what he had been during his lonely months of London life. She had not seen the bitterness, the depression, the hardness, the too evident deterioration which had saddened Cecil's heart through the winter and spring;

and she could not see as Cecil saw how he was struggling up now into a nobler manhood. Roy instinctively felt it. Mr. Boniface, with his ready sympathy and keen insight, found out something of the true state of the case; but only Cecil actually knew it. She had had to bear the worst of the suffering all through those long months, and it was but fair that the joy should be hers alone.

Frithiof hardly knew which part of the day was most pleasant to him, the quiet mornings after Mr. Boniface and Roy had gone to town, when he and Sigrid were left to their own devices; the pleasant little break at eleven, when Mrs. Boniface looked in to remind them that fruit was good in the morning, and to tempt him with pears and grapes, while Cecil and the two children came in from the garden, bringing with them a sense of freshness and life; the drowsy summer afternoon when he dozed over a novel; the drive in the cool of the day, and the delightful home evenings with music and reading aloud.

Quiet the life was, it is true, but dull never. Every one had plenty to do yet not too much, for Mr. Boniface had a horror of the modern craze for rushing into all sorts of philanthropic undertakings, would have nothing to do with bazaars, groaned inwardly when he was obliged by a sense of duty to attend any public meeting, and protested vehemently against the multiplication of "Societies."

"I have a pet Society of my own," he used to say with a smile. "It is the Keeping at Home Society. Every householder is his own president, and the committee is formed by his family."

Notwithstanding this, he was the most widely charitable man, and was always ready to lend a helping hand; but he loved to work quietly, and all who belonged to him caught something of the same tone, so that in the house there was a total absence of that wearing whirl of good works in which many people live nowadays, and though perhaps they had not so many irons in the fire, yet the work they did was better done in consequence, and the home remained what it was meant to be, a centre of love and life, not a mere eating-house and dormitory.

Into the midst of this home there had come now some strangely fresh elements. Three distinct romances were being worked out beneath that quiet roof. There was poor Frithiof with his shattered life, his past an agony which would scarcely bear thinking of, his future a desperate struggle with cir-

cumstances. There was Cecil, whose life was so far bound up with his that when he suffered she suffered too, yet had to live on with a serene face and make no sign. There was Roy already madly in love with the blue-eyed, fair-haired Sigrid, who seemed in the glad reaction after all her troubles to have developed into a totally different being, and was the life of the party. And yet in spite of the inevitable pain of love, these were happy days for all of them. Happy to Frithiof because his strength was returning to him; because, with an iron resolution, he as far as possible shut out the remembrance of Blanche; because the spirit life within him was slowly developing, and for the first time he had become conscious that it was a reality.

Happy for Cecil because her love was no foolish sentimentality, no selfish day-dream, but a noble love which taught her more than anything else could possibly have done; because instead of pining away at the thought that Frithiof was utterly indifferent to her, she took it on trust that God would withhold from her no really good thing, and made the most of the trifling ways in which she could at present help him. Happiest of all perhaps for Roy, because his love story was full of bright hope—a hope that each day grew fuller and clearer.

"Robin," said Mrs. Boniface one evening to her husband, as together they paced to and fro in the verandah, while Frithiof was being initiated into lawn-tennis in the garden, "I think Sigrid Falck is one of the sweetest girls I ever saw."

"So thinks some one else if I am not much mistaken," he replied.

"Then you, too, have noticed it. I am so glad. I hoped it was so, but could not feel sure. Oh, Robin, I wonder if he has any chance? She would make him such a sweet little wife."

"How can we tell that she has not left her heart in Norway?"

"I do not think so," said Mrs. Boniface. "No, I feel sure that can't be, from the way in which she speaks of her life there. If there is any rival to be feared it is Frithiof. They seem to me wrapped up in each other, and it is only natural too, after all their trouble and separation and this illness of his. How strong he is getting again, and how naturally he takes to the game! He is such a fine-looking fellow, somehow he dwarfs every one else," and she glanced across to the opposite side of the lawn, where Roy with his more ordinary height and build certainly did seem somewhat

eclipsed. And yet to her motherly eyes that honest, open, English face, with its sun-burnt skin, was perhaps the fairest sight in the world.

Not that she was a blindly and foolishly loving mother, she knew that he had his faults. But she knew too that he was a sterling fellow, and that he would make the woman he married perfectly happy.

They were so taken up with thoughts of the visible romance that was going on beneath their eyes, that it never occurred to them to think of what might be passing in the minds of the two on the other side of the net. And perhaps that was just as well, for the picture was a sad one and would certainly have cast a shadow upon their hearts. Cecil was too brave and resolute and self-controlled to allow her love to undermine her health; nor did she so brood upon her inevitable loss that she ceased to enjoy the rest of life. There was very much still left to her, and though at times everything seemed to her flavourless and insipid, yet the mood would pass and she would be able intensely to enjoy her home life. Still there was no denying that the happiness which seemed dawning for Roy and Sigrid was denied to the other two; they were handicapped in the game of life just as they were at tennis—the setting sun shone full in their faces and made the play infinitely more difficult, whereas the others playing in the shady courts had a considerable advantage over them.

"Well! is the set over?" asked Mr. Boniface as the two girls came towards them.

"Yes," cried Sigrid merrily. "And actually our side has won! I am so proud of having beaten Cecil and Frithiof, for, as a rule, Frithiof is one of those detestable people who win everything. It was never any fun playing with him when we were children, he was always so lucky."

As she spoke Frithiof had come up the steps behind her.

"My luck has turned, you see," he said with a smile in which there was a good deal of sadness. But his tone was playful, and indeed it seemed that he had entirely got rid of the bitterness which had once dominated every look and word.

"Nonsense!" she cried, slipping her hand into his arm. "Your luck will return, it is only that you are not quite strong again yet. Wait a day or two and I shall not have a chance against you. You need not grudge me my one little victory."

"It has not tired you too much?" asked Mrs. Boniface, glancing up at Frithiof. There

was a glow of health in his face which she had never before seen, and his expression which had once been stern had grown much more gentle. "But I see," she added, "that is a foolish question, for I don't think I have ever seen you looking better. It seems to me this is the sort of exercise you need. We let you stay much too long over that translating in the old days."

"Yes," said Sigrid; "I hardly know whether to laugh or cry when I think of Frithiof, of all people in the world, doing learned translations for such a man as Herr Sivertsen. He never could endure sedentary life."

"And yet," said Mr. Boniface pacing along the verandah with her, "I tried in vain to make him take up cricket. He declared that in Norway you did not go in for our English notions of exercise for the sake of exercise."

"Perhaps not," said Sigrid; "but he was always going in for the wildest adventures, and never had the least taste for books. Poor Frithiof, it only shows how brave and resolute he is; he is so set upon paying off these debts that he will sacrifice everything to that one idea, and will keep to work which must be hateful to him."

"He is a fine fellow," said Mr. Boniface. "I had hardly realised what his previous life must have been, though of course I knew that the drudgery of shop life was sorely against the grain."

"Ever since he was old enough to hold a gun he used to go with my father in August to the mountains in Nord fjord, for the reindeer hunting," said Sigrid. "And every Sunday through the winter he used to go by himself on the wildest excursions after seabirds. My father said it was good training for him, and as long as he took with him old Nils, his skydsmand—I think you call that boatman in English—he was never worried about him when he was away. But sometimes I was afraid for him, and old Gro, our nurse, always declared he would end by being drowned. Come here, Frithiof, and tell Mr. Boniface about your night on the fjord by Bukken."

His eyes lighted up at the recollection.

"Ah, it was such fun!" he cried; "though we were cheated out of our sport after all. I had left Bergen on the Saturday, going with old Nils to Bukken, and there as usual we took a boat to row across to Gjelleslad where I generally slept, getting up at four in the morning to go after the birds. Well, that night Nils and I set out to row across, but had not got far when the most fearful storm came down on us. I never saw such

lightning before or since, and the wind was terrific, we could do nothing against it, and indeed it was wonderful that we did not go to the bottom. By good luck we were driven back to land, and managed to haul up the boat, turn it up, and shelter as best we could under it, old Nils swearing like a trooper and declaring that I should be the death of him some day. For four mortal hours we stayed there, and the storm still raged. At last by good luck I hunted up four men who were willing to run the risk of rowing us back to Bergen. Then off we set, Nils vowing that we should be drowned, and so we were very nearly. It was the wildest night I ever knew, and the rowing was fearful work, but at last we got safely home."

"And you should have seen him," cried Sigrid. "He roused us all up at half-past six in the morning, and there he was, soaked to the skin, but looking so bright and jolly, and making us roar with laughter with his description of it all. And I really believe it did him good; for after a few hours' sleep he came down in the best possible of humours. And don't you remember, Frithiof, how you played it all on your violin?"

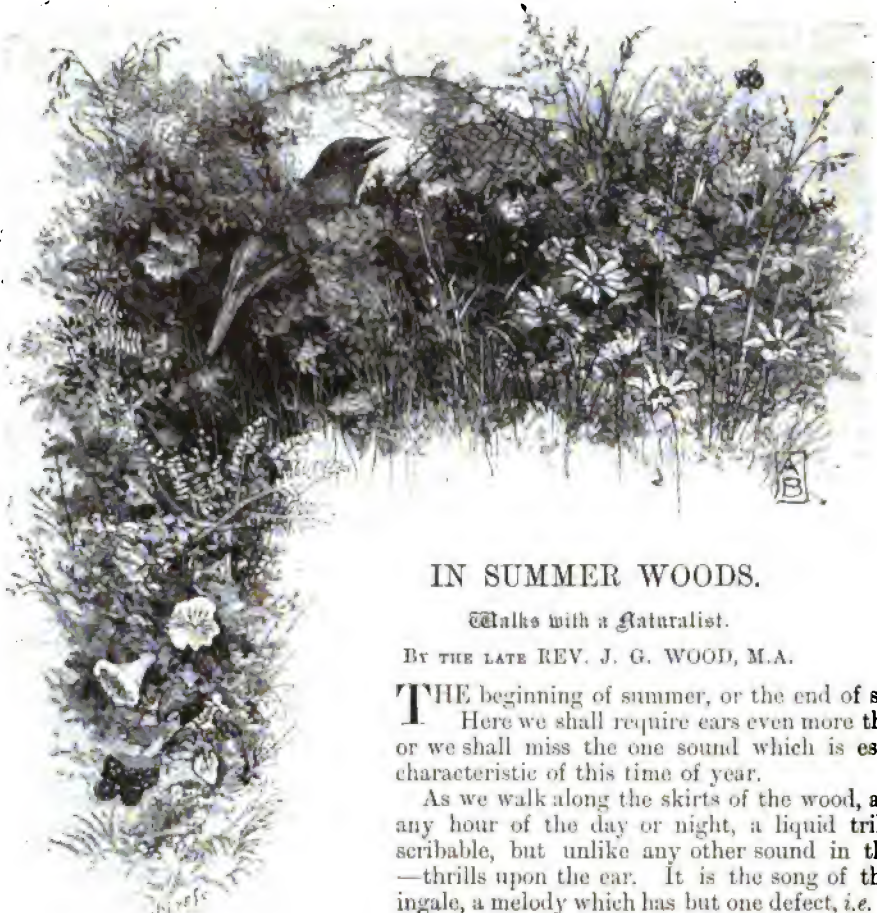
"And was only successful in showing how well Nils growled," said Frithiof laughing.

The reference to the violin suggested the usual evening's music, and they went into the drawing-room, where Sigrid played them some Norwegian airs, Roy standing near her, and watching her fair sweet face, which was still glowing with the recollection of those old days of which they had talked.

"Was it possible," he thought, "that she who was so devoted to her brother, that she who loved the thought of perilous adventures, and so ardently admired the bold, fearless, peril-seeking nature of the old Vikings, was it possible that she could ever love such an ordinary, humdrum, commonplace Londoner as himself? He fell into great despondency, and envied Frithiof his Norse nature, his fine physique, his daring spirit.

How infinitely harder life was rendered to his friend by that same nature, he did not pause to think, and sorry as he was for Frithiof's troubles, he scarcely realised at all the force with which they had fallen upon the Norwegian's proud self-reliant character.

Absorbed in the thought of his own love, he had little leisure for such observations. The one all-engrossing question excluded everything else. And sometimes with hope he asked himself, "Can she love me?" Sometimes in despair assured himself that it was impossible—altogether impossible.



IN SUMMER WOODS.

Talks with a Naturalist.

By THE LATE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

THE beginning of summer, or the end of spring ? Here we shall require ears even more than eyes, or we shall miss the one sound which is essentially characteristic of this time of year.

As we walk along the skirts of the wood, at almost any hour of the day or night, a liquid trill—indescribable, but unlike any other sound in the world—thrills upon the ear. It is the song of the nightingale, a melody which has but one defect, *i.e.* its short duration. Scarcely for more than six weeks is the nightingale in song. It is true that he may sometimes continue to sing for a longer period, but the song is then like that of a boy whose voice is beginning to crack, and has lost its rich purity of intonation, its sweetness, and its fiery spontaneity.

He has always been one of my special feathered favourites, and while he is in song I never allow a day to pass without holding a duologue with him ; for he is a conversational bird, and those who know his language can induce him to approach within a few yards in order to hold parley for a time. Only you must not allow him to detect you, or he will change his note, and instead of delighting your ears with his song, he will stretch out his neck, flutter his wings, and scold his deceiver with a voice as harsh as the cry of a startled blackbird. The one time of the day in which his voice is seldom heard is noontide, when he is mostly silent for about an hour. The same habit is to be found in several of our songsters.

I really think that the nightingale must

know that his song is admired by human beings, so fond is he of making his home close to the habitations of man. This very boldness makes him a frequent victim to the wiles of the professional bird-catcher.

The man hangs about the locality which the birds frequent, picks out the best singer, scrapes a hole near the nest, puts two or three meal-worms into it, lays a couple of limed twigs over it, and is sure to secure his prey.

Capturing this bird is a cruel proceeding, as it seldom lives ; and even if it should survive, it suffers terribly by being debarred from the migration to warmer climates, which is an essential portion of its life.

Should it survive, it is sometimes employed as a singing-master to young canaries.

The male canaries are carefully kept out of hearing of the young birds, and the nightingale is placed in the room, so that his shall be the only voice which they hear. When they are old enough to try their own voices, they naturally imitate that of the only songster which they have heard, and in consequence are free from the ear-piercing shrillness which often makes the natural song of the canary intolerable to nervous persons.

That the nightingales can measure each other's power of song is evident to every one who has studied their habits. We know that with ourselves there is always a "championship" in any branch of sport or athletics, and that no one will dare challenge the champion unless he be exceptionally strong in his own line.

So it is with the nightingale. Long experience of the bird has taught me that in every district there is a King Nightingale, and that when he raises his voice he is "Sir Oracle," and all other nightingales within hearing cease their song. One of these king nightingales had his nest close to my house, and occupied the same spot for five years, after which time I heard his voice no more. I always feared that he had fallen a victim to some rascally birdcatcher.

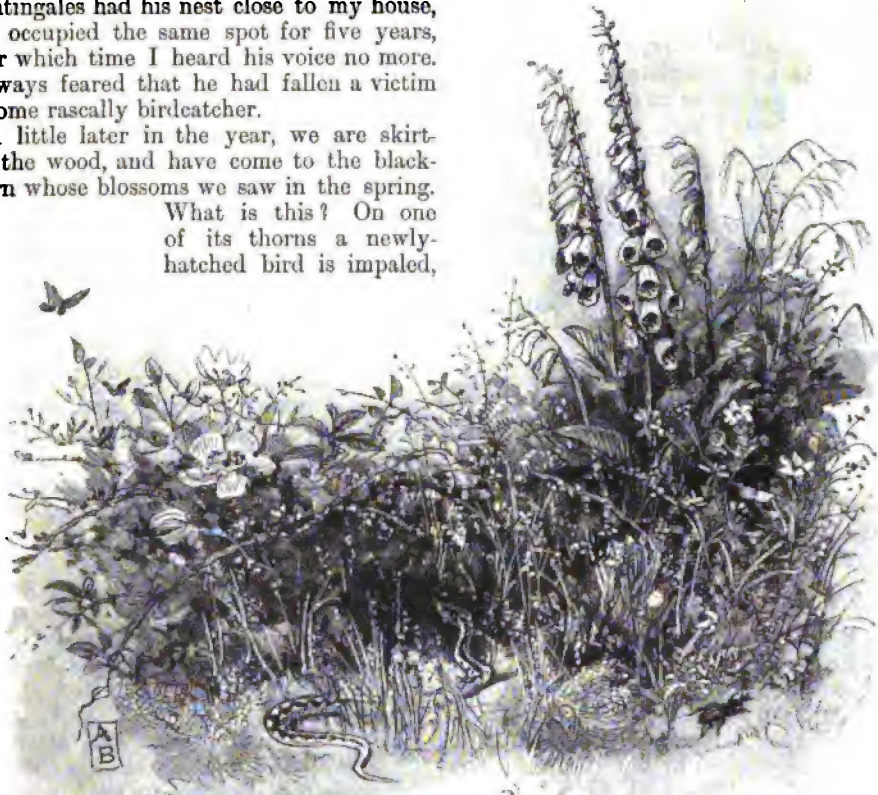
A little later in the year, we are skirting the wood, and have come to the blackthorn whose blossoms we saw in the spring.

What is this? On one of its thorns a newly-hatched bird is impaled,

the thorn running just under the skin. Another and another are impaled close by it, and several beetles have suffered the same fate. How came they to be impaled, the insects through the body, and the birds under the skin?

"Squawk!" Out flies a bird, and, still screaming, it skirts the trees, and disappears behind them. As it flies, it shows so much red, that it might be taken for a redstart, except that it is much too large.

An expert pronounces it to be the Red-backed Shrike, and asserts that its nest must be at hand. Here it is, built among the branches of the blackthorn, only a yard or so from the ground. Though a conspicuous nest when its locality is indicated, it is so deeply buried among the foliage that it would readily escape observation, if the parent bird, like the starling, did not set up such an outcry at the approach of an intruder, and did not impale



its prey so as to betray the vicinity of its home. Here are the eggs—cream-grey, mottled with reddish brown and grey, the spots being mostly gathered in an irregular ring round the large end of the egg.

In some parts of England, this bird is called the "Nine-killer," from an absurd idea that it kills and impales nine victims before it eats the first. So prevalent is this idea, that I have seen it gravely brought forward as a proof that birds are able to count as far as nine.

I confess myself unable to understand the object of the impalement. Were the food, like that of the vulture, preferable as it approached putridity, we could understand it if young birds were the only prey. But, as far as the experience of more than forty years can teach, the percentage of young birds to beetles is scarcely one per cent., and, as all practical entomologists know, dead beetles when exposed to the action of the elements do not putrefy, but are speedily dried into a horny material which not even the shrike would accept as nutriment.

Here is a bird essentially belonging to early summer.

From my study window, whence like Herr Teufelsdröckh I contemplate the stars, I see a little bird perched on an apple-twig. It is a peculiarly spotted bird, about as large as a sparrow, but of a much lighter build. Patiently it sits on its appointed perch. Suddenly it springs from its post, flits irregularly for a few yards, and returns to its perch, carrying an insect in its mouth. This is the Spotted Flycatcher, sometimes called the Beam-bird, in allusion to its habit of placing its simple nest upon beams in barns and outhouses.

The presence of this flycatcher is an unmixed benefit to the gardener or agriculturist, as it feeds almost wholly on winged insects, which, if allowed to live, would deposit hundreds of eggs, each of which would be hatched into a plant-eating grub or caterpillar. One pair of these birds fed their young more than five hundred times in one day, and, as several grubs were delivered to the young at each time of feeding, the amount of destruction which is daily wrought by this bird may be roughly estimated.

We steal noiselessly along, as becoms practical naturalists, and hear the words, "Chiff-chaff, chiff-chaff," repeated as clearly as if they had been spoken by human lips. They are uttered by a little bird, which, like the cuckoo and the cockatoo, has derived its name from the nature of its cry.

The nest of the Chiff-chaff is placed in a variety of localities, but always well hidden. I have found many of these nests, and the last was made in a very singular locality.

Some of my companions and myself were engaged in ransacking Cannock Chase in search of any living beings which might happen to exist there. Now, as is known to every one who has studied the ways of beetles, a vast number of species is to be found under the bark of dead trees. One of these fallen trees had been blown down, and had been lying there for some years. The space between the bark and the trunk was occupied by the nest of a Chiff-chaff, the entrance being so small that unless we had casually stripped off the bark, we should scarcely have detected it. The young had only been hatched for a few hours, and I need hardly say that we refrained from touching either the nest or the young, and that we replaced the bark which had been removed.

Just at the edge of the wood, and on the borders of the heath, look out for snakes. Sometimes among the heath may be found the cast skin, or rather, the slough of a snake, which has utilised the closely-growing heath stems in ridding itself of its worn-out garment. Sometimes the slough is found entire, and in all cases it is turned inside out.

Three species of snake inhabit this country, and in such a spot as has been mentioned all three may perchance be found. Only remember that if you want to see these creatures, you must look for them, as they are very shy, slipping away at the very sound of a human footstep, and having a wonderful power of packing themselves away into crevices which seem scarcely able to conceal an animal of half their size.

As for the common Grass Snake, it can at once be known by its slender head, its slightly speckled body, and the patch of yellow at either side of the base of the head. You may catch it without fear, as it has no poison-fangs, and its only weapon is an abominable odour which, like the skunk, it has the power of emitting when alarmed. However, if kindly treated it soon becomes tame, and will allow itself to be handled without making use of its sole means of defence. Its natural food is the frog, and its mode of eating its prey is most peculiar, and worthy of being watched.

When there is a bare spot among the heath, especially if a few hillocks should be scattered about, look out for the Viper, which has a way of coiling itself upon the top of a hillock, enjoying the sunbeams, and so har-

monizing with surrounding objects that it may easily be passed without detection.

No one who has ever seen a viper can mistake it for any other snake. It varies greatly in colour, from grey to various tints of yellow and brown, sometimes being nearly black. But its head is always short and wide at the base, and along the spine there runs a chain of squared black spots arranged in zigzag fashion.

Do not kill it. The viper never bites unless attacked, and even then will suffer much provocation before using its fangs. Moreover, it is a distinctly beneficial animal to the agriculturist, its principal food consisting of field-mice. Like the weasels, hawks, and owls, it is one of the means for preserving the balance of nature, and when farmers complain of a plague of mice, they have mostly themselves to blame for killing off the very birds and beasts which would have kept these plagues in check.

The activity of the viper is marvellous, and when closely pressed the reptile darts this way and that, twists and turns with such lightning-like rapidity, that the eye can scarcely follow its movements, and seems to present its armed head in every direction at once.

During the visit to Cannock Chase we came on a fine specimen of the brown variety of viper. As one of the members of the excursion wanted a living viper, we hunted it for some time with the intention of tiring it out. The result was that the viper tired us out, and it was not until some twenty minutes had elapsed that the head master of the school succeeded in getting the point of his stick under it and dexterously tossing it into a butterfly net which was held ready to receive it.

A string was then tied round the net above the captive, and the viper was thus borne off in triumph. Once caught, the reptile made no resistance, but curled itself up in the net and did not even attempt to escape.

If you should happen to kill a viper be sure to dissect its head. You will want nothing but a penknife, though the dissection will be helped by a pair of common nail-scissors. Open the side of the head, find the poison-reservoir, and trace the channel which communicates with the base of the hollow fang. Also note that as the fangs are merely connected with the gums, and not lodged in the jaw-bone, they are liable to be pulled out of the jaw when the prey struggles violently after being bitten. Subsidiary fangs

are therefore formed in the mouth, each being smaller than its predecessor, so that the last looks more like a tiny point of horn than a fang.

Near the spot where we caught the viper, we came on that very rare snake, the Coronella. It is venomous, but not nearly so poisonous as the viper. A few days before my visit, one of the boys had been bitten by a snake, but had suffered so little from its bite that I doubted whether it could have been a viper. The boys had killed the snake, and, wanting to "mak' siccar," they had pounded it to pieces. After much trouble, the remains were found, and by a fragment of skin which escaped destruction, I was able to identify it as the coronella.

Sit down by one of the hillocks, taking care not to throw your shadow on it, and watch its surface. Suddenly there appears on the hillock a brown lizard with a long, slender tail. How it came there you did not see, for it appeared as mysteriously as a vision of the night. Move but a hand, and it has gone as mysteriously as it came. This is the common Sand-Lizard, which has visited the sunny hillock for the sake of catching the flies that rest upon it.

Remain perfectly motionless, and the lizard will again appear, exhibiting well the peculiar reptilian characteristic of absolute immobility alternating with lightning-like rapidity of movement.

If you want to catch it and take it home, it will be useless to snatch at it, as the lizard is quicker than the human hand. But the reptile does not notice a slow and very gradual movement, and of this peculiarity you can take advantage. Still taking care not to throw a shadow on it, bring your hand very slowly over the reptile until you nearly touch it, and then swiftly seize it. Take care that you do not grasp it too tightly, or it will shake off its tail, and thereby spoil its beauty. True, a new tail will grow in course of time, but it is always short and stumpy, and does not equal the original tail in beauty.

Should you wish to keep the creature alive, you will be troubled in procuring a sufficiency of insect food. The lizard seems to prefer flies to any other food, but it can very well be kept on meal-worms, which have the advantage of renewing their own supply.

This being the time of year most favoured by reptiles, look out for the Blind-worm, or Slow-worm, as it is sometimes called. No other reptile can be mistaken for it, the peculiar silvery lustre of its scales and its small head being sufficient to distinguish it.

Why it should be called the blind-worm I cannot imagine, as its eyes, though small, are peculiarly bright and conspicuous. Slow it certainly is, and when seen, it can be captured without difficulty.

In spite of popular prejudice, the blind-worm is perfectly harmless, and can be handled without danger. It is not even a snake, but is only a legless lizard, as may be seen by looking at its tongue, which it incessantly projects from its mouth. The tongues of all snakes are double, with rounded slender forks, whereas the tongue of the blind-worm is flat, short, and only notched at the extremity.

This pretty reptile is easily tamed, and soon comes to know its owner if kindly treated. To the gardener it is an unmixed benefit, as it feeds almost entirely on the white slug, which does such damage to flowers and garden herbs. When seizing its prey, it mostly grasps it by the side, and, by a succession of bites, contrives to persuade the slippery morsel down its throat. The young of the blind-worm are very pretty little beings, but really look at first sight as if they were small vipers, so large are their heads, and so bold is a black line along their silvery backs.

Wherever we turn, eye and ear are feasted by the rich repast which Nature now unfolds for us. Here from this sunny slope what a magnificent expanse of meadow lands, river windings, and summer woods stretches out in front. But let us hasten on, and resume our post by the sunny hillock, to watch the winged insects that visit it. We shall soon see some swift-winged, fly-like insects, which swoop upon the hillock, suddenly change from blue to green as they alight, snatch up a fly and take to wing with their prey, again changing to blue as they rise into the air. These are the wonderful Tiger Beetles (*Cicindela*), which rightly stand at the head of the insect race.

They doubly deserve their name, being more tigerish than the tiger itself, inasmuch as the tiger has no wings wherewith to hurl itself through the air upon its prey. Perhaps the name of "Dragon Beetles" would be more appropriate.

Throughout the whole of their lives these are most interesting beings, and those who will use their eyes may observe them through the whole summer. At the beginning of summer, few, if any, of the beetles themselves will be visible, but near or on the very sand-hillocks which we are at present investigating, the singular larvæ or grubs may be dis-

covered. They are not easily seen, for they live in small perpendicular burrows, about as large in diameter as ordinary worm-holes, and being often passed over as being simple worm-holes.

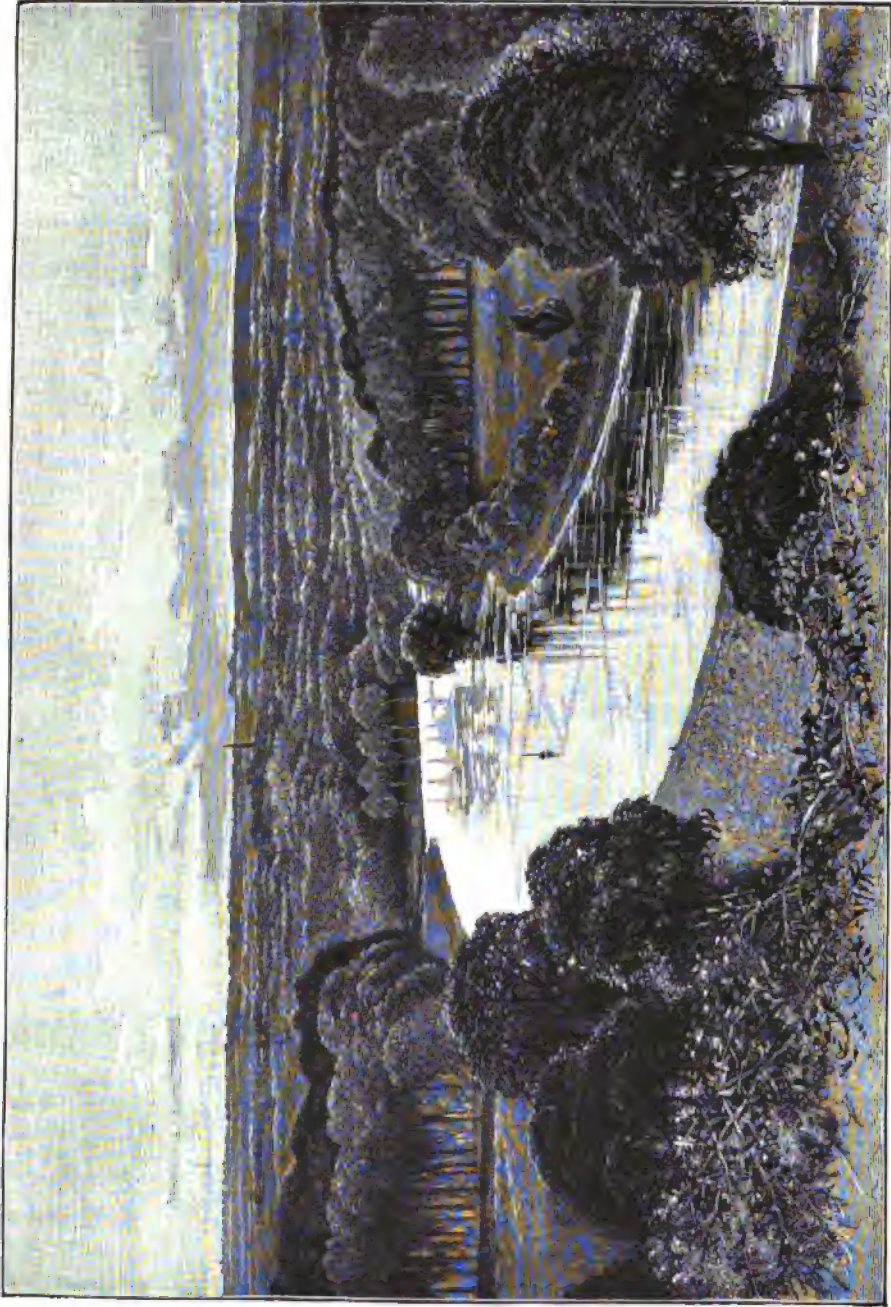
Each of these is inhabited by a single larva, which, though fierce enough in the capture of prey, is extremely shy and wary, and at the least concussion of the ground will drop to the bottom of its retreat. Observe the golden rule of practical naturalists, and remain absolutely still, keeping a watchful eye on the burrows, several of which will probably be within sight. Presently a pair of long, curved jaws, shaped like sickle-blades, and attached to a large, rounded head, will emerge from the hole, will spread themselves widely, and then be motionless, lying almost parallel with the ground, from which they are hardly distinguishable.

Presently some insect, mostly an ant, comes between the spread jaws, which instantly close upon the victim and disappear into the recesses of the burrow. How does the larva hold itself suspended in the burrow while waiting for prey? Not by means of the jaws, as they are needed for the capture of active insects. Dig up the burrow, first pushing a twig or grass-stem into it so as to guide the knife, and at the bottom will be found the grub.

A glance at it will answer the question. The eighth "segment" or ring of the body is enormously enlarged on the upper portion, so as to give the creature a hump-backed look, and upon this hump are a pair of short and stout hooks. By means of these hooks the grub is enabled to climb up the burrow, and when it has reached the top to suspend itself, leaving the jaws free for the capture of prey. By withdrawing the hooks it can at once drop to the bottom of the burrow, carrying its prey with it.

As to the perfect insect, its beauty, when seen under a magnifying lens, is beyond all powers of description. It looks as if it were covered with the most brilliant gems set in a golden framework, while, when the wings are spread, the upper surface of the body is of a shining metallic blue. Not only is it beautiful to the eye, but it is grateful to the nostrils, exhaling a perfume much resembling that of sweet-briar.

As most of our insects and flowers are at their best in the summer, and it is manifestly impossible even to enumerate them, I have therefore chosen one typical insect; and for the flowers must refer the reader to any trustworthy handbook which treats of that subject.



IN SUMMER WOODS.

THE WIFE'S LOVER.

I HAVE a lover, I. 'Tis long indeed
Since from my husband's lips sweet praises came,
Since all my pains have earned one small thanks' meed,
Or one poor fault of mine gone free from blame :
But then my lover ! All I do is best ;
No plan, no deed, but makes him new surprise
That I should be so skilled, so kind, so wise ;
Whether I work or sport or sit at rest,
That way I am dearest, he most proud of me—
Only that sometimes he will take a spite
At some light task he deems for me not light,
And, gently tyrannous, have me let it be.
Well, he forgets : we have been wed so long :
But in my heart I have him, who but he ?
My lover in whose eyes I did no wrong.

I am not lonely quite though day by day,
Evening by evening, I am thus alone,
My lover never has quite gone away
Who talked with me—ah, in how dear a tone !
Who looked at me whene'er he spoke or I,
And when he looked 'twas softly : not a word,
However light, I spoke him fell unheard ;
Even he'd speak for sake of my reply.
Ah, I remember, though to him 'tis nought,
How in the earlier years he could not find,
With me not near, a pleasure to his mind ;
How, hurrying home, from room to room he sought
For me, me sole, me he could never spare,
Me whom he needed for his every thought,
Whom his heart needed as his life the air.

A star may long have perished, yet its beam,
Reaching our world, shine and exist to us :
Our happiness, however spent it seem,
Exists to me, sending its brightness thus.
'Twill last, I think, for all my life-time yet
And keep me from the darkness I might know
If in this world there were no long ago,
If, being his wife, I could like him forget.
I might be wearier (life's a drowsy round),
I might be lonelier, might shed foolish tears,
But for the love, the lover, of far years,
But that some trifling thing, a scent, a sound,
A gift he gave me then, a book we read,
Brings all that *was* anew, and I have found,
Though he forgets, the lover whom I wed.

He will remember when it is good-bye,
 His hand that tenderly will hold mine fast
 Will be again my lover's while I die ;
 And afterwards when he recalls the past
 I know 'twill be as though through all our life
 I had been what I used to be to him,
 As though our sunshine never had grown dim
 And I had been his love as well as wife
 Always. He'll think 'twas always ; he'll, I gone,
 Forget I wearied him and pleased him ill,
 Forget, not the old love, but this long chill.
 Reading, through tears, my name upon my stone,
 He'll think he misses me, as though I had been
 Someone he always needed, prized, now, still.
 'Twas once, and he'll forget the while between.

I have not lost my lover ; no, not lost ;
 No more than lilies have been lost whose root
 Is in the earth while the dead leaves are tost
 On chilly gusts and autumn is afoot :
 Within the root there live the bud and leaf,
 And in one's heart of memory the flowers
 Live on that were abloom in happy hours.
 I have my lover ; I make little grief ;
 I have my lover, him who took my youth,
 And kept it very happy some years long ;
 But youth has waned : yet in my heart too strong,
 For I desire youth's happiness, in sooth,
 Of being loved and praised, and that's gone by.
 Well, I am merry at the true, true, truth :
 Not lonely, I ! I have a lover, I !

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.

A MEMORY OF VERONA.

By WILLIAM SHARP.

FROM an American friend I had received
 such a solemn warning anent certain
 disillusionment at *Verona la Degna*, Verona
 the worshipful, that I almost dreaded my
 arrival in a town which, after Rome and
 Venice, was the Italian city that had most
 haunted my imagination ere I set foot in
 Italy at all. Disenchantment is a harsh-
 voiced, ill-favoured siren, who lurks every-
 where for the unwary pilgrim, even in *Italia*
Bella, amid the tumult of Naples as in the
 desolation of Ostia, amid the byways of
 Fiesole as well as among the grandeurs of
 Volterra. She may be snubbed and ousted,

siren though she be, but only by a deter-
 mination to be on guard against her abrupt
 appearances, and to forestall her mocking
 comments by a foreview of reasonable pro-
 babilities. Still there *are* localities and town-
 lets where one may relax from all suspicion
 of disenchantment : not far from Rome itself,
 what exquisite haunts unspoiled of the Van-
 dal ; in the waterways beyond the dominion
 of the municipality of Venice what strange
 surprises, what secrets of pathos ; in the hill-
 country around Cadore what visions of almost
 the identical objects, a fantastic peak, a tor-
 rent like a leaping naiad, a stone-pine with

boles and branches solid against the glow in the west, upon which the eyes of Titian were wont lovingly to rest ! But to arrive in the city of one's dreams, and to be conscious of little save the clamour of the *facchini*, the rattle of the omnibus, and the fluent mendacities of the *patrone* at the hotel—this, surely, were something to be avoided.

"You'll find the whole thing as great a swindle as Miss Capulet's tomb," remarked my cynical friend, "or, for that matter, as her house, which would make a Chicago backstreet look seedy. What ? You want to see the place where Dante lived in exile—and the Amphitheatre ? Well, I don't pretend to care a button about Dante since I can't read him in the original, and—judging from quotations I've seen—I wouldn't if I could ; but as for that Amphitheatre—"

But I never heard what my friend's remonstrance amounted to, for, after an interval of expectant silence on my part, he settled Verona and its Amphitheatre (and a great deal more south of the Euganeans and north of Etna) by remarking, with almost savage emphasis, that if the lusty male babe which his wife had recently presented him should in due time develop any literary and artistic faculty he would train the youthful Jonathan to be the bitter foe of Ruskin, and watch with glee from afar off while the new "Harvard Undergraduate" spoke the plain and bitter truth about every ill-drained town, badly-kept hotel, draughty church, age-beared picture, and sham tomb, house, or temple in the peninsula.

Needless to say, my friend was not a representative American, though typical of no inconsiderable section of Anglo-Saxondom. But while I laughed at his denunciations, and even ventured upon a general refutation of his heresies, a chill came over me at the thought that Verona might indeed prove to be what my companion called "another Dead-Sea-Fruiter." In most circumstances to have entertained such a fear in actual trepidation would have been hypersensitive, but the lover of Italy will understand and sympathise when he learns that Verona, if thither I went, was to be the last place of my sojourn in Italy ; and that, too, at the end of my first journey to that country, when to leave with an unfortunate impression would be almost as disenchanting a farewell as that of Hippolyte Le Patourel when he stroked, at parting, the tresses of his newly-won Anastasie, the unworldly, and found the *poudre d'or* come thickly off with his touch.

It was, therefore, with quick pleasure that

I received, while at Padua, a letter from an artist-friend, in which occurred the following enticing suggestion : "You say you fear disillusionment at *La Degna*, but you need entertain no such apprehension. I could vouch for your being more charmed by it than by any town west of the lagoons or outside your beloved Umbria. But do not come by train, and endure the horrors of arrival at our villainous station. You say you will leave Vicenza on Wednesday ? Well, book your baggage through, but yourself get down at Campalto, a small station near Verona ; there I shall meet you, and conduct you to my present diggings near Sant' Ambrogio, and not far from Gargagnano, a glorious spot where I am painting, and where is situated the villa in which Dante is reputed to have composed his 'Purgatorio.' The moon is at the full this week, and I'll walk into Verona with you, settle you at the 'Torre di Londra' or the 'Aquila Nera,' and leave you in a spot where, if you venture to say you are disenchanted, I shall be your foe for ever after."

In accordance with my friend's very welcome instructions I duly alighted, shortly after sundown, at Campalto. A short walk in the neighbourhood of picturesque scenery brought us to some high quarries which, in the waning light, had a peculiarly grandiose aspect. A few late swallows were darting backward and forward, and the bats were so numerous that the ephemere must have been having a bad time of it. Somewhere, not far away, a curious flute-like hooting betokened the presence of one of those small owls akin to, but not identical with, the Tuscan *aziola*, which Shelley loved to hear ; and, from the hollows in the quarry, dark with shadow, came intermittently a blithe echo of the song, lessening as the singer passed into the distance, of a labourer or peasant, '*lla 'talya ! oh, Italia-a-a ! oh, Bell-la, Bell-bell-la !*

Supper over, and the edge taken off our news and chit-chat, we strolled forth, passed through an old garden now covered with weed and trailing ivy, entered a small narrow ravine, and emerged near a clump of olives, grey and gnarled with centuries of growth, and almost phosphorescent with innumerable fireflies intricately threading their maze through and under the branches. Beyond these rose the walls of an apparently uninhabited house, and as I looked curiously at it my companion muttered the opening lines of the "Purgatorio," and then I knew that there Dante had brooded, and dreamed,



Statue over the Tomb of Can Grande della Scala.

and dipped his pen in the ichor known only to the immortals.

"Silence is sweeter than the sweetest sound," and so I found it then: and we walked on wordless. But erewhile stronger and more scintillating lights than those of the fireflies, which often were of emerald hue and, when red, paler than those of Florence and the south, caught the wandering eyes, and then, too, there became audible a medley of distant sounds, scarcely recognisable till the shriek of a steam-engine in the distance removed all doubt.

A little later we heard the *swish-swish* of water, and from the parapet of the bridge I descried the Adige, that swift and most po-

etic of north Italian rivers. Still a little later and we emerged upon the Via di Porta Nuova, crossed the railway, passed underneath the arch at the New Gate, and were in Verona.

As we walked up the Corso Vittorio Emanuele my friend exclaimed, "See, there's the moon rising behind that old palace. We must go and see the Ponte Vecchio in this aspect before we do anything else. But you're not to see everything to-night, not even the amphitheatre, for I have another plan for you. So come down this narrow street, which will enable us to get into the Via Colomba without entering the Piazza di Brà, as the older Veronese still call the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele." Ten minutes later we had reached the end of the Via Colomba, crossed the wide junction of the Strada di Porta Stuppa and the Corso Cavour, and

found ourselves in full view of a scene as lovely as it was impressive.

Before us swept the Adige in swift flow, black when beneath shadowed walls, but elsewhere agleam with lamps, the lanterns in passing market-skiffs, and the lights from the high buildings on the upper slope; with, at one reach, a broad band of moving amber marked with serpentine convolutions of the most lustrous gold—for here the moonlight fell uninterrupted by fortress, house, or cypress-grove. The Ponte del Castello, the picturesque old bridge, with its unequal arches, turreted and battlemented in mediæval fashion, connected the two banks, and led on that beyond us to the splendid pile of

the ancient castle, now known as the Arsenal rather than as the Castel Vecchio, though it was the old palace-fortress of the Scaligers, those Martinos and Can Grandes who were to Verona what the Medicis were to Florence or the House of Este to Ferrara. The castle was erected by the second Can Grande, about the middle of the fourteenth century, with a view rather to the easier subjection of Verona, when necessary, than for æsthetic reasons or the pleasures of isolation. Nearly five centuries later the Austrians made it into a fortress, and destroyed something of its beauty in adding to its military value; and now, as the arsenal of one of the chief cities of united Italy, it is likely to play an important part in the next war. Almost before I realised where I was I found myself in a fruit-merchant's boat and being rapidly poled up-stream round the great bend which the town takes eastward; and while still fascinated by the gleaming river and all the endless beauty of the constantly varying pageant, I was bidden by my companion to leap ashore, and told that we were at the landing-place at the Porta di San Pietro. Beyond it the ground, covered with houses white in the moonshine, rose towards the huge fortified barracks which constitute the most striking feature in Verona. Here it was (upon this site, rather, for the ancient remains no longer exist) that in far-back days the great Ostrogoth Theodoric, known to his countrymen as Dietrich of Bern, built his splendid palace, with lofty Gothic towers, whence he could look towards the Alps on the one hand, back towards Torcello and the lagoons, and southward down the valley of the Adige beyond Mantua and the lowlands of Parma. Gian' Galeazzo Visconti practically destroyed the Gothic stronghold and built his own castello upon it, though for a long time it continued to be semi-Gothic in style. But in less than ten years from Galeazzo's "folly" Verona was lost to the Viscontis and passed under the dominion of the Venetians; and of course the picturesque old place saw many vicissitudes thereafter till it was blown up by the French in 1801. Then the Austrians rebuilt and the Italians added, and now the Castello di San Pietro is one of the first fortresses of its kind in Europe. In Verona, indeed, there is as much to interest

the military man as in the fort-girdle of Paris or Metz itself.

To the back of us the upper portion of the Dome rose solemnly into the moonlit air; but my friend hurried me onward and down a narrow and very foul-odoured street, only to stop abruptly opposite an uninviting "public."

"If the fit is on you," I remarked sarcastically, "let us at least adjourn to some more reputable tavern than this."

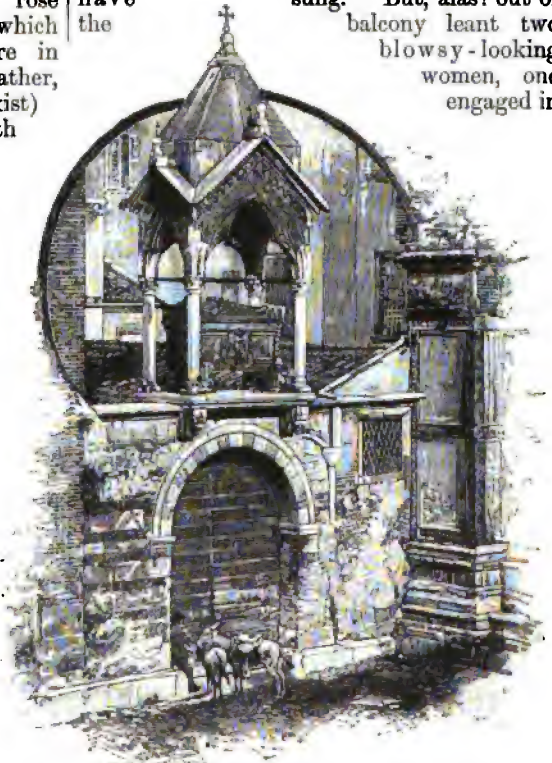
"Shut up. Do you see that balcony? You do? Well, that's Juliet's balcony, for this is the old palace of the Capulets."

Then, seeing my incredulity, he directed my attention to a tablet with this inscription, let into the wall:—

QUESTE FURONO LE CASE
DEI CAPULETI
ONDE USCÌ LA GIULIETTA
PER CUI
TANTO PIANSERO I CUORI GENTILI
E I POETI CANTARONO.

Which may broadly be translated as: "In this mansion of the Capulets dwelt Juliet, for whom so many gentle hearts have suffered, and whose fate so many poets have sung." But, alas! out of the

balcony leant two blowsy-looking women, one engaged in



Tomb of Castelbarco.

chucking forth discarded celery-stalks into the street, the other in yelling with excruciating shrillness to an ill-favoured child in the gutter.

So this was Juliet's balcony! Juliet's house! I cursed Mr. Irving and the Lyceum, and then turned upon my companion, who, to do him justice, felt or pretended to feel remorseful.

"So you have dragged me round the town in order to give me a supremely delightful impression of Verona?"

"Upon my soul, old fellow, I couldn't resist the temptation. I never thought of it till a few minutes ago. But I can assure you that you have seen it to advantage; why, an hour or so later the moonlight will make this street lovely, and in sunshine it's positively sordid. Besides, it will act as a zest to your next experience. Come along."

Through one or two narrow streets, across a gay little piazza, and then we passed under the shadow of Sta. Anastasia, a fine thirteenth century Gothic church, which I afterwards found to be well worth a prolonged visit for its artistic thirteenth and fourteenth century treasures. To the left of the building, over a gateway, near the chapel of St. Peter Martyr, is the black marble sarcophagus (under a canopy of stone) of the famous Count Guglielmo da Castelbarco, the adviser of the Scaligers and a great benefactor to Verona. The beauty of its details is not adequately represented in the accompanying sketch, nor, indeed, are they so defined as to satisfy those who remember Mr. Ruskin's enthusiastic commendation when he alludes to it as the most perfect Gothic sepulchral monument in the world: "This pure and lovely monument, my most beloved throughout the length and breadth of all Italy; chief, as I think, among the sepulchral monuments of a land of mourning."

Immediately afterwards we turned into the handsome Via Sottoriva, and in five minutes found ourselves on the Ponte Umberto, which leads to the Isle of St. Thomas, midway in the Adige, to Verona what the Trastevere is to Rome. I almost fancied, too, that the people were more Veronese here than in the other parts of the city, and the streets and houses certainly had an air of greater antiquity. At last, having reached the mainland again, we came in due time to a shadow-haunted street, which we crossed. At an old doorway of iron my companion stopped, rang a bell, muttered something to the *custode*, and the next moment we were under the deeper shadow of a grove of ilexes,

and felt all about us the most exquisite interblending of all sweet odours.

"This is what I have brought you to; we are in the famous Giusti Garden, and hence you will see Verona as not one in a thousand see 'La Degna.'"

The extreme hushfulness, the semi-darkness, here illumined by moonlight, here by the slow, rhythmic movement of the fireflies, accentuated the sense of remoteness already afforded by the locality and by the closed iron gates. Through rose-hedged by-ways we passed, gradually mounting higher, now by some gravelled way and now by a grassy slope or precipitous ledge. Under an ilex, sombre in its black-green darkness, was a statue of Pan, mossed like a burn-boulder; a little further on were a Venus, the heroic figure of a young warrior, and an Apollo radiant with moonlight. Amidst a mass of acanthus was a Dancer, apparently treading upon roses, so dense were the blooms round and above the pedestal, and with uplifted arm beseeching to some blithe companion; but there in mingled shadow and mellow light he stood, frozen to an eternal expectation, silent but for ever eloquent. Then through more roses and lilies and flowers innumerable—in greater luxuriance than in any of the gardens of Florence itself—till we came upon the most wonderful cypresses I had ever seen. Black and motionless these ancient trees rose every here and there like spires. So ancient are they that one's imagination is thrilled by the thought of the many great souls who have wandered beneath them; by the thought of all that these cypresses have witnessed in their centuries of existence.* Past the first of the cypresses we went, and then, having mounted by a winding staircase, found ourselves on the old, half-ruinous terrace at the end of the garden.

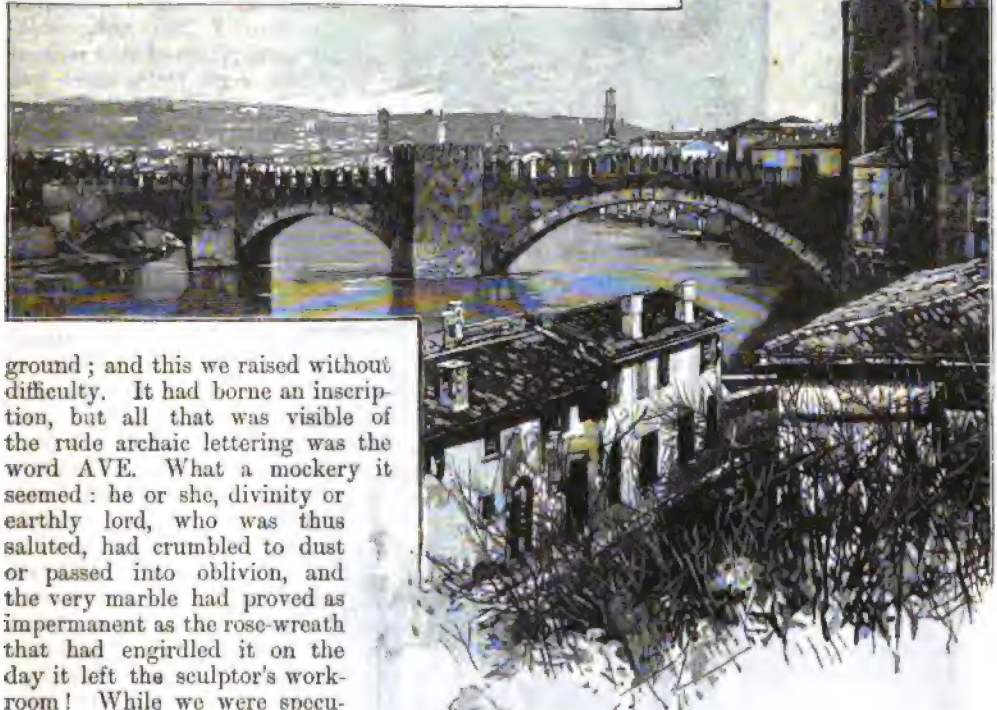
What a glorious view it was! All Verona lay below, like some gigantic saurian, with flashing gems for scales; the Adige moved white and glistening; and the outlines of distant mountains were almost as visible as in the light of day. There, away to the right, is the village which claims to be the birthplace of Virgil; and southward lies Mantua, where his genius effloresced like a fadeless flower. Far away, yonder, are those Euganean heights where Petrarch lies at rest; down in the hollow, close by, the locality where Dante walked broodingly

* Many of the ancient cypresses, more than two hundred in number, of the Giardino Giusto, are from one hundred to one hundred and twenty feet in height, and several are from four hundred and fifty to five hundred years old.

among cypress and ilex, and fashioned his Song of Purgatory. There, too, in that older Verona are the ways beloved of that keen singer Catullus, of the studious Pliny, of Cornelius Nepos, and Vitruvius, and of others whose names are writ in the golden book of history. But if the mind wander back from the days of old Rome and Theodor the Goth, from the mediæval strife of Viscontis and Can Grandes, the lords of Venice and the imperious Scaligers, to the great events of later days, one may look in every direction from Verona towards fields ominous of joy or woe for Italy: Novara, Montebello, Solferino, and eventful Villafraanca.

Still, as is natural, it is to the period of the Ghibellines that one naturally turns—the period of Dante and of Romeo and Juliet. Yes, I felt, as I stood there upon the Giusti

terrace in the wonderful moonlight, that to have omitted Verona would have been to have missed one of the most fascinating cities in Italy, to have lost a "last impression" far more treasurable than that obtained from Vicenza or Padua. As we—very reluctantly—descended from the heights, we passed a thicket of oleander and acanthus, fragrant as Hymettus, which was literally banked up against a dense growth of laurels and myrtles. I had stooped to look at the fallen statue of a Dryad when my companion pointed out to me a marble slab projecting from the



ground; and this we raised without difficulty. It had borne an inscription, but all that was visible of the rude archaic lettering was the word AVE. What a mockery it seemed: he or she, divinity or earthly lord, who was thus saluted, had crumbled to dust or passed into oblivion, and the very marble had proved as impermanent as the rose-wreath that had engirdled it on the day it left the sculptor's work-room! While we were speculating if it were an *Ave Cæsar*! a sudden electric throb broke the stillness, a

vibration seemed to pass through the myrtles, and then in a moment, in an indescribably rich and potent flood of song, welled forth the voice of a nightingale. Never have I heard such a passion of music. We could both descry the small dark object; indeed, so close were we that

we could see its down-drooped wings (the outer *pennæ* apparently rigid) tremulous with its ecstasy, and the throat quivering with its throbs and pulsations. We stood entranced, and both started when one of us inadvertently dropped a walking-cane, fearful that the song would cease; but though

Ponte del Castello.

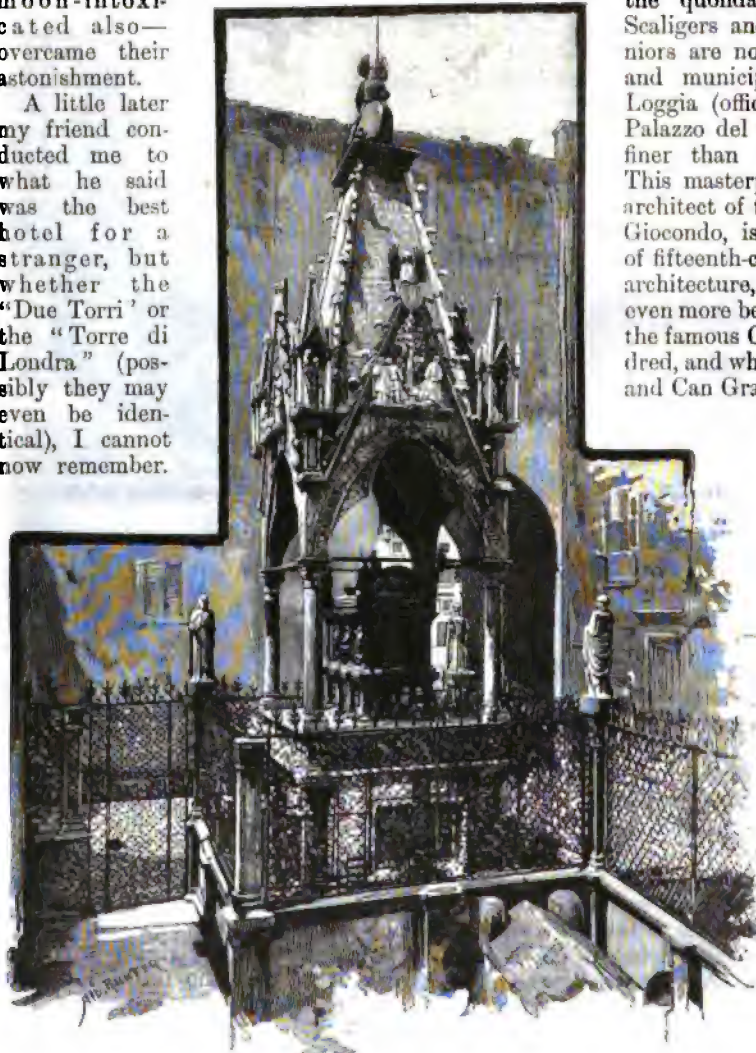
the nightingale must have not only heard but seen us, it seemed oblivious of our presence, and sang on so passionately, almost so deliriously, that we thought its little heart would burst. All the low twittering and flute-like cries which had been previously audible had ceased; for what bird could have ventured against that peerless voice? As suddenly as it commenced, the ecstasy ended: there was a low thrilling cry, a faint rustle of wings among the myrtle-blossoms, and the lover had joined his mate. It was not till the garden gate opened for us again that we heard the voicing of the critics and silenced chatterers, as blackbird, thrush, and finch—moon-intoxicated also—overcame their astonishment.

A little later my friend conducted me to what he said was the best hotel for a stranger, but whether the "Due Torri" or the "Torre di Londra" (possibly they may even be identical), I cannot now remember.

I may add that the accommodation was very indifferent, the cooking still more so, and the charges higher than at the chief inns in most North Italian towns; but on the other hand the "Torre di Londra" seems to be unquestionably superior to either the "Aquila Nera" or the "Colomba d'Oro," which are said to be mainly patronised by Italian commercial travellers.

Next morning I sallied forth alone, and after a stroll along a portion of the Corso Cavour, the chief street of Verona, turned down a narrow arcaded *strada*, and found myself in the Piazza dei Signori. Here the Verona of mediæval days still exists to a great extent, though the quondam palaces of the Scaligers and other potent seigniors are now adapted to legal and municipal purposes. The Loggia (officially known as the Palazzo del Consiglio) was even finer than I had anticipated. This masterpiece of that master-architect of the Renaissance, Fra Giocondo, is a superb example of fifteenth-century North Italian architecture, and must have been even more beautiful in the days of the famous Council of Five Hundred, and when Martino, Alberto, and Can Grande della Scala held

court within its walls. In the middle stands the statue of Dante, the sympathetic and very able work of Zannoni, erected some four-and-twenty years ago to commemorate anew the exile of the great poet, and the fact of his having sought and found shelter in Verona. It was but a step from the Loggia to the Church of Santa Maria Antica, in the court of which are to be seen one of the city's



Tomb of Mastino II.

chief "sights," the Tombs of the Scaligers. These lords of Verona were of humble origin, and obtained their name of *Scaligeri* from having originally been dealers in ladders (*scala*, "a ladder or stair"); but once that one of their family reached the honour of election to the post of Podesta, their fortunate star rose with startling rapidity. Podesta Martino's son, Alberto, made himself an independent prince, and the Scaligeri became great lords, and Della Scala one of the noble names of Italy. The greatest of the family was that Can Grande who offered asylum to Dante, who in return for four years' hospitality has conferred upon his host an immortality of renown. The tomb which is nearest to the Piazza dei Signori is that of Mastino II., a rich and beautiful example of monumental sculpture. All the sarcophagi have a close artistic kinship, though individually very different in details; as so eminent an architectural authority as Mr. Street says of them, "they are of singular interest, not only for the excessive beauty of the group of marble and stone which, in the busiest highway of the city, among tall houses and crowds of people, has made their churchyard, for some five hundred years, the central point of architectural interest, but because they give us dated examples of the best pointed work during nearly the whole time of its prevalence in Verona." The Can Martino here immortalised was the seventh of the ruling Della Scalas, and the least worthy, although in the extent of his dominion the most potent of his race. As the head of the Guelphic league against the Ghibellines, he

lost possession after possession; and with his death the fortunes of the Scaligers definitely waned. The largest of the sarcophagi is that raised by the sculptor Bonino da Campiglione during the lifetime of the Scaliger whom it commemorates, the unscrupulous Can Signorio, a tomb that is certainly a marvel of magnificence, but is to some extent spoiled by excess of elaborate detail and incidental ornamentation. Among the others the two of most interest to the ordinary visitor are those of Bartolomeo (in whose reign lived the Montecchi and Capelletti, whom Shakespeare has familiarised to us as the Capulets and Montagues, the kindred of Romeo and Juliet), and of Can Grande, the magnificent, whose monument, a heroic equestrian figure, is placed above the portal of Sta. Maria Antica. The tomb of Can Grande itself rests upon mastiffs, who support the ladder-shield of the Scaligeri.



In Sta. Maria in Organo.

There is something grandiose and impressive in the way these lordly monuments seem to dominate Verona, as though the town were held in immortal fee by those who, whatever their faults, loved and wrought for the welfare of the beautiful old Gothic, ancient Roman, prehistoric city on the Adige.

The interior of Sta. Maria Antica is also well worth a visit, though it is not to be confused (as some writers have inadvertently done) with Sta. Maria in Organo, which is on the left bank of the Adige. The latter was built upon an ancient site known as the *Organum*—hence its title; and is famous on account of its lovely choir and sacristy woodwork by the Olivetan master, Fra Giovanni,

and an extremely beautiful candelabrum in walnut, though the latter is probably the work of a later artist than the renowned Giovanni. Among the pictorial attractions are a signed work in *tempera* by Morone, a fine example of Bonifazio, a picture of St. Francesca Romana by Guercino, and in the beautiful sacristy some noble frescoes by Francesco Morone, the finest work of this painter. Among other churches besides those I have named, and the Cathedral and San Zeno, a visit to that of San Giorgio should not be omitted, on account of a masterpiece by Paolo Veronese there to be seen, while devout Catholics would take particular pleasure in walking through the aisles of San Ziro, the most ancient church in the city; so old that it is supposed to have been built by King Berengarius, the Carolingian, and is reputed to be that where the first mass in Verona was said.

It was but a few steps from the Tombs of the Scaligers to the most picturesque and delightful locality in Verona, the busy, gay, thoroughly Italian Piazza del' Erbe—not only the most picturesque in the city, indeed, but superior in this special characteristic to that of any other North Italian town, save the fruit-market of Rome. A corner of it is visible in the accompanying sketch, which to a certain extent conveys some suggestion of the brilliant colouring that at once strikes the eye. Above, an intensely blue sky; around the Piazza numerous palaces and houses with the remains of old frescoes visible, here so faint as to look like natural tinting, there still preserving Europa and her bovine rape, Venus and her ocean-company, or the gods banqueting in Olympus; here dull and inchoate, there vivid in the sunlight, though mayhap but a white limb gleam or a curved urn supplicate. On one house is Liberale's fresco, "God the Father,



Piazza del' Erbe.

Adam, and Eve." There the huge umbrellas of the country-folk and the fruit-sellers, brilliant green or luridly scarlet, and the enormous baskets of fruit and flowers and vegetables, so plentiful as to make one take it for granted that the vegetarian could here live in luxury for "quarter of a centesimo"—"the change of a farthing," as we should say. As for the noise, surely nothing in Venice could surpass it. One would have to go to the Neapolitan markets to hear its like. With what appalling shrillness yon good-wife recommends her *fragole, uva, limoni*; with what stentorian voice this vendor of oranges proclaims their superlative worth! Everybody

shouts at once, apparently indifferent to audience, scales clash, merchandise falls with a clatter, dogs bark, donkeys bray, and below all there is a kind of whispering sound of laughter and the indescribable *susurrus* of actively moving human beings.

The Piazza del' Erbe is the modern version of the ancient Forum, and has historical interest of the most varied kind. In the middle of it is an ancient, or rather in part ancient, fountain, dating from the reign of King Berengarius, in the tenth century; and near the frescoed Casa Mazzanti, is the Torre del' Municipio, erected by Can Grande, who, furthermore, placed in it, to the astonishment of his fellow-citizens, the first clock ever seen in that part of the world. At the further end of the square—that shown in the illustration herewith—is a lofty marble column, which has a curious appearance to strangers, though sacred in the eyes of the Veronese. But to explain this it is necessary to condemn the artist of the aforesaid illustration; for where on earth—or what is more to the point, in Verona—could he have discovered the winged lion of St. Mark, which he has placed a-top of the column? As he made his sketches on the spot it is only to be surmised that his artistic sense was so affronted by the blankness of the empty column that he replaced the long-since deposed lion. Of one thing we may be sure, namely, that he did not “complete” his sketch in the Piazza del' Erbe, for what patriotic Veronese but would not have arisen in his wrath and violently assaulted the traitor-Tedesco who dared so to suggest the possible sway, or at least the past dominion, over Verona of a rival power! For this column was raised by the Venetians in 1524, to support the lion of St. Mark, the indication of the supremacy of the Maritime Republic; nor was it till 1799 that the latter, vanquished by the French, lost their nominal suzerainty, and that, to the patriotic joy of the Veronese, Leo was dragged down from his station and “sent packing.” No wonder, therefore, that the citizens prefer their fine column all untenanted; though if there were to arise another Can Grande with his mastiff, or other Scaliger with his ladder, no doubt they would soon permit the insignia of the ancient house to usurp the vacant summit. Meanwhile, artists who are offended by the latter's bareness should keep to the other side of the square.

To the lover of English history this picturesque Piazza del' Erbe has other interest than that stimulated by memories of that

Shakespearean play which is always in one's mind when one is in Verona—as the thought of Virgil underlies all one's reflections at Mantua, or of Shelley by the Spezzian shore. For here it is that Browning has placed the opening scene of *Sordello*:

“ . . . That autumn eve was stilled;
A last remains of sunset dimly burned
O'er the far forests, like a torch-flame turned
By the wind back upon its bearer's hand
In one long flare of crimson; as a brand
The woods beneath lay black. A single eye
From all Verona cared for the soft sky;
But, gathering in its ancient market-place,
Talked group with restless group; and not a face
But wrath made livid, for among them were
Death's staunch purveyors, such as have in care
To feast him.”

And here, too, is the *locale* of one of the noblest of Rossetti's poems, “Dante at Verona;” and his are the lines which haunted me most when I strolled about the city, or in the courts of the old Scaliger palaces. It was so easy to fancy that there, too, passed, with bent head, the solemn figure of the poet whom mothers pointed out to their awe-struck children as “the man who had been in hell.”

“ At Can la Scala's court, no doubt,
Due reverence did his steps attend;
The nabers on his path would bend
At ingoing as at going out;
The penman waited on his call
At council-board, the grooms in hall,

“ And pages hushed their laughter down,
And gay squires stilled the merry stir,
When he passed up the dais-chamber
With set brows lordlier than a frown;
And tire-maids hidden among these
Drew close their loosened bodices.

“ And the court-poets (he, forsooth,
A whole world's poet strayed to court!)
Had for his scorn their hate's retort.
He'd meet them flushed with easy youth,
Hot on their errands. Like noon-dies
They vexed him in the ears and eyes.

“ Fame tells us that Verona's court
Was a fair place. The feet might still
Wander for ever at their will
In many ways of sweet resort;
And still in many a heart around
The poet's name due honour found.

“ Watch we his steps. He comes upon
The women at their palm-playing.
The conduits round the garden sing
And meet in scoops of milk-white stone,
Where wearied damsels rest and hold
Their hands in the wet spurt of gold.”

It was close upon noon when, having traversed the Via Nuova, I emerged into the wide and glaring expanse of the huge Piazza Vittorio Emanuele. The heat was very considerable, and the strong scent of a mass of lilies at a vendor's stall, combined with the numerous malodorous smells from every quarter, made me long for shadow and silence. And just as I vaguely formulated my wish to myself I descried the huge girth

of the Veronese Coliseum rise into the hot air.

The immense Piazza Brà, as it is still commonly called in conversation, had become almost deserted; and so great was the illusion that it was not difficult to imagine one had stepped back centuries, and that the Verona of the Roman Cæsars had usurped the prosperous city of Rè Umberto.

The magnificent Amphitheatre is second in grandeur only to that of Rome, and is in some respects much more perfect. To me that day it seemed even more beautiful, and not all the eloquence of Verona's justly famed poet-historian, Scipione Maffei, seemed exaggerated. The reddish marble (all of which must have been brought on the flood of the Adige, from the distant quarries) gleamed like a gigantic rose of white flushed by the heat. Tier upon tier stood out in relief, sometimes all ashine, again dark in shadow; and from the lofty walls and ruined arches hung clusters of golden-rod and the beautiful grassy plumes of the plant known as maiden's love, while in and out of the hollow spaces the tireless swallows darted intermittently. Under an arch, in the corner, lay the torso of a Minerva or an Aphrodite, a goddess or spouse of an unknown Cæsar, and upon it, with wings out-

stretched, an enormous sulphur-butterfly. These yellow butterflies must have an especial fondness for Verona, and for the Coliseum in particular, for they were in such abundance that one might well have surmised them to be the spirits of the barbarian youths and maidens who had met death in the Amphitheatre returned, by a strange irony, to play in the sunshine above the unremembered dust and fallen greatness of those to whom their agonies had been an idle hour's amusement.

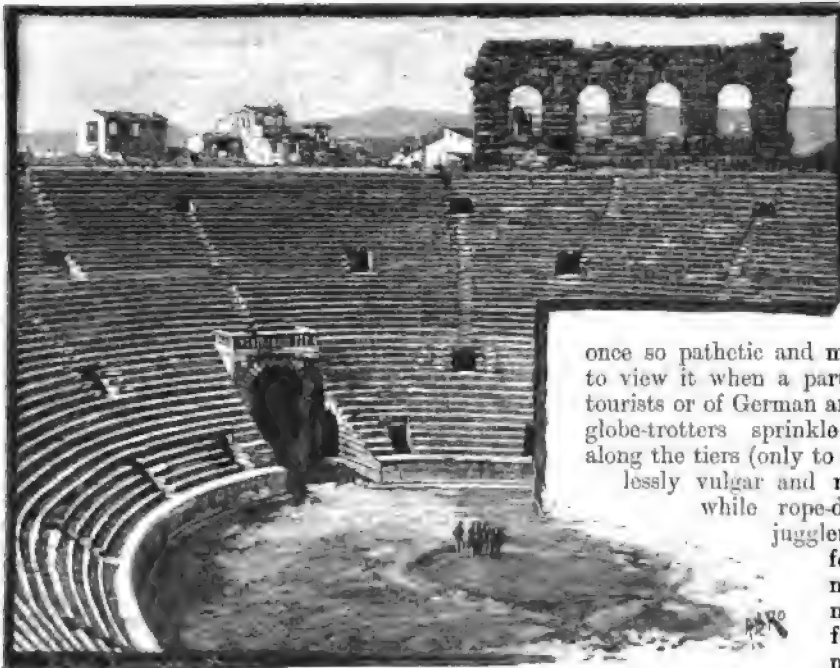
The Veronese Coliseum is rumoured to have been built by Trajan, but the leading authorities seem to be agreed upon the fact of its erection by Diocletian about A.D. 290. In the olden days it was able to contain more than forty thousand spectators, but though mimic displays of an extremely parochial kind do still take place within the ancient walls, there has not in recent years been any great concourse of people at one time. On the occasion of the Dante Sixth-Centenary Festival a proposal was mooted to the effect that either a gladiatorial show or a mediæval tournament should be ordained; but, to the chagrin of the Veronese, the project was overruled on the ground of the probability that the receipts would not counterbalance the in-

evitable immense outlay.

It is certainly better, in ordinary circumstances, to see the Amphitheatre in its solitude, at

once so pathetic and majestic, than to view it when a party of Cook's tourists or of German and American globe-trotters sprinkle themselves along the tiers (only to appear hopelessly vulgar and meaningless), while rope-dancers, and jugglers, and indif-

ferent horsemen, on still more indifferent steeds, make a trivial medley in the



The Amphitheatre.

arena beneath. According to Maffei's measurements, writes Stichler, the area of the Coliseum is 450 feet long, and 360 feet wide, and the forty-four rows of seats which rise up one above the other could alone accommodate forty thousand spectators. "The seats were divided by passages, which spread like rays from the centre of the arena to the topmost gallery, so that the crowd, which entered by no fewer than seventy arched doorways, could easily disperse itself over the enormous space. As a protection from sun and rain, a colossal awning of sail-cloth was spread over the spectators; and under its shelter the many-headed public could sit at its ease, listening breathlessly to the growl of the panther as it crouched beneath the raised foot of the elephant, or watching the sword of the gladiator as he gave his adversary the *coup de grâce*—*Habet! Habet!*"

But what need to chronicle the other chief sights of Verona? Every visitor is, gladly or perforce, taken to see the cathedral, and the still more beautiful church of San Zeno, Sta. Anastasia, and half a score of others; but are they and their contents not all detailed at full length in the books of Murray and Baedeker! Let whoso will remember—or go and see—all these and other treasures of the past, for himself, for not even shall I expatiate, however succinctly, upon the chief contents of the twelve galleries of the Pinacoteca. One luxury I must allow myself, however, and that is a grumble at the excessive number of very dubious attributions of pictures to famous artists, particularly those in the Bernasconi Collection (the first two galleries).

So well content was I to let Verona be the last place of my long sojourn in Italy that I stayed on day after day. The view from the Giusti Terrace, and, latterly for me, still more that from the summit of the Coliseum, compensated a thousandfold for the discomforts and inattention at the very unattractive "chief hotel," while every morning I felt that to leave without witnessing another sunset or another moonlit night in those unequalled gardens across the Adige, would be to affront my own "presiding deity," just then so benignly gracious.

At last the weather settled the question. One morning I awoke with the clashing of the green *jalousie* against the window-wall of my bed-room, and heard the wind and rain, with strange blasts of thunder, which had suddenly swept down upon us from the Alps.

XXX—28

When seated in the afternoon train from Verona, striving to catch a farewell glimpse of the beautiful old town through the blurred and streaming window, a stanza of "Dante at Verona" haunted me with such persistency as to obliterate



Cathedral. Side entrance.

for the time
all other im-
pressions.

"At such times,
Dante, thou
hast set
Thy forehead
to the painted
pane
Full oft, I
know; and if
the rain
Smote it outside,
her fingers
met
Thy brow; and
if the sun fell
there,
Her breath was
on thy face
and hair."

But now
the abiding
impressions
are not those
of that wet
and dreary
afternoon, but

of the high tiers of the Amphitheatre, with the sulphur-butterflies and the cluster of golden-rod moving across or impendent over the shadow-haunted hollows and sombre lightless spaces, and of that for ever unfinished *Ave*, on the ancient slab among the oleanders and myrtles wherefrom Prince Nightingale so marvellously entertained me on the night of my arrival.

Yes, I am *very* glad I did not spend only a few hours in Verona, and come away with "last impressions" of Juliet's rowdy street and tawdry abode, and of her even more atrociously disenchanting "tomb." My Chicago friend would then have had my full sympathy.

"DELTA."

By THE REV. W. W. TULLOCH, B.D.

DAVID MACBETH MOIR was born on the 5th of January, 1798, at Musselburgh, the second of four children. His father died when he was nineteen years of age; but his mother lived till within nine years of his own death, and had, therefore, the delight, so dear to a mother's heart, of sharing in the professional success and in the literary triumphs of her son.

Young Moir received an admirable education at the grammar school of his native town, and lived the free and joyous life of a healthy and vigorous lad. The pleasures of the play-hour must have been vividly enjoyed by him, and have imprinted themselves upon his memory, for in one of his essays he afterwards recalls them with delightfully graphic force.

When he was only thirteen years of age he became an apprentice to Dr. Stewart, a medical practitioner in Musselburgh, who had taken a fancy to the lad. He was bound for four years, as was at the time customary, on the understanding that after learning the actions and uses of drugs he was free to carry on his medical education at the Edinburgh University.

His first poetical piece of which we hear was written in his fifteenth year, and was in imitation of Pope's earlier verses. Shortly after this he got two short prose essays into *The Cheap Magazine*, a Haddington publication, and in after years he used to describe the "restless impatience"—many of us well know all that is included in the phrase!—with which he went into the street to await the arrival of the stage-coach by which the magazine was to come, and the subsequent rapture which he experienced when he "saw himself actually in print." Life brings many kinds of "rapture" to a healthy mind; but not many experiences so wondrously full of an almost holy joy, blended with a sense of humility and distrust of one's own powers, as does this. It constitutes a sacred moment, which is among the most precious remembrances of many who have since written much. Alas! as in regard to all other experiences, it only occurs once in life in quite the same way.

The last winter of his apprenticeship saw him duly entered as a medical student at Edinburgh. He remained there during the week, returning home on Saturday to spend Sunday, and was up again with the lark on

Monday to walk into the town to begin the week's studies. His brother tells us he lodged in a small room in Shakespeare Square. "In the evenings he was in the habit of attending Carfrae's saleroom, where the best part of his small weekly allowance of pocket-money was expended on books. I remember," adds his brother, "the pride with which every Saturday night he showed us his weekly purchases. His economy and contentedness were admirable, mental improvement being his great aim. Occasionally he indulged in a visit to the theatre to see the performances of Mrs. Siddons and Miss O'Neil, John Kemble and Edmund Kean, which made a very powerful impression on his mind."

His apprenticeship being over, he attended the medical classes regularly, and passed as surgeon in 1816, when he was only eighteen years of age. He had thought of being an army surgeon; but the battle of Waterloo had changed matters, and the idea was given up. He remained at home cultivating his literary tastes and taking an active part in the proceedings and debates of "The Musselburgh Forum," of which he was secretary. For his services in connection with this office he received a silver medal, suitably inscribed. His literary work issued in the anonymous publication of a small volume, entitled, "The Bombardment of Algiers, and other Poems," which, however, did not become known beyond the circle of his own friends.

Next year he became partner to Dr. Brown, at Musselburgh. This was the year in which his father died, and he was thus enabled to help his mother to keep the "pot boiling." "Many a time," says his brother Charles, "have I heard my mother, who was a woman of a strong mind, record with a tearful eye the struggle of that period, and the noble bearing of her son David, who carried her successfully through all her difficulties." But with all his work, he was bound to steal time for authorship, the desire for which was constantly asserting itself. "When the duties of the day were over," the same brother tells us, "and it was always nine or ten o'clock in the evening before he could count on that, after supper the candle was lighted in his bedroom and the work of the desk began. Having shared the same room with him for many years in my early life, the routine of those nights is as fresh in

my mind as if it had been but yesterday. With that tender care for others which was the distinguishing feature of his character, he used to persuade me to retire to rest; and many a time have I awoke when the night was far spent, and wondered to find him at his books and pen."

Many of the pieces which he then wrote found their way into *Constable's Edinburgh Magazine*, of which Mr. Thomas Pringle, author of the "Autumnal Excursion," whom he had got to know, was editor.

With all his work and study he got time for healthful exercise. He tells us he was more known among the *profanum vulgus* for his gymnastic proficiencies than for any mental capabilities, and "many could give evidence as to my prowess in leaping, running, swimming, and skating, who never dreamt that I 'penned a sonnet when I should engross.'" Of skating he seemed to be particularly fond. His verses bear traces of his love for it, and all other winter sports. The "powdery snow" recalled to him "a boyish skater mingling free, amid the merry maze." "His nerves all jangling feel, and he hears the tones of voices shrill and the ring of the slider's heel." Again he writes:

"The skater there, with motion nise
In semicircle and graceful wheel,
Chalks out upon the dark blue ice
His chart of voyage with his heel;
Now skimming underneath the boughs,
Amid the crowd now gliding lone,
Where down the rink the curler throws
With dexterous arm his booming stone."

In youth he was shy and bashful. "From eighteen to twenty-one I lived in such a state of nervous excitement that the very idea of encountering a strange face or making a call at a house where I was not thoroughly familiar, was a torture that called on me for an ejaculation to Heaven for support." Going about amongst people perhaps "blunted his sensibilities, but it gave him the benefit of more commonplace nerves." Thus early he found the advantage of mingling a life of reflection and study with the practical life of the world.

How hard he kept to his professional work, and how engrossing he found it, may be judged from the fact that between the years 1817 and 1828, when he took a run to Glasgow and Northumberland, he did not sleep one single night out of Musselburgh!

As every day found him on the rounds of duty, so, by-and-by, almost every month found him among the contributors to *Blackwood*. Sentimental stanzas, humorous squibs, and occasionally short essays, came alike fast and easily from his busy and facile pen.

Maginn got the credit of many of the humorous verses, in which he "hit the folly as it flew." Robert Chambers congratulates him on his success in this kind of writing. "Have you never observed," he writes to him, "that songs appear all the more acceptable to the popular mouth when they are a little daft-like? Honest Captain Grey always joins me in this idea. A kind of rant or 'drant,' *aut aliocumque nomine gaudeat*, often fixes itself on the public, when capital, sensible verses have no chance. Is it because we sing only (generally speaking) when we are in a frivolous, capersome humour, and don't care about what comes uppermost? If not this, hang me if I can tell what it is." His graver verses were usually signed Δ. Hence the name Delta by which he became known in the literary world and to thousands of people throughout the kingdom, especially to the younger generation, whose hearts are "open to all sympathies," whose glance invests "nature with an added charm," and who are peculiarly susceptible to writing in which nature is faithfully portrayed, and the many feelings which crowd their hearts find fit, appropriate, and musical expression—the pensive sadness which, in his own words, asks for

"A moment to ponder, a season to grieve,
The light of the moon, or the shadows of eve!"

But besides these sweet and tender pieces signed Delta, he was constantly pouring forth in *Blackwood*, which he and others have delighted to call old *Ebony*, "all manner of jocularities in prose and verse; familiar letters and rhyming epistles from O'Doherty; mock heroic specimens of translations from Horace; Christmas carols by the fancy contributors, Mullin and the rest; ironical imitations of living poets; Cockney love songs; puns and parodies, freaks and fantasies endless"—in fact, *jeux d'esprit* of all kinds.

He thus won many warm friends, who joyfully welcomed his company when he could spare a few hours in Edinburgh. Among these were Mr. William Blackwood, Professor Wilson, Thomas Aird, who subsequently wrote the Memoir attached to his "Poetical Works," the talented and whimsical, quaint and queer Dr. MacNish, author of the "Anatomy of Drunkenness," better known as "the Modern Pythagorean," for whom Moir was to perform the same office as Aird did for him. He was also on very intimate terms with John Galt, the novelist, whose life he was also to write. So friendly were Galt and Moir, and such was the confidence Galt placed in him, that when he had

to hurry off to America he left his story, "The Last of the Lairds," in Moir's hands to write the finishing chapters, and to introduce it to the world. This Delta did very successfully. The author did not see his completed work for some time afterwards, and when he did he "laughed heartily at the ingenious way in which his substitute had disposed of some of his characters."

Ere this a wonderful little book had appeared which showed that Moir was more than capable of working on the same lines as Galt. This was the "Autobiography of Mansie Waugh"—a work that has achieved a deserved and perhaps unexampled popularity among lowland Scots of all classes and conditions. It was commenced in *Blackwood* in 1824, and was continued for three years. So speedy and great was its popularity that Mr. Aird tells us he knew "districts where country clubs, waiting impatiently for the magazine, met monthly as soon as it was issued, and had Mansie read aloud by one of their members amidst explosions of congregated laughter." It was published as a whole in 1828, and not only in Scotland but in England and America it had a great success, and came to be looked upon, as it still is, as a "standard classic" of humour of a certain pawky and rare type. It is essentially Scotch, and yet few people can fail to catch the quaint and whimsical humour which pervades, or as we might say, saturates it, or fail to keep as one of their mental portraits, nay, intimate personal friends, the Dalkeith tailor, who is its hero. He is an "exquisite compound of conceit, cowardice, gossiping silliness, pawkiness, candour, kindly affections and good Christian principle, with no violent contrasts, no gross exaggerations; a unique hero at once ludicrous and loveable."

The very first chapter reveals the power of the writer. The description of Mansie's grandfather is delightfully real and is filled in with a very tender and loving touch. We still laugh at this amusing story of his Auntie Bell and the cow.

"Among her other ways of doing, grannie kept a cow, and sold the milk round about to the neighbours in a pitcher, whiles carried by my father, and whiles by my aunties, at the ransom of a halfpenny the mutchkin. Well, ye observe that the cow ran wild, and it was as clear as pease that she was with calf. Geordie Drouth, the horse doctor, could have made solemn affidavit on that head. So they waited on a better, waited on for the provie's calving, keeping it upon draff and oat strae in the byre, till one morning everything seemed in a fair way, and my Auntie Bell was set out to keep watch and ward. Some of her companions, howsoever, chancing to come by, took her out to the back of the house to have a game

at the pall all; and in the interim Donald Bogie, the butcher from Yetholm, came and left his little jackass in the byre, while he was selling about his crockery of cups and saucers and brown plates on the old one through the town in two creels. In the middle of Auntie Bell's game, she heard an unco noise in the byre, and knowing that she had neglected her charge, she ran round the gable and opened the door in a great hurry, when, seeing the beastie, she pulled it to again, and fleeing half out of breath into the kitchen cried, 'Come away, come away, mother, as fast as ye can. Eh, lyet the cow's cauffed, and it's a cuddie!'"

How delightfully comical, and yet how perfectly natural the picture of his uncle and the other members of the town council going to dine with a great lord in the neighbourhood, who had made a lot of money in the East Indies! It was with something like fear and trembling they approached the mansion, even though with the view of keeping up their "pecker" they had before starting swallowed a "sowd of toddy." Getting into the drawing-room, they did not feel very much more at ease. With the reflection of the looking-glasses, one of the baillies was so possessed within himself, that he tried to chair himself where chair was none, and landed not very softly on the carpet; while another of the deacons, a fat and dumpy man, as he was trying to make a bow, and throw out his leg behind, stamped on a favourite Newfoundland dog's tail, that "wakening out of its slumbers with a yell that made the roof ring, played drive against my uncle who was standing abaft and wheeled him like a butterfly, side foremost, against a table with a heap of flowers on it, when on trying to keep himself, he drove his head like a battering ram through a looking glass and bleached back on his hands and feet on the carpet."

The description of the dinner which ensues is most comical, and the fun of it culminates when along with the dessert there is handed round "three dishes of twisted black things, just like sticks of Gibraltar rock, but different in the colour."

"Baillie Bowie helped himself to a jargonelle and Deacon Purves to a wheen raisins; and my uncle, to show he was not frightened and knew what he was about, helped himself to one of the long black things which, without much ceremony, he shoved into his mouth and began to. Two or three more, seeing that my uncle was up to trap, followed his example, and chewed away like nine-year-olds. Instead of the curious looking black thing being as sweet as honey—for so they expected—they soon found that they had caught a Tartar, for it had a confounded bitter, tobacco taste. Manners, however, forbade them laying it down again, more especially as his lordship, like a man dumbfounded, was aye keeping his eye on them. So away they chewed, and better chewed and whammelled them round in their mouths,

first in one cheek and then in the other, taking now and then a mouthful of drink to wash the trash down, then chewing away again and syne another whammel from one cheek to the other, and syne another mouthful, while the whole time their eyes were staring out of their heads like mad, and the faces they made may be imagined but cannot be described. His lordship gave his eyes a rub as though he was dreaming, but no, there they were bodily chewing and whammeling and making faces."

They were eating his cigars!

One very amusing chapter relates Mansie's experiences as a volunteer, and another giving his first and last visit to a play—told with marvellous drollery—is inimitable.

Long may "Mansie Waugh" continue to charm Scotch folk all the world over, and may its readers lay to heart the admirable counsel Mansie gives in the following remarks to his wife: "The happiest man is he that can live quietly and soberly on the earnings of his industry, pays his day and way, works, not only to win the bread of life for his wife and weans, but because he kens that idle-set is sinful; keeps a pure heart towards God and man; and caring not for the fashion of this world, departs from it in the hope of going, through the merits of his Redeemer, to a better."

A year after "Mansie Waugh" appeared as a complete volume, Dr. Moir was married to Miss Catherine E. Bell, the youngest daughter of the senior partner of the well-known Leith firm, Bell, Rannie & Co., at Carham Church, Northumberland. She was born at Sydenham, in the parish of Ednam, where the poet Thomson was born, and the fact is alluded to in the lines "Thomson's Birthplace." The union was a pre-eminently happy one, though the young couple had early their share of affliction in the death of some of their infant children. Sad as these events were, it is to the poignancy of grief he thus suffered that we owe some of his strongest poems. He could not help letting the bitterness of his sorrow appear in his verses, and thus they have the touch of nature in them which makes the author kin to every sorrowful heart.

One of the little ones had called himself "Casa Wappy," hence the name of the verses in which he laments his death. Every one must feel how real his words are. Here there is no mere writing for the sake of writing, of which there is sometimes just a suspicion in some of Delta's verses. It is direct from the heart.

"Do what I may, go where I will,
Thou meet'st at my sight;
There dost thou glide before us still—
A form of light!

I feel thy breath upon my cheek,
I see thee smile, I hear thee speak,
Till oh! my heart is like to break,
Casa Wappy.

"And though, perchance, a smile may gleam
Of casual mirth,
It doth not own, whate'er may seem,
An inward birth;
We miss thy small step on the stair;
We miss thee at thine evening prayer;
All day we miss thee everywhere,
Casa Wappy."

Besides contributing regularly to *Blackwood*, we find him at this time writing for the *Annals*, for *Fraser's Magazine* and the *Edinburgh Literary Gazette*.

And so the useful round of daily toil goes on, varied at home by a meeting of the Kirk Session or Town Council, or one of the many societies of which he was secretary, by a visit to Ayr to attend a Burns Festival, to Oxford to attend a meeting of the British Association, and thence to Cheltenham and London, where Mr. Fraser, the publisher, got him to sit to MacIse for a full-length etching, which afterwards appeared along with a short biographical notice in *Fraser's Magazine*.

He had also much pleasant literary correspondence with writers such as Mrs. Hemans, Mrs. Mary Howitt, Mrs. S. C. Hall, Mrs. Caroline Southey, and Mrs. Oliphant, who sent him for his opinion her "Passages in the Life of Mrs. Margaret Maitland of Sunnyside," the first of the many novels which that gifted authoress has given to the world, which still receives them with eagerness.

Here is a characteristic letter from Hood:—

"But for this last shake, I should have indulged hopes of visiting Edinburgh, and, of course, Musselburgh. But I am more sedentary than ever; some would say *chairy* of myself, so that sitting for my bust lately seemed hardly beyond my usual still habits. Luckily I have always been a domestic bird, and am therefore not so wretched from being incapable of passage. Still I should prefer health and locomotion, riding here and there, to and fro, as you do, because others were ill and I was not. How you must enjoy walking to set a broken leg!"

Alas, in 1846 he was to have a severe accident to his hip joint, which was more than a broken leg, inasmuch as it made him lame for the remainder of his life. He was, however, able for his work, and he went further afield than usual when he attended and spoke at the opening of the Glasgow Athenæum in 1847. In 1849, he had a "June jaunt" into the Highlands with Professor Wilson, Mr. Henry Glassford Bell, and one or two other friends.

In 1851 he delivered a course of six lectures at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution on "The Poetical Literature of the Past

Half Century." They were afterwards published and had a good sale.

At the time of the delivery of the lectures his health was not good, and about midsummer, in dismounting from his horse he accidentally hurt his weak limb, and gave himself a severe wrench in endeavouring to save it. He was suffering severely, but the day was Sunday, and it was his duty to officiate as elder at the church-door plate, and he insisted on performing his duty, though he had to go to bed immediately after service. He became rather despondent as to his health, and said to his wife, "Catherine, I am resigned to the Almighty's will, whensoever it may please Him to call me. I have been trying for some time past to live every day as if it were my last." Rallying a little he set out, along with his wife and one of his boys, to see if a little change would do any good. They went in the first instance to Ayr, and enjoyed visiting the birthplace of Burns. On returning to the inn he was, however, seized with a violent spasm. His wife wished him to summon medical aid, but he refused to do so, saying, in direct opposition, we daresay, to advice he had often given his patients, "No; if a doctor were here he would order me to bed, and I should never rise again. My constitution is making a desperate effort to relieve itself; but lay me on a bed of sickness, and it is all over with me in this life. You must get me home to-morrow." However, he was better in the morning, and he determined to spend a day at Dumfries before he returned. While walking with his wife and son, and Aird, the poet, by the side of the Nith, enjoying the varied beauties of the place, in the richest light of a July sunset, "Oh, me, there's that spasm again!" he suddenly exclaimed, and his face collapsed "as if he had been struck through with a musket ball." And indeed his illness was quite as fatal as if he had been. Notwithstanding all that could be done for him, after he was got back to the inn with difficulty, it was evident that he was rapidly sinking. He told his wife his hours were numbered, and that he could not be long with her. "But do not let it distress you or I will say no more. Look at me, my wife, and see I am perfectly resigned to the will of an All-wise Providence. Have faith; God will protect you and our children." To Aird he said, "I am going to die, but I am quite resigned, quite resigned. I have contemplated this for some time back." "What am I, poor sinner, that everybody should be so kind to

me?" he said, when he heard that another of the Dumfries doctors had volunteered to sit up with him.

His partner and son-in-law, his daughters and sons, his minister, Mr. Beveridge, and Mr. John Blackwood, all hastened to see him. At one time some hope was entertained of his recovery, but, alas! it was not to be. The picture we have of the end is a very tender and touching one. We see the dying man patting his wife on the cheek and chin, saying, "My wife;" calling Mr. Aird, and afterwards Mr. John Blackwood, to his side and blessing them, "his hand on their head rising and falling with every clause of the blessing;" and again, putting his hand on the head of his children and his wife he blessed them, and prayed his blessing for the little ones at home, "Jeanie and Emy and Osy," and for his brother and all his absent friends. "And now may the Lord my God," he prayed aloud, giving every syllable with a long-drawn-out solemnity, "not separate between my soul and my body, till He has made a final and eternal separation between my soul and sin, for the sake of my Redeemer!"

He died at two o'clock on Sunday morning, the 6th July, 1851. He was buried in the quiet and peaceful churchyard of Inveresk, beside the three little boys whom he loved so dearly, and whose deaths he had lamented in lines of such touching pathos. "There a large number of sympathising mourners assembled to take farewell," says a writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*, "of the gentlest and tenderest being, of the most true and single-hearted man, that we may ever hope to meet with in the course of this earthly pilgrimage." To *Blackwood's Magazine* he had contributed no fewer than three hundred and seventy articles in prose, the last of which, the "Lament of Selim," appeared in the month in which he died.

Delta wrote too fast and with too little concentration of thought, but it is doubtful, even if he had taken more time and gone in for careful revision and excision, whether his place would have been higher in the ranks of the poets than it is. Apart from the more purely domestic verses, his great charm is fidelity to nature and a certain graceful picturesqueness in catching effects. Probably these pictures owe their charm to the fact that they spring directly from a pen dipped into the colours he uses, and from eyes fresh from the vision he sees. A moonlight night, making the earth look like enchanted fairyland, the sight of the "evening star's bright lovely beam, fair heavenly speck calling all

the stars to duty," a winter landscape, the falling snow, a beautiful summer morning, the lark rising on "trembling wings"—it is such sights as these that stir him, and straightway he makes us share the feelings which they awaken in his own heart, and a singularly pure, gentle, and sensitive heart it was. One of the most faithful bits of painting to our mind is "October—a Sketch." As you go forth with him you see what he saw—

"From bough to bough of the thick holly-tree
The spider weaves his net; the gossamer,
A tenuous line, glistening at intervals,
Now floats and now subsides upon the air,"—

the lap of nature shorn and bare, the golden sun of the dandelion eclipsed, and the sere nettle seeds along the bank:

"Yet on the wild brier grows the yellow hip;
The dew-sprout bramble shows its clusters ripe;
Reddens 'mong fading branches, the harsh sloe;
And from the mountain-ash in scarlet pride,
The fairy branches drop their countless beads
In richness; on the little laburnum's bough
Mix pods of lighter green among the leaves;
And, on the jointed honeysuckle stalk,
The succulent berries hang. The robin sits
Upon the mossy gateway, singing clear
A requiem to the glory of the woods,
The bright umbrageousness which, like a dream,
Hath perish'd and for ever pass'd away;
And when the breeze awakes, a frequent shower
Of wither'd leaves bestrew the wooded paths,
Or from the branches of the willow whirl,
With rustling sound, into the turbid stream."

There is also some admirable description in "The Bass Rock," as, for example, when the rower with his boat-hook struck the mast—

"And lo! the myriad wings that like a sheet
Of snow o'erspread the crannies—all were up!
The gannet, guillemot, and kittiwake,
Marrot and plover, snipe and eider duck,
The puffin, and the falcon, and the gull;
Thousands on thousands, an innumerable throng
Darkening the noontide with their winnowing plumes,
A cloud of animation! the wide air
Tempesting with their mingled cries unceasing!"

Fine too is the conclusion of this poem, in which he describes the intense feeling of loneliness with which the Bass Rock inspired him. He has walked amid encompassing mountains

"At twilight, when alone the little stars
Brightening amid the wilderness of blue
Proclaimed a world not God-forsaken quite."

He has walked at midnight on the hollow shore listening to the trampling of the waves and the howling of the gales: he has mused in churchyards far remote—long forsaken even by the dead, but never such loneliness has he felt as he experienced upon this grim throne of solitude. It haunts him in the crowded streets, and it makes solitude ever deeper.

"Off in the populous city, 'mid the stir
And strife of hurrying thousands, each intent
On his own earnest purpose, to thy cliffs,
Sea-girt, precipitous—the solan's home—
Wander my reveries; and thought of thee,
While scarcely stirs the ivy round the porch,
And all is silent as the sepulchre,
Oft makes the hush of midnight more profound."

The "Hymn to Hesperus" is pretty throughout, and a fine sentiment pervades most of his sonnets. Perhaps the nearest approach to a good song is "Heigh-Ho."

Taking the poems as a whole no one can read them without feeling drawn nearer to nature in many of her moods; closer to the life of flower, and plant, and tree; more tender to the life of bird and beast, and more akin to fellow man, more pleased to share his joys and more sympathetic towards his sorrows. He who can help us to feel this has not lived in vain, and will not readily be forgotten as a poet, even if this claim to remembrance be second to his fame as a humorist and to his character as a man.

"VENITE."

SHALL I upon my knees from day to day
Pass all my life in penitential prayer,
Amidst a world so wonderfully fair,
While birds and breezes call my soul away
To woodlands where the children dance and play?
Shall I bend low and mutter words of care,
Lest He who made the earth and placed us there,
Should leave His flock all shepherdless to stray?

Ah no! the truest worship does not lie
In fast and vigil; spending dismal days
To only lift the tribute of a sigh
Gives God no glory. Come with gladsome lays,
All ye who truly love the Lord most high,
For perfect prayer is found in perfect praise.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

SMITHFIELD AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

By ARTHUR REYNOLDS.

FIRST PAPER.

THE recent attempt, happily defeated, to bring about the destruction of the Charterhouse—a place which for more than five centuries has been successively an important centre of the religious, social, and educational life of London, and where buildings still remain whose history reaches back for four hundred years—drew public attention to the interest attaching to that venerable house. Many persons who, from their recollection of “The Newcomes,” were conscious that the Grey Friars there described was an old-world institution in the neighbourhood of the city, were yet unaware of the existence at the present time of the quiet, picturesque courts in the midst of that busy quarter. Doubtless, also, some were induced for once to turn their steps eastward, and thus realised that even in that dingy region, from which rank and the gay world

drifted long ago, there yet linger some relics of an illustrious past. Those who ventured on such a pilgrimage would, if they did not actually pass through it, catch a glimpse of a most unpromising locality in close proximity to the Charterhouse. The meat markets, though they serve so useful and necessary a purpose, certainly render Smithfield, as this part is named, other than prepossessing. Yet it is in itself so full of historic interest, and is surrounded with buildings which either still preserve many of their ancient features, or are the successors of older foundations, that a walk round Smithfield, if only in imagination aided by written description or pictorial illustration, is by no means unprofitable.

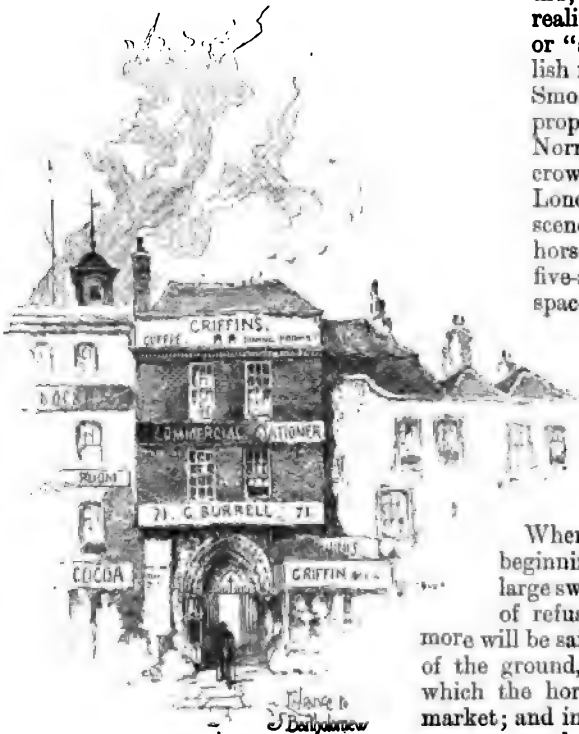
Fitzstephen, the friend and companion of St. Thomas of Canterbury, describing the City of London, relates that “there is also without one of the city gates, and in the very suburb, a certain *plain field*, such both in reality and name.” This “*campus planus*,” or “*suburbana planities*,” derives its English name from an older form, *Smeth* or *Smooth*; and while it is not known whose property this Smoothfield was before the Norman Conquest, it became part of the crown lands when the Conqueror came to London. In Fitzstephen’s day it was the scene of a Friday market for cattle and horses, and it so continued until some five-and-twenty years ago, when the great space suggested its appropriation to its present use. Shakspeare, in *Henry IV.* (Pt. II. act i. sc. 2), thus refers to this horse-fair:—

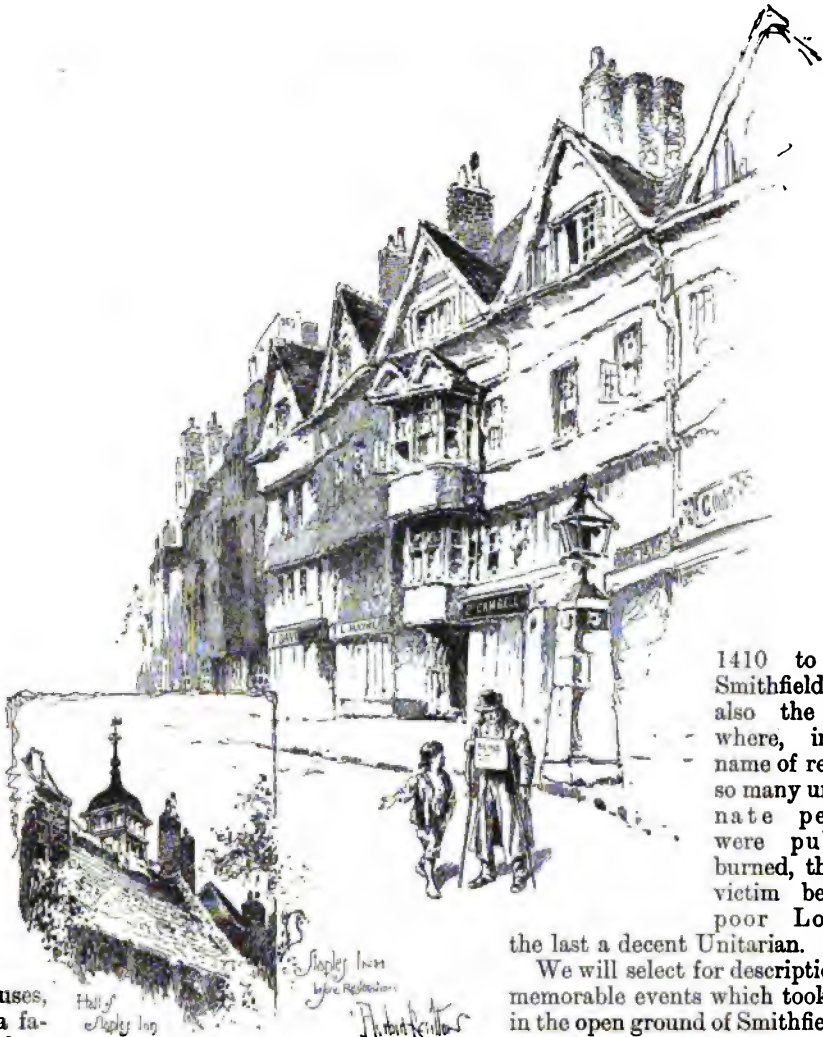
“*Fal.* Where’s Bardolph?”

“*Page.* He’s gone into Smithfield to buy your worship a horse.

“*Fal.* I bought him in Paul’s, and he’ll buy me a horse in Smithfield.”

When we first hear of Smithfield, at the beginning of the twelfth century, it was a large swampy waste of land, a common *laystall* of refuse from the city. Rahere, of whom more will be said hereafter, having drained a portion of the ground, a large sheet of water was left, at which the horses were watered when brought to market; and in course of time Smithfield, as a large open space, shaded in part by great elms, and surrounded by churches, monasteries, and other reli-





gious houses, became a favourite playground for

the citizens young and old, affording, as it did, room for tournaments and boyish games, and in winter an opportunity of indulging in the popular sport of skating and various amusements on the ice-covered horse-pool. From ancient times a gallows stood on one side or the other of the field. Removed from the east, it was planted on the west side under the elms, and it was here that in the year 1305, on the Eve of St. Bartholomew, the patriot William Wallace was brutally hanged, drawn, and quartered, before the eyes of a huge crowd, drawn thither by the annual fair, which had been opened by yearly custom that very morning. From

1410 to 1611 Smithfield was also the place where, in the name of religion, so many unfortunate persons were publicly burned, the first victim being a poor Lollard,

the last a decent Unitarian.

We will select for description two memorable events which took place in the open ground of Smithfield. In the year 1381, the Socialists of that day, led by Wat Tyler, and then as now stimulated by clerical eloquence, marched on London from Blackheath, bound, not for Trafalgar Square, but for the city. "My good friends," their reverend adviser, John Ball, had said, "things cannot go on well in England until everything shall be in common; when there shall be neither vassal nor lord, and all distinctions shall be levelled. . . . How ill have our lords used us! . . . Are we not all descended from Adam and Eve? Our lords are clothed in velvet and camlet, while we are forced to wear poor cloth." The mob advanced to London Bridge on the twelfth of June, entered the city, which was left open lest they might set fire to the suburbs

and burned down the Savoy, the magnificent palace of John of Gaunt, murdering its defenders. They then turned northwards, and passing through Smithfield, burned the neighbouring hospital of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell, together with its church. From thence dispersing they paraded the streets, wreaking their vengeance chiefly on the Flemings, wherever they could find them, and robbing the houses of the Lombards in the quarter still known by their name.

On the Saturday morning the king, who was lodging in the Wardrobe,* a great house near Blackfriars, once known as Tower Royal, and afterwards called the Queen's Wardrobe, rode to Westminster to hear mass. Returning thence he met a crowd of twenty thousand, as it is said, assembled in Smithfield in front of St. Bartholomew's Priory. Wat Tyler recognised the king and said, "I will go speak with him." The mayor, William Walworth, struck Tyler, who instantly drew his dagger and would have slain the mayor had he not been well armed. The mayor then, to use Stow's words, "drew his basiliard, and grievously wounded Wat in the neck, and withal gave him a great blow on the head; in the which conflict an esquire of the king's horse, called John Cavendish, drew his sword and wounded Wat twice or thrice even to the death; and Wat, spurring his horse, cried to the commons to revenge him. The horse bore him about eighty feet from the place, and then he fell down half dead." Many of the people stabbed him in different places and dragged him into St. Bartholomew's Hospital hard by, from whence the mayor caused him to be brought out again, and then and there beheaded. For the part he took in this affair the mayor was knighted by the king on the spot, who, as was very commonly believed, granted the addition of a sword to the arms of the City of London, to commemorate the event of the day. It should be said, however, that the sword or dagger was there before that date, and was the emblem of the great apostle whose church has for so many ages been the chief glory of the city.

Allusion has already been made to the practice of holding tournaments in Smithfield, a fact which is attested by the name of Giltspur Street, which still leads into the open space. The route of the knights often lay from the Tower Royal or Wardrobe through Knighttrider Street, then westward to Creed

Lane, and so out at Ludgate, entering Smithfield through Giltspur Street. Of the famous jousts held here in 1390 the following account is given by Froissart.

The fame of the splendid feasts given in honour of Queen Isabella's public entry into Paris had spread throughout Europe, and the King of England and his uncles had been fully informed of them by English knights who had been present on the occasion. The king, determined not to be outdone, gave orders for grand tournaments to be holden in London, in which sixty knights, attended by sixty noble ladies, all splendidly arrayed, should take part. The sixty knights to tilt for two days, that is to say, on the Sunday after Michaelmas and the Monday following. They were to set out at two o'clock in the afternoon from the Tower of London, and parade through the streets and up Cheapside to Smithfield. There they were to await on the Sunday the arrival of any foreign knights who might desire to tilt; "and this feast of the Sunday was called the Challengiers." On the Monday the same ceremonies were to be observed, and the sixty knights to be ready to "tilt courteously with blunted lances against all comers." The prizes were to be awarded as the ladies of the court should adjudge them. On the Tuesday the esquires were to tilt with others of the same degree. These preliminaries having been settled, proclamation of the approaching festivities was made throughout England, Scotland, Hainault, Germany, Flanders, and France. The great day so anxiously expected at length arrived, and a vast number of nobles and other distinguished personages came into London, among the most illustrious foreigners being the Counts de St. Pol and D'Ostrevant. In the afternoon of Sunday, "about three o'clock, there paraded out from the Tower of London sixty barded coursers ornamented for the tournament, on each of which was mounted a squire of honour that advanced only at a foot's pace; then came sixty ladies of rank, mounted on palfreys, most elegantly and richly dressed, following each other, every one leading a knight with a silver chain completely armed for tilting; and in this procession they moved on through the streets of London, attended by numbers of minstrels and trumpets, to Smithfield. The Queen of England and her ladies and damsels were already arrived, and placed in chambers handsomely decorated. The king was with the queen. When the ladies who led the knights arrived in the square their

* The Church of St. Andrew by the Wardrobe in Blackfriars still preserves the memory of the royal residence.

servants were ready to assist them to dismount from their palfreys, and to conduct them to the apartments prepared for them. The knights remained until their squires of honour had dismounted and brought them their coursers, which having mounted they had their helmets laced on, and prepared themselves in all points for the tilt. The Count de St. Pol with his companions now advanced, handsomely armed for the occasion, and the tournament began. Every foreign knight who pleased tilted, or had time for so doing, before the evening set in. The lords and ladies then retired where they had made appointments. The queen was lodged in the Bishop of London's Palace near St. Paul's Church, where the banquet was held." On this first day the prizes were awarded to the Count de St. Pol for the opponents, and to the Earl of Huntingdon for the tenants of the lists. After the banquet a great dance was given in the queen's apartments in London House in the presence of the king and his court. The next day (Monday) the tournament was continued with even greater vigour than before. The prize was won for the opponents by the Count D'Ostrevant, and by Sir Hugh Spenser for the tenants; and the day closed with a supper in London House. On the Tuesday "the tournament was renewed by the squires, who tilted in the presence of the king, queen, and all the nobles, until night, when all retired as on the preceding day. The supper was as magnificent as before at the palace of the bishop, and the dancing lasted until daybreak, when the company broke up. The tournament was continued on the Wednesday by all knights and squires



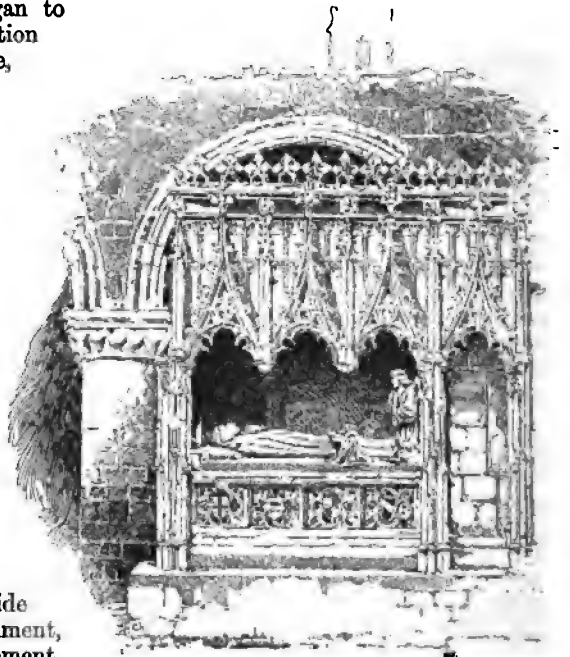
indiscriminately, who were inclined to joust; it lasted until

night, and the supper and dances were as the preceding day. On Thursday the king entertained at supper all the foreign knights and squires, and the queen their ladies and damsels. The Duke of Lancaster gave a grand dinner to them on the Friday. On Saturday the king and his court left London for Windsor, whither the Count D'Ostrevant, the Count de St. Pol, and the foreign knights who had been present at the feasts, were invited. All ac-

cepted the invitation, as was right, and went to Windsor, which has a handsome castle, well built and richly ornamented, situated on the Thames, twenty miles from London. The entertainments were very magnificent in the dinners and suppers King Richard made, for he thought he could not pay honour enough to his cousin, the Count D'Ostrevant. He was solicited by the king and his uncles to be one of the Companions of the Order of the Blue Garter, as the Chapel of St. George, the patron, was at Windsor, and he was admitted a Knight Companion to the great surprise of the French knights then present . . . When the entertainments at Windsor had lasted a sufficient time, and the king had made handsome presents to the knights and squires of France, the company took leave of the king, the queen, and the court, and departed for their different homes."

The draining and improving of Smithfield, to which reference has already been made, was carried out under the direction of Rahere, the founder and first prior of the Priory of St. Bartholomew. About the year 1102, this Rahere, "a pleasant-witted gentleman," says Stow, "and therefore in his time called the king's minstrel," began to build his priory, in accordance, as tradition reports, with a vow made at Rome, whither he went on a pilgrimage, to atone at the scenes of the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul for the sins of his youth. On his way home he had a vision of St. Bartholomew, who directed him to found a priory of canons of the order of St. Augustine, together with an hospital, in some swampy meadows called Smithfield, "then the place of executions and of great shows." About the year 1123 the house was established as a Priory of Austin Canons, or Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine, otherwise known as Black Canons* from the habit they wore, which consisted of a long black cloak and hood over cassock and rochet. To the priory he added a hospital, which stood outside the precinct, having its own establishment, and, according to a common arrangement, having its own parish church within its own enclosure. With the exception of a few de-

tached fragments, all that remains of this once famous and extensive priory are the mutilated choir of the church together with the space under the crossing, and a beautiful gateway of the thirteenth century. This choir, which since the dissolution has served as the parish church of St. Bartholomew the Great, is one of the most interesting and valuable buildings in England. As the chapel in the Tower exhibits the earliest Norman work, so St. Bartholomew's is a striking example of the progress attained in architecture by the time of Henry I. The nave with its aisles, the central tower, lady chapel, and the domestic buildings have all perished. Until lately the lady chapel was a fringe factory; in another portion is a blacksmith's shop; the north triforium is a schoolroom. Until the latest restoration was taken in hand the most deplorable state of things existed here; but in spite of squalor and gloom the grand old ruin—for such in fact it was—with its splendid triforium, its great pillars, its solemn arches, and the stately vista of its south aisle, presented a most impressive scene. To speak of restoration might excite the ire of those who would



Prior Rahere's Tomb

* The district of Canonbury owes its name to the fact that the Priors of St. Bartholomew's had their country manor-house there.

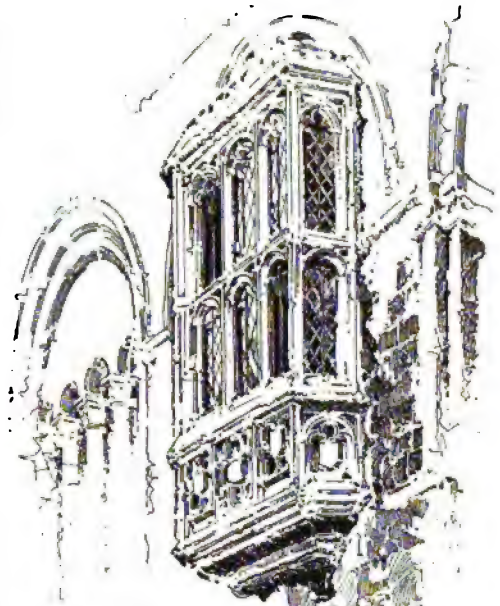
suffer an ancient building to fall into decay rather than restore it: and yet one might venture to commend the endeavours that have been made to acquire the site of the lady chapel, and at least to clear away the sordid associations of a workshop from the worship of the church.

Among the monuments which the church contains first and foremost is that of the founder. The tomb is several centuries later than Rahere's time, but the effigy itself is by some considered to have been the work of one to whom his face was familiar.* At any rate it is not a mere conventional face that is there represented, but rather it appears to be a likeness of living features. This monument stands on the north side of the high altar, and is a very dignified structure. In the south aisle of the choir stands a rich Elizabethan monument in memory of Sir Walter Mildmay, Elizabeth's Chancellor of the Exchequer, and founder of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. On the south side of the choir, one of the bays of the triforium is filled in with a Perpendicular window projecting into the church, being in fact the window of a chamber in the prior's lodgings, from which persons might assist at the religious offices without coming into the church. (A similar arrangement exists in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, for the convenience of royalty.) On the face of this oriel is carved a barrel or tun, pierced with a cross-bow shaft or bolt, forming a rebus on the name of the last prior before the dissolution, William Bolton.

When the priory was dissolved, it fell into the hands of Sir Richard Rich, Speaker of the House of Commons, and, as Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, head of the Royal Commission for dealing with Confiscated Abbey Lands. For the sum of about £1,100 he was allowed to purchase the priory in West Smithfield, with the whole of its precinct, still known as Bartholomew Close, and all the rights and privileges pertaining to the ejected prior and his predecessors. The prior's house he converted into his own town residence, where he lived in great state as Baron Rich and Lord Chancellor of England. From Lord Rich the property descended to the Earls of Warwick and Holland, and thence to the Edwardes family, afterwards ennobled by the title of Barons Kensington, in consequence of their intermarriage with the Rich family.

It may be interesting to recall some of the

* See Morley's "Bartholomew Fair."



Prior Bolton's
Oriel



many curious scenes which doubtless this ancient precinct witnessed from time to time. One of the most singular was the annual disputation of schoolboys, of which we have given us the accounts of two eye-

witnesses, Stow and Paul Hentzner. The latter, who was a German travelling tutor, and author of an *Itinerarium*, writing in the year 1600, relates that the scholars disputed in grammar and logic on St. Bartholomew's Eve (Aug. 23), on a bank under the famous mulberry-trees in the Close, and that the successful competitors were rewarded with little bows and arrows of silver. The scholars belonged to the schools of St. Paul's, St. Peter's in Westminster, St. Thomas Acon's Hospital in Cheapside, St. Anthony's Hospital, and St. Peter's upon Cornhill. In course of time the disputations came to a

bad end owing to the ill-blood between the schools, and notably between St. Paul's and St. Anthony's. For, as Stow relates, "the scholars of St. Paul's, meeting with those of St. Anthony's, would call them Anthony pigs, and they again would call the others pigeons of St. Paul's, because many pigeons were bred in St. Paul's Church, and St. Anthony was always figured with a pig following him; and . . . did disorderly provoke one another in the open street with 'Salve, tu quoque, placet mecum disputare?'—'Placet.' And so proceeding from this to questions in grammar they usually fell from words to blows, with the satchels full of books many times in great heaps, that they troubled the streets and passengers; so that finally they were restrained with the decay of St. Anthony's School."

One institution, however, connected with St. Bartholomew's Priory, lingered on to our own time, the famous Bartholomew Fair. In a charter of 1133 the royal permission was granted to "Rahere the Prior and the Regular Canons" to hold their annual fair at the feast of their patron, and the king's "firm peace and the fullest privileges" were further granted to "all persons coming to and returning from the Fair of St. Bartholomew." This grant of *firm peace* meant much more than at first sight would appear. It implied freedom from arrest on the way to and fro, and during the holding of the fair, except for debts

(To be concluded next month.)



*George Jones
Bartholomew*

contracted in the course of their dealings in the fair-time. This

fair was by a common arrangement held in, or near, the churchyard, and its chief object was to facilitate commerce for "the clothiers of England and the drapers of London." Of course, the usual medley of traders of every description might have been seen there, but it was as a Cloth Fair that it came into existence, and the quaint narrow street named Cloth Fair to this day attests the ancient uses of this old-world spot.

ENGLISH INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE.

By JOHN RAE, M.A., AUTHOR OF "CONTEMPORARY SOCIALISM," ETC.

I.—THE LOCAL FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

THE question of working-class insurance is at present very much on the order of the day in all countries. People tell us the world itself lives from hand to mouth, that it has never more than a week's supplies ready, and that if it ceased producing to-

morrow it would be in absolute want in eight days; but few working men have so moderate a provision against a rainy day as even that, and the rainy day is frequent with them, and sometimes stays long. Without some adequate system of insurance, therefore,

working people are liable to be thrown upon public charity by every temporary calamity they encounter, and against that humiliation they entertain, as a class, a very noble feeling of resistance. But the question is by no means easy. The insurance of the other classes of society is a comparatively simple business, because it deals, generally speaking, with only one risk—and that the easiest of all to calculate—the risk of the insurer's death; but working-class insurance must give protection against many other risks much more difficult to reckon—against sickness, accidents, loss of employment, temporary distress from other causes, and finally, to be effective, against the danger of forfeiting the advantages of the insurance itself by inability in seasons of adversity to continue paying the weekly contribution. In some countries the government has undertaken the solution of this difficult problem by the introduction of a compulsory national system, but in England the labouring classes have been left to work it out for themselves in their own towns and villages. They have been doing so now for a hundred years and more, often in the teeth of bitter and costly sacrifices, but always with a silent, uncomplaining persistency; and in the end they have succeeded, without any thought of the great work they were really doing, in building up out of very humble beginnings a system of provident institutions which, though they may be far from perfect yet, already answer their main purposes fairly well, and which are, perhaps, the noblest and most striking fruit of those vigorous habits of association which are native to the English people. There are more than thirty thousand friendly societies in England and Wales alone. In 1885 as many as 15,985 sent in reports to the Chief Registrar, and although it is impossible to state exactly the number of the unregistered societies, it is generally considered by those who know that they are quite as numerous as the registered. These societies are of a very varied character, from small village clubs of thirty members up to great affiliated orders with four thousand lodges spread over the length and breadth of the land. They have probably between them little short of ten million members and twenty millions of funds, for in 1880, when only 12,867 societies sent returns to the Registrar, these 12,867 had a total membership of 4,802,249, and total funds amounting to £13,002,974, and the remaining 20,000 societies which failed to report themselves must have had at least as much again. Membership in more societies

than one is not so common as to affect the result; 15 per cent. is usually considered a sufficient deduction to cover such cases. Ten millions is therefore not an unreasonable estimate, but even that is not yet all, for of late years a great deal of working-class insurance has been undertaken outside the friendly societies altogether, by proprietary companies, which, working under the Companies Act, do not fall under the supervision of the Chief Registrar at all. One of these, the Prudential, has as many as six million and a half of policies, and others of them are growing into a large business. We must not imagine, however, that all these millions of insured persons enjoy the complete all-round insurance against sickness, distress, and death, which working people require. The proprietary companies and many of the larger friendly societies undertake no kind of insurance except burial money, and a great number of their policies, indeed, are only for a pound or two on the death of a child; and we have no means at present of saying precisely how many of the members of friendly societies are insured against sickness as well as death, and how many are merely insured for the burial benefit and nothing more. Most of the societies, however, are sick as well as burial clubs, and probably some six millions of their members may be safely considered to enjoy this double insurance. Sickness has a wide meaning in the friendly society world; it is equivalent to disability to work, whether from disease, accident, or the infirmity of years, so that sick relief includes virtually a superannuation allowance. Some of the better-developed societies have, however, started a separate superannuation benefit, and—what is of great consequence to the modern working man—an out-of-work benefit for the able-bodied; while some insure tools and boats and nets, and what is called an "endowment," i.e. a certain sum after a given term of years, generally wanted for the purpose of settling a son or daughter in life.

The origin of the friendly societies is usually traced back to the old English guilds, and we certainly first hear of a friendly society in the middle of the seventeenth century, about the very time we last hear of an existing guild; but the historical filiation is, nevertheless, not very exact, and in its ruder forms of the "Funeral Brief" and the "Sharing-out Club," the friendly society may have risen any moment out of the need for it, and the social and practical habits of

the people who experienced the need. A number of friendly societies still exist, however, which are well on for two hundred years old, and there is at least one which is older—the Society of Dyers in Linlithgow, founded in 1679. Before 1793 these societies were not very numerous, but Sir G. Rose's Act of that year, conferring on them important privileges and exemptions on condition of their submission to a certain measure of State supervision, gave a great impetus to their development. Within a few years a thousand new societies sprang up in Middlesex alone. In Rose's Act they are still called "mutual fellowship societies." Mutual fellowship—camaraderie and friendly social life—was one of the joint needs for which they were first established, and for which, indeed, they are still resorted to. The attachment of the members to their annual feast is as strong as ever. The Commissioners of 1874 report that while clubs have certainly been ruined by feasting too much out of the common good, clubs have as certainly been ruined by giving up the feast; because, as Sir G. Young stated, the country labourer thinks "that a club from which, as long as he is in health, he gets absolutely nothing, 'no beer, no feast, no fire,' is too hard for human nature to bear." When Mr. Gladstone introduced his Government Annuity Bill in 1864, Mr. Sotherton Estcourt, an old and very experienced ally of friendly societies, said the working classes would never take advantage of the Bill if it became law, because they did not "enter into friendly societies or clubs for the benefits of such societies so much as for companionship." The societies which are at present most popular and most progressive—the great affiliated orders—are specially marked by their feelings of camaraderie, though they take the wise care of preventing the excessive conviviality of which Mr. Tidd Pratt in his time used so constantly to complain, by removing their quarters everywhere from public-houses. And this social function of the friendly society is a great help to it, both in the work of increasing its membership and of collecting its contributions. Members induce their friends to join because they hope to meet them at the weekly meetings, and they bring their contributions to these meetings, without the intervention of a collector, because the meetings themselves are a pleasure. Otherwise collectors and canvassing agents would be necessary. Even people belonging to better conditions of life need a good deal of canvassing often before they will insure, and

few working men, after their hard day's toil, would care to take the trouble to go far for the mere purpose of paying in their weekly pence. One reason of the failure of the Government Annuity Scheme is that it employs neither agent nor collector, but the genuine friendly society requires no functionaries of that kind, its social spirit being thus an economy and an instrument of high pecuniary value.

A little before the passing of Rose's Act the first attempts were made by the celebrated Dr. Richard Price to discover from statistical data a sound actuarial basis for the operations of friendly societies; his labours have been much improved since by men like Ansell and Neison; and during the whole of the present century, friendly societies have been progressing with equal step in the extent of their membership and in the safety of their system. The small local clubs are now being more and more superseded by the great orders, and the great orders are the zealous friends of all sound actuarial reform. The State has interfered but little with the course of development. The Act of 1875 still leaves registration entirely optional, and contents itself with offering certain advantages which are expected to induce societies to register. A non-registered society, for example, cannot acquire or hold real property, or sue or be sued as a corporation. The property they hold is in the eye of the law simply trust property in the hands of trustees, against whom they have no right of action. Before Russell Gurney's Act of 1868, they had no right even to prosecute their officers for larceny or embezzlement. Now registration confers this important right, and gives besides an exemption from stamp duty, which, however, is thought by some to be a more doubtful advantage than it might seem at first sight, because many of the labouring class, it appears, are so ignorant as to imagine that a policy with a Government stamp upon it has a guarantee for its security, which a policy without a Government stamp wants. To receive the benefits of registration, the society must submit to various requirements. Out of fairness to ordinary insurance companies it must not issue a life policy for more than £200, or an annuity for more than £50 a year. To prevent crime, the life of a child under five cannot be insured for more than £6, or the life of a child under ten for more than £10. The society, moreover, must consist of at least seven members; it must send its rules in detail to the Chief Registrar;

if it grants annuities it must have the soundness of its tables certified by a Government official; it must send to the Chief Registrar an annual return of its receipts, funds, expenditure, and membership, and a quinquennial valuation of its assets and liabilities; and the Registrar is empowered either of his own motion or at the instance of a certain number of members, to institute an investigation of the affairs of the society when irregularities are suspected in its management, or to wind it up altogether. Half the societies—more than half of the Scotch ones—remain unregistered, from objections to publicity and other requirements or restraints, or from mere unwillingness to take the trouble; and many societies, though registered, send in no return. But this state of things is yearly mending. More societies are registering, more registered societies are sending in returns, and the returns are better and more accurately drawn up. The Registrar without resorting to force and without the aid of local assistants, keeps working on with great faith and patience, and on the whole—as he informed the Commission—sees the societies “developing very rapidly” through the good sense and good management of their members into something which he thinks much higher than any “mere system of compulsory providence.”

The friendly societies are for nothing more remarkable than for the great variety of form and organization which they have freely assumed in the course of their natural development. Their most rudimentary forms, as has been stated, are the funeral brief and the sharing-out club. The funeral brief, which still swarms in Yorkshire, is purely a burial club, originating in the practice of sending round the hat on the death of a comrade to raise the funeral expenses and a small provision for the family in their time of need. In order to avoid the delay caused by the process of collecting a sum which to be helpful must be timely, the subscribers would begin to “keep one death in hand,” i.e. to have always ready collected the sum usually given to a family on an occasion of the sort. This would involve a certain slight beginning of organization—a list of subscribers, a definite though small fund, and a treasurer collecting and holding it, and receiving a trifle for his trouble; and this slight organization is the “funeral brief,” the burial society in its cradle. As the little club grows, the occasional “levy” gives place to the weekly contribution, and then we have the local burial society complete, as we

find it universally in England still. In 1871 the registered local burial societies of England had a membership of 700,000 (or allowing for double membership, 550,000).

The sharing-out club is both a sick and a burial society, and though quite as humble as the funeral brief, has a touch more of native contrivance in it. Fifty or a hundred neighbours—sometimes as few as twenty or thirty—meet together at the beginning of the year and make up out of entrance fees and subscriptions for the week a little box, enough to go on with in the meantime, and always increasing as the subscriptions fall in week by week. Out of this fund are paid the sickness and burial liabilities of the club as they arise in the course of the year, and then at the year's end, if there is any surplus over, as there almost always is, this surplus is divided—shared out—among the members in equal parts, and then a new club is set up on the same lines for the new year. If the members of the new club are the same as the members of the old one, then a portion of the surplus is usually reserved before the division in order to set the new club agoing; for a club of a hundred perhaps £100 would be so reserved. The only expenses are a small gratuity to the secretary who keeps the books, and the drink taken for the use of the room in the public-house where they meet. In London these sharing-out clubs are very common under the name of “Slate Clubs,” or of “Birmingham Societies,” though they are said to be now very rare in Birmingham itself, and they are hardly less common in Scotland under the name of Yearly Societies. They are to some extent a savings bank as well as an insurance society, for the members contribute with the direct purpose of having a little round sum at the end of the year, as well as to secure themselves against the risks of sickness and accident during its course. A little round sum of that sort is always handy to a labourer's family, and according to the best testimony, it is rarely misspent. A witness well qualified to speak, because he had twenty-five years' experience of superintending such a society, the Rev. Fitzhardinge Portman, says, “My experience as a clergyman of more than thirty-five years' standing, is that a little lump of money, though it be only 25s. or 30s., coming in now and then, is a very great boon to our agricultural labourers, and I have no reason to think, speaking generally, that it is improperly or wastefully spent. It much more often goes towards the purchase of a pig or of shoes

or of some necessary article of clothing." Ephemeral as the sharing-out clubs are, therefore, they are of great utility, especially to migratory workmen like navvies, or to those lower classes of labourers who are excluded by wages tests or other conditions from the greater friendly societies. Besides their sick and burial benefit these clubs sometimes give their members small loans to tide them over a difficulty and prevent them going to a pawnbroker. A fair sample of them, because it is a very small one, is a London slate club of twenty-seven members that lately came under my notice. The total income for the year 1888 from entrance fees, subscriptions, fines, and levies, was £68. Out of this it paid £2 10s. to its secretary and £1 13s. for the rent of the room it met in. It gave during the year £5 15s. in sick pay, £4 7s. 6d. burial money, £8 10s. in loans; and then at Christmas there remained £44, which was divided among the members, so that each member, besides being sheltered against various risks during the course of the year, received back at the close of it a sum of £1 12s. 7d., which, but for this slate club, he would most probably never have saved at all.

Sometimes these clubs are established for seven years, or for ten, but when they at length grow into permanent organizations they are known as Dividing Societies. The Dividing Societies, besides doing sick and burial business, often undertake to receive deposits on interest, and to advance loans to members. The dividing loan society is always popular, and generally very beneficial. One of the Commissioners who reported on Scotland in 1874, makes the remark that wherever there was no yearly loan society there was sure to be a crop of pawnbrokers and moneylenders. The dividing society is generally much larger in membership than the sharing-out club. There is one in Birmingham, for example, the Union Provident Sick Society, established in 1802, which had in 1880 some five thousand members, a yearly income of more than £9,000, a reserve fund of more than £15,000, and which divided £3,262 among the members at the close of the year. Its income is derived partly from a 3s. 6d. entrance fee, and partly from a fortnightly contribution of a shilling to the sick fund, and threepence to the management fund, and its benefits are a weekly allowance of 10s. for the first fifty-two weeks, and 5s. for the remainder of the sickness, and a burial benefit of £20 on the member's own death, and £8

on the death of his wife. These are the figures for members over twenty years of age; for members between sixteen and twenty both the contributions and the benefits are only half of those mentioned. All the members are working men, except about five per cent., who are now manufacturers and tradesmen in good circumstances, but had been working men when they entered. The number of this brood of sharing-out and dividing societies it is quite impossible to calculate exactly.

Besides the local burial club and the dividing society there are various other forms of separate local societies, which generally undertake both sick and burial business. There are local town societies, the majority of which have been long established, but are said to be ruining themselves by their narrow corporation spirit, and to be dying out before the competition of the great orders. Then there are village and county societies, that have been set up under the patronage of the landlords and clergy, and generally have as one of their aims the separation of the club meeting from the public-house. It was not easy without such patronage for a small club to obtain suitable accommodation for their meetings in many country places except in the tavern, and, to make matters worse, the publican usually refused to take a money rent, because he knew he could make five times as much out of a liquor rent. One of the Commissioners of 1874 shows the difference between money rents and liquor rents in the case of some Manchester societies. The National Sick and Burial Association of that city paid only 3½d. a year per member for the rent of their room, and the Amalgamated Engineers only 6d., but the Manchester and Salford Equalised District of Druids, who paid in liquor, paid 1s. 6d. a year per member, and the Manchester No. 1 District of Druids as much as 2s. 3½d. The Commissioners mention eleven county societies in their Report of 1874—societies extending over the whole of a single county—and these had a membership of 29,036, and funds amounting to £221,955. These societies are chiefly useful for the scattered agricultural labourers of thinly populated districts, because these labourers would have found difficulties in combining for the purpose of their own accord, and besides their wages are too low to admit of their entrance into the affiliated orders. But the county societies have their unavoidable defects. The members do not take the same interest in them as the members of the town lodges, and the officers

cannot exercise an adequate check on cases of sickness.

Then there is a number of friendly societies connected with particular factories and other industrial works, which it is in many cases compulsory on the labourers at those works to join, and which are generally supported in part by contributions from the firm. The railway companies have such societies, and so have many private firms, like the Crossleys, of Halifax, the Dennys, of Dumbarton, and Salt, of Saltaire. These societies are always admirably and cheaply managed, because the accounts are kept by the employers' clerks, and their funds are safe; but they are open to the great objection that a member loses his claim if he leaves the service of the firm, and may then besides be too old to be accepted in any other friendly society, and they have always encountered the determined hostility of the trade unions, because they are thought to have the tendency to make the workmen too dependent on the employers. There is still another class of local societies deserving of remark, because they are sometimes represented as a superior development, the model for the friendly society of the future. They are the Deposit Friendly Societies, founded by the Hon. and Rev. Samuel Best. Mr. Ludlow, the Chief Registrar, says, however, that though these societies are registered under the Friendly Societies Act, they are really not, properly speaking, friendly societies at all, but savings banks. They give relief in sickness, it is true, but they take in deposits as well, and the principle they adopt is to make the amount of the relief given to any individual in sickness depend on the amount of the deposit which stands at his credit in the bank. There is a separate insurance fund, to which every individual contributes in proportion to his deposits, but only part of the sick allowance

comes out of that fund, the remainder being taken from the recipient's own private account. Another peculiarity of the system is, that although the allowance given is the same for all, the proportion of the allowance that is taken from the member's own money varies according to the probabilities of his health, and to general circumstances of age, sex, and condition. For example, healthy males under thirty-five, having no hereditary complaint in their families, and following no unhealthy trade, get three-fourths of the sick allowance from the general insurance fund, and take only one-fourth from their own, while healthy males between the ages of forty-five and fifty-five, persons of doubtful health or following unhealthy occupations, get only half the allowance from the general fund, and must take the other half out of their own deposits. There are five different classes of risks in Mr. Best's scale, and persons in the fifth class must contribute as much as five-sixths of the sick allowance from their own money. One peculiarity remains. When a member is unable to draw the prescribed portion from his own money he is not entitled to sick allowance at all; and this principle, at first sight appearing so harsh, was considered by the founder to be the pivot of the whole scheme, inasmuch as it supplied the necessary incentive to members to keep increasing their deposits, instead of spending them. The first society of this kind was established in Mr. Best's own small parish of Abbots Ann, and in 1873, 450 of the 700 inhabitants of that parish were members of it. The entire membership in that year was 791. Mr. Best's ideas have been followed more or less completely by other societies, like the Hampshire Friendly Society and the National Deposit Friendly Society, but they show no signs as yet of having the future their admirers anticipate.

THE DEAD MERMAID.

ST. BRANDAN, coming out of his cell,
On a wild morning,
Hears o'er the yellow ocean-swell
The breakers sob and sing.

All rosy stretch the beaten sands
In the dawning light;
High up between the sky and lands
A cormorant swings in sight.

The sea-weeds gathered smooth and brown
Are high and low;
Upon the sand-hill's shifting crown
The drenched gulls sit a-row.

St. Brandan, lifting up his hands
In the new morning,
Praiseth the Lord of sea and lands,
Of men and angels' King.

St. Brandan, raising yet his hands
 With a reverent breath,
 Prayeth for mariners of all lands
 Whom last night brought to death.

But what is this the waves bring close,
 Tossed to and fro,
 This delicate thing of gold and rose,
 And white that shames the snow ?

This thing of rose and snow and gold,
 Shaped fair withal,
 This from the Sea-King's palace cold ?
 A mermaid such they call.

The kindly sea-weed drapes her fair
 Down from the waist,
 The diamond sands are in her hair
 And sparkle on her breast.

He draws her in ; his eyes are dim,
 His thoughts are faint ;
 This seems as fair a thing to him
 As any saved saint—

As any saint that brings him balm
 In a troubled hour—
 Dorothy with her rose and palm,
 Or Barbara with her tower.

He kneels him down, and fain would weep,
 She looks so mild,
 This half a creature of the deep,
 And half a maiden-child.

Upon her long-lashed eyelids meek
 The tears have dried ;
 The coming death is on her cheek,
 The rocks have gored her side.

St. Brandan lifts his eyes above,
 Prays with a cry ;
 Christ Jesus, the dear Lord of Love,
 Sits in His place on high.

Christ Jesus bends Him down to hear,
 And holds His breath.
 " Now for true service many a year
 A boon ! " St. Brandan saith.

" A soul for her, my Master dear,"
 He prays with a will ;
 Christ Jesus almost smiles to hear ;
 His servant pleads not ill.

Nay, well as him who anciently
 Wrestled amain,
 And would not let the angel be ;
 Of blessing he was fain.

The mermaid opes her grey-green eyes,
 And " Jesus " saith,
 Yet scarce can speak for windy sighs
 That strangle still her breath ;

But " Jesus " saith, and at the name
 Grows bright to see,
 As though within her form a flame
 Hath burnt up joyously.

St. Brandan rises up from her,
 And hasteneth where
 A little pool of rain-water
 Glasses the rock-face bare,

And gathers in his hollow palm,
 And comes again,
 And pours it on her forehead calm—
 The dew of heaven's rain.

With " Father, Son, and Holy Ghost "
 Is baptism given :
 Never shall this dear soul be lost
 That preens its wings for heaven ;

That taketh flight, yea, even now
 That bird is flown ;
 St. Brandan, with his hidden brow,
 Is praying on alone.

He makes her grave in holy earth,
 In blessed ground ;
 Of mourners there shall be no dearth,
 The grey gulls keen around.

The cormorant hangs no more on high,
 He is gone home ;
 His little ones cry hungrily,
 Fishing beside the foam.

The worn-out breakers sob to sleep ;
 The noon turns white ;
 In a sea-palace fathoms deep
 Are tears, and death, and night.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAP. XXVI. LESLIE MAKES A DECLARATION.

"WHERE is Harry?" said George Vine that same evening, as he sat in his study, surrounded by his living specimens of natural history, and with the paper before him that he had vainly tried to fill.

"He must be waiting about down in the town—for news," said Louise, looking up from her work.

"He ought to have been here to dinner, my dear," said the naturalist querulously; "it would have been some comfort. Tut—tut—tut! I cannot collect my thoughts; everything seems to slip from me."

"Then why not leave it, dear, for the present? This terrible trouble has unhinged you."

She had risen and gone to the back of his chair, to pass her arm lovingly about his neck, and he leaned back, dropping his pen to take her hand and play with it, pressing it to his lips from time to time.

"I suppose I had better," he said sadly; "but I am dreadfully behindhand—four letters from the Society unanswered. I wish they did not expect so much from me, my darling."

"I do not," said Louise, smiling. "Why should you wish to be less learned than you are?"

"Had we not better go on again to Van Heldre's now?"

"I think I would leave it till quite the last thing."

"Ye—es," said Vine, hesitating, "perhaps so; but I don't like it, my child. Van Heldre has always been to me like a brother, and it seems so strange and hard to be almost driven from his side. Doctor's like a tyrant, and as for Crampton—there, wait till the poor fellow is well again, and if we together do not give Master Crampton a severe setting down my name is not what it is."

"You must forgive it, dear; he is so anxious about his master."

"Yes, yes, of course," said Vine pettishly; "but the man is so insolently overbearing. Really, my dear, if he has been in the habit of behaving to Harry as he has conducted himself towards us, I do not wonder at the poor boy's intense dislike to the office routine."

"It is not fair to judge him now," said Louise.

"No, my dear, I suppose not; but it is very painful, when I feel as if you and I have quite a right in that poor fellow's bedroom, to be literally expelled, Madelaine siding with the doctor, and poor Mrs. Van Heldre really utterly broken down."

"We should only make matters more painful by interfering. Let us go and ask how Mr. Van Heldre is about ten, and I will get Madelaine to let me sit up with her and help."

"No," said Vine, rising and pacing the room, "I shall not sit down quietly. I feel that it is my duty to insist upon being there. I shall go up at once."

"Wait till I put on my things, dear."

"No; I shall only go for an hour now, and I will come back and fetch you later on."

"But, papa dear!"

"There, there, there! don't be alarmed, I shall not get out of temper with Crampton now. That will keep."

"Then you will go—now?"

"Yes," he said decidedly; "I cannot sit here."

"But you hardly tasted your dinner. Let me get you some tea first."

"My dear child, I can touch nothing; and pray don't oppose me. I am in such a state of nervous irritation that if you do I am sure I shall say something unkind, and then I shall be more upset than I am now."

"I am not afraid," said Louise, hanging on his shoulder for a few moments, and then kissing his wrinkled, careworn brow.

"Thank you, my darling, thank you. You will not mind being left? Harry ought to be here."

"Oh, no, dear; but you will come back soon and tell me all. Harry will be here before then."

"Of course, my dear, of course."

"And you will give my dear love to Madelaine," Louise cried, as her father moved away from the door.

He nodded, and with bended head went off down the path, while, after watching till he had disappeared, Louise stood gazing out to sea, as the evening began to close in, and a soft, melancholy breeze came whispering among the trees.

She could not tell why it was, but everything seemed to wear a different aspect, and a profound sense of dejection came upon her, which brought the tears to her eyes.

Where could Harry be? It was hours since she had seen him, and as she felt how much she required help and counsel at that time, her thoughts strayed to Duncan Leslie, and she looked across an intervening depression to the steep cliff path, which led up past Uncle Luke's den to the Mine House, where a faint light twinkled, and away beyond, like a giant finger pointing upward, the great chimney shaft towered.

She stood gazing at that faint light for some minutes, with her eyes growing dim, and the troubled feelings which had often assailed her in secret increasing till, with cheeks burning and an angry ejaculation, she turned into the house, where she fetched her work from the study, and was soon after seated by the window trying to sew. At the end of a few minutes she rose and rang for the lamp, which was brought in by the cook.

"Where's Liza?" said Louise.

"Gone down into the town, ma'am," said the cook, looking at her uneasily.

"What for? She did not ask leave."

"She said she would not be long, ma'am," said the woman evasively.

"Tell her to bring in the tea the moment my father returns. Let everything be ready."

"Yes, ma'am."

The woman hurried out, and Louise sat gazing at the door, thinking that the woman's manner was strange.

"I am upset," she said with a sigh, "and that makes things seem different."

She had been dreaming over her work for a few minutes when she started, for she heard voices talking loudly. She sat up in her chair with her senses on the strain, trembling lest there should be bad news from the Van Heldre's. She was not kept long in suspense, for there was a quick step in the hall, a sharp rap at the door, and Liza entered, scarlet with excitement and exertion, her shawl over one arm, her hat hanging by its strings from the other.

"Liza!"

"Yes, miss, it's me. Can I speak to you a minute?"

"Have you brought news from Mr. Van Heldre's?"

"Which I have, miss, and I haven't."

"How is he?" cried Louise, paying no heed to Liza's paradoxical declaration.

"No better, and no worse, miss; but it wasn't about that. I leaves you this day month, miss; and as much sooner as you can suit yourself."

"Very well, Liza. That will do."

"No, miss!" cried the girl excitedly, "it won't do. 'Cusing people o' being thieves when it was nothing but a bit of a bundle o' old rags and things I saved, as might ha' been burnt, and they bought 'em of me, and I bought the ribbons o' them."

"I do not wish to hear any more about that transaction, Liza; but I am glad to hear you can explain it away. You should have been frank at first."

"So ought other people, miss, if you'll excuse me; and not go taking away a poor servant's character by alluding to money left on no chimley-pieces as I never took."

"Liza!"

"Yes, miss; I know, and thinking o' sending for the police."

"I had too much feeling for you, Eliza, and for your future character. I did not even send you away."

"I should think not indeed, miss. Mother and me's as honest as the day; and if you want police send for 'em for them as has been picking and stealing."

"My good girl, what do you mean?"

"Oh, you don't know o' course, miss; but you very soon will. And him with his fine airs, and his boots never shiny enough. He'll find out the difference now; and as to me staying in a homelike this where one of us is a thief, I've got my character to look after, and——"

There was a sharp knock and ring, and from force of habit, Liza turned.

"In a month, miss, if you please; and now you're going to hear what come an hour ago, and is all over the town by now."

Louise caught at the table to steady herself, and her lips parted to question the girl, but she had hurried out of the room. The door was opened, a deep male voice was heard, and directly after Duncan Leslie hurried in.

"It is no time for ceremony," he gasped, breathlessly. "Where is your father?"

"At—Mr. Van Heldre's," panted Louise, as she turned to him with extended hands. "Mr. Leslie, pray—pray tell me—what is wrong?"

"Tell you?" he cried, catching her almost in his arms, and holding her firmly; and his voice sounded deep, hoarse and full of commiseration. "How am I to dare to tell you, Louise?"

"Mr. Leslie!"

She half struggled from him, but he retained her hands.

"Tell me," he cried; "what shall I say? Am I to speak out?"

"Yes, quick! You torture me."

"Torture you, whom I would die to save from pain!"

She trembled and flushed, and turned pale by turns.

"I must tell you," he said; "there is no time to spare, I have—try and bear it, my child, like the true, brave heart you are. Your brother——"

"Yes; quick! what do you mean?"

Leslie stood looking at her for a few moments, his mind dragged two ways, and shrinking from giving his news as he gazed into her dilated eyes.

"Why do you not speak?" she said passionately. "Do you not see the pain you give me?"

"I must speak," he groaned. "Where is your brother? There is a horrible rumour in the town. Mr. Crampton——"

"Crampton!"

"Accuses your brother of having robbed and struck down Mr. Van Heldre."

"It is a lie!" she cried fiercely, as she snatched away her hands, gazing at him with flashing eyes and burning cheeks. "My brother a thief—almost a murderer! Oh!"

"It cannot be true," said Leslie; "but——"

"Weak and reckless and foolish; but—oh, why have you come up to say these things?"

"Because I love you!" he cried passionately; and he caught her hands in his, and held them tightly. "Because I knew that the horrible charge must soon reach your ears, and that it would be better that it should come from me—when you were in trouble—when you wanted help."

"It is not true—it is not true!" cried Louise, excitedly.

"Where is he? Let me see him. I may be able to advise and help. Louise, dear Louise, let this terrible time of trial be that which brings us together. Let me prove to you how I love you by being your counsellor, your aid in this time of need."

She heard his words, uttered with an earnestness which told their truth; but their effect was merely to arouse her indignation. How dared he take advantage of her agony and weakness at a time like this, and insult her with his professions! It was an outrage.

"Don't shrink from me," he whispered. "I will say no more now. Forgive my clumsy blundering out of the words I have for months been longing to speak. Only let me feel that you understand me—that I may love; and then you will turn to me for help in this time of trouble."

For answer she pointed to the door.

"It is false," she cried; "my brother a common thief!"

"It must be false," he echoed, against his own belief; "but the charge has been made, and he must be warned in time."

"Warned in time?" she cried. "And you who profess to be our friend, stood by and heard this charge made, and did not strike down the villain who made it."

"Miss Vine—Louise, you are hasty. The shock I know is terrible, but we must be prepared to meet it. He must not be taken unawares."

"My brother can meet such a charge as a gentleman should. It is not the first time that so foul an attack has been made against an innocent man."

"You are too hard upon me," he pleaded.

"How could I, loving you as I do——"

"Loving!" she cried, scornfully.

"What have I done?" he groaned. "I ran up here directly to try and be of service. In my excitement, I spoke words that I should have kept back for a time, but they would have vent, and—No, I am not ashamed of what I have said," he cried, drawing himself up. "Louise Vine, I love you, and I must help you and your brother in this terrible strait."

"Then go back to the town, and tell all who have dared to say my brother committed this crime that what they say is false, and that his father, his sister will prove his innocence. Go!"

"Yes, go!" said a shrill, harsh voice.

"Louise, go to your room and let me speak to this man."

"Aunt, you have heard?"

"Yes, from the servants. And I heard his last insulting words. Go to your room, child."

She threw open the door, and, accustomed to obey from her childhood, Louise moved slowly towards the hall; but as she turned slightly to dart a last indignant look at the man who had set her heart beating wildly as he at the same time roused her indignation, she saw such a look of agony that her courage failed, a strange sense of pity stole through her, and she stepped back and took her aunt's arm.

"Hush, aunt dear," she said, "there is no need to say more. Mr. Leslie has made a great mistake in bringing up that cruel report, and he will go now and contradict it for my brother's sake."

"And apologise for his insult," cried Aunt Marguerite fiercely. "Child, I bade you go to your room."

"Yes, aunt, I am going."

"I must speak to this man alone."

"Aunt, dear—"

"Pray go, Miss Vine," said Leslie, approaching and taking her hand.

She yielded, and he led her to the door.

"Nothing your aunt can say will change my feelings towards you. When you are calm you will forgive me. Believe me, I will do everything to clear your brother from this charge."

She looked at him wildly, and still hesitated to obey her aunt's words. Finally, she gave way, Leslie held the door open till she was on the stairs, and then closed it, his manner completely changing as he turned and faced Aunt Marguerite, who stood with her head thrown back, and an indignant look of anger in her keen eyes.

"So, sir," she exclaimed, "you in your common ignorance of everything connected with the social life of such a family as ours, dare to come up as a tale-bearer—as one of our servants did a few minutes back—and tell this pitiful story about my nephew."

"I grieved greatly, Miss Vine," said Leslie in quiet business-like tones.

"You grieved!" she cried. "A theft! Do you know that a Des Vignes would prefer death to dishonour?"

"No, madam; but I am very glad to hear it, for that being the case Henry Vine must be innocent."

"Innocent!" she cried scornfully. "My nephew Henri! As if it could be for a moment in doubt!"

"I shall strive hard to help Mr. Vine, your brother, to clear him from this disgrace."

"Disgrace, sir? It is no disgrace. If the *canaille* cast mud at one of noble lineage, does it disgrace him? No. The disgrace is where some plebeian—some trading person—is mad enough to advance his pretensions, and dares to address a lady as I heard you address my niece. Let me see, sir, did I not once give you to understand that Miss Louise Des Vignes would in all probability be soon married to a gentleman of Auvergne—a gentleman whose lineage is as noble as her own?"

"I did understand something of the kind, madam, but until I see Miss Louise Vine another's wife I shall boldly advance my pretensions, hoping to the last."

"Even supposing that her brother has committed some *faux pas*?"

"That would be the greater inducement to me to stand by her in her time of need."

"Most gratifying, I am sure, Mr. Leslie, and highly creditable to one of your nationality," said Aunt Marguerite sneeringly, as she raised her glass to her eye, and gazed at him in an amused way. "Now may I ask you to leave me? My brother and my nephew are from home, and I cannot entertain you as I am sure you would wish. Good evening, Mr. Leslie—good evening."

She bowed him out with a sneering smile upon her thin lips, and Leslie hurried back towards the town.

"What shall I do?" he muttered. "Oh, that sneering old woman, how she does raise one's gall! Poor Louise! she did look more gentle toward the last; and I don't believe in the Frenchman of great lineage. If there is one, let's do battle as they did of old, if he likes. What a fool I was to speak as I did just when she was so full of trouble! I must have been mad—a declaration of love, and an announcement that the poor girl's brother was in trouble. The young idiot! The scoundrel! How I should like to have his drilling for the next five years! What shall I do? I must help him. It's true enough, I'm afraid; and he must have the best legal help. If I had only someone to consult with. Van Helder would have been the man."

There was a pause as the young man thought deeply of what steps he ought to take next.

"Yes, with all his sham cynicism and silly whims, the old man is shrewd, and can help when he likes. Uncle Luke!"

CHAPTER XXVII.—A BROTHER'S APPEAL.

LOUISE VINE stood trembling in her own room, listening till she heard the door close, and Duncan Leslie's step on the gravel. Her agitation was terrible, and in place of being clear-headed and ready to act in this emergency, she felt as if her brain was in a turmoil of contending emotions. Indignation on her brother's behalf, anger against Leslie for his announcement, and another form of anger which she could not define struggled with a desire to go to her brother's help, and at last she placed her hands to her head and pressed them there.

"What shall I do?" she panted.

"Louise, Louise, my child!"

It was Aunt Marguerite's voice, and there was a sharp tapping on the panel of the door after the handle had been turned.

"Louise, my child, unlock this door."

She made no reply, but stood with her hands clasped together, listening to the sharp voice and the quick tapping repeated on the

panel. Both ceased after a few minutes, and Aunt Marguerite's door was heard to close loudly.

"I could not talk to her now," muttered the girl. "She makes me so angry. She was so insulting to Mr. Leslie. But he deserved it," she said aloud, with her cheeks burning once more, and her eyes flashing, as she drew herself up. "My brother—a common thief—the man who injured Mr. Van Heldre! It is not true."

She started violently and began to tremble, for there was a sharp pattering on her window panes, as if some one had thrown a few small shot. Would Duncan Leslie dare to summon her like that? The pattering was repeated, and she went cautiously to the window, to make out in the gloom a figure that certainly was not that of Leslie.

She opened the casement with nervous anxiety now.

"Asleep?" cried a hasty voice. "There, stand aside—I'm coming up."

There was a rustling noise—a sharp crack or two, a hand was thrown over the window-sill, and, panting with exertion, Harry clambered in.

"Harry!" cried Louise in alarm, for his acts, his furtive way of coming to the house, and his manifest agitation did not suggest innocence.

"Hush! Don't talk aloud. Where's the governor?"

"Father is at Mr. Van Heldre's."

Harry drew in a quick spasmodic breath.

"And Aunt Marguerite?"

"In her room. But, Harry!"

"Be quiet. Don't talk. Let me get my breath."

Louise stood before him with her hands clasped, and a flow of agonising thoughts seeming to sweep her reason away. All was confusion, but above the flood there was one thing to which she clung—Harry was innocent. In spite of everything in the way of appearance, he was innocent; nothing should turn her from that.

"Well," he said suddenly, "haven't you anything to say?"

There was a savage vindictive tone in his voice which startled her more than his previous threatening way.

"Yes; where have you been? Why do you come back like this?"

"Where have I been? Up on the cliffs, wandering about among the rocks, and hiding till it grew dark and I could come home. And why did I come home like this? You know. Of course you have heard."

"Mr. Leslie came, and——"

"Mr. Leslie!" cried Harry with a mocking laugh. "Save us from our friends."

Louise's sympathy swung round on the instant to the side of the attacked; and, hardly knowing what she said—

"Mr. Leslie came to bear some terrible news, and to offer to help you."

"To help me!" cried Harry with the eagerness of him who catches at straws.

"And you—what did you say?"

"I said the information was false—a miserable invention. And I repeat it. Harry, it is not true?"

He made no reply for a few moments while, sobbing and terrified, Louise clung to him.

"Harry," she said excitedly, "why do you not speak?"

"Don't talk to me," he said hoarsely, "I'm thinking."

"But, Harry, I laugh at Aunt Marguerite's follies about descent and our degradation; but it is your duty to make a stand for our father's sake. Who has dared to accuse you of all this?"

"Don't talk to me," he said in an angry whisper, as he ran to the window and listened, crossing the room directly after to try the door.

Louise gazed at him in a horrified way, and her heart sank down, down, as her brother's acts suggested the possibility of his guilt. Then, like a flash of light, a thought irradiated her darkening soul, and she caught her brother's arm.

"I know!" she cried.

"You—you know?"

"Yes, I see it all now; and why this charge has been made. It was Mr. Pradelle."

"Pradelle!"

"And that is why he left so suddenly. Harry, my poor brother!"

"Let Pradelle be," he said huskily. "I'm not going to hide behind another man."

"Oh! But, Harry!"

"Look here," he said uneasily; "I want your help, and you do nothing but talk."

"I will be silent; but tell me it is not true."

"Do you want me to make matters worse by telling some paltry lie?" he said. "Yes; it is true."

"Harry!"

"No; not all true. I did not steal that money."

"Ah!" ejaculated Louise; and she reeled to her bed, and would have fallen but for the post she grasped.

"I've no time to explain, but you must know. Yes; I did knock old Van Heldre down."

"Harry!" she groaned.

"And Crampton saw me come away; he has sent for the London police; and, unless I can get off, I shall be taken and tried."

Louise literally tottered towards him.

"No, no," he said angrily. "You are going to talk and preach. You don't want to see me disgracing you all by being cast in gaol?"

Disgracing them! Louise's first thought was of Duncan Leslie, and a pang of agony shot through her. How could she ever look him in the face again? A chill that seemed to paralyze shot through her. The hope that she had nursed was cast out, and her brother's word seemed to open out a future so desolate and blank that she turned upon him angrily.

"Harry!" she cried, "this is not—cannot be true." He paid no heed to her words but stood biting his nails, evidently thinking, and at last he turned upon her like one at bay, as she said, after a painful pause: "You do not answer. Am I to believe all this? No, I cannot—will not believe it. Harry. It can't—it can't be true."

"Yes," he said, as if waking from a dream. "One of the lads would take me over in his lugger. St. Malo: that would do. Louy, what money have you?"

"Then it is true?" she said

"True? Yes; it's true enough."

"Then you—oh, Harry, for pity's sake—Harry!"

She burst into a wild fit of sobbing.

"That's right," he cried savagely. "I came to you for help and you go into hysterics. There, unlock that door, and get me something to eat, and while I'm enjoying myself, you can send Liza for the police."

"Harry!"

"Then why don't you act like a sensible girl? Listen: nobody must know that I have been here; not even the governor. I'm going to steal down to the harbour by-and-by; and I shall get Joe Lennen or Dick Paul to take me over to France. If I stay here I shall be arrested, and disgrace you all. There never was such an unlucky fellow as I am. Here, once more, what money have you?"

"Very little, Harry," she said; "about three sovereigns."

"Has aunt any? No; she must not know that I'm here. Louy, you must let me have your watch."

"Yes, Harry," she said, as she stood before him cold and striving hard to master her emotion as a mute feeling of despair attacked her.

"And you'll help me, won't you?"

"Yes, Harry," she said, in the same cold mechanical way.

"Let me have your chain and rings, and any other trinket that will fetch money. Must have something to live upon till this trouble has blown over. You see I am penniless; I am not a thief. I shall soon get right again, and you shall have all these things a dozen times over." She suppressed a sigh. "Be quick then—there's a good girl! I've no time to waste."

Louise moved across the room to the drawers and took from the top a small rose-wood box, which she placed upon the table. Then taking her watch from her waist, she was in the act of unfastening the chain, when there was the sound of a closing door below, and her father's voice, sounding loud and excited, as it called her by name.

CHAP. XXVIII.—IN DEFENCE OF HIS YOUNG.

"LOUISE! Where is Louise?" The step on the stairs sounded like that of a younger man; and as the door was tried, Harry had reached the window, from whence he was about to climb, when he fancied he saw some one below, and he hastily closed the casement, and drew back trembling. "Louise! open this door."

"No, no," whispered Harry. "He must not know I am here."

"Not know?"

"Am I to break this door?" was thundered from the other side.

Harry glanced once more at the window. It was fancy. No one was below now that he could see; and he was in the act of unfastening it when there was a crash, the door flew open, and his father strode into the room. It did not seem to be the same man, and Harry shrank from the fierce, erect, angry figure which approached.

"As I might have guessed. You coward! So you would strip your sister of what money and jewels she has and then escape!" Harry stood before him silent and with his head averted. "You did not counsel this flight, Louise?"

"No, father," she said, in a low voice full of pain; and she looked from one to the other, as if mentally stunned, and unable to realise the force of all that was taking place.

"I thought not. You abject, miserable wretch!"

Harry started, and gazed half in fear, half in wonder, at the stern, commanding figure before him.

"It—it was to save you all from disgrace."

Vine burst into a discordant laugh.

"From disgrace—to save us from disgrace? And is this part of your childish aunt's teaching?"

"Father! Pray!" whispered Louise, rousing herself and clinging to his arm.

"Silence, my child!" he cried. "I am not angry with you. I blame myself. Weak and indulgent. Tolerating that foolish woman's whims, that her old age might pass peacefully away, I have allowed all her follies to go on; but I did not believe these seeds could strike so deep a root. To save us from disgrace! So this is being the aristocratic gentleman of French descent! The man who would prefer death to dishonour—the man who scorns to sully his hands by embarking in some honest trade! And I, wrapped in my pursuits, riding my weak hobby, have let things go on till they have ended thus!"

"But, father, think! Be merciful."

"Think? I dare not, girl. Merciful? No. He is no longer my son. We must bear the disgrace as best we can; hide our shame elsewhere. You and I, father and sister of a miserable convict, who in the pursuit of money and title, could stoop to rob."

"No, no, father; not rob."

"Scoundrel! don't speak or I may forget myself, and strike you down as you struck down your benefactor, the man who stretched out his hand to save you from the ruin that dogged your heels."

"It was a miserable accident, father. I did not steal."

"Bah! Lies come easily to such as you; but I have no words to waste, there is no time for that."

"No, father; quick, before it is too late," whispered Louise. "Let him go; let him escape to France—to repent, father. He is your son."

"No. I disown him. And you counsel this—you, girl?"

"Yes, father, you will spare him," sobbed Louise; "he is my brother."

"He has broken those ties; neither son nor brother to us, my child. He has blasted your future by branding you as a convict's sister, and embittered the few years left to me, so that I would gladly end them now."

"Father!"

"Hush, my child! I am rightly punished for my weakness. I hoped that he would change. I was not blind, only patient, for I

said that these follies would soon pass, and now I am awakened to this. My son in the hands of the police!" he laughed in a wild, discordant tone. "Monsieur Le Comte des Vignes, I must have been mad."

"Go on!" said Harry, fiercely. "Trample me down. There, let me pass. Better in the hands of the police than here."

"No, no!" cried Louise excitedly. "Father, he must escape. It is one great horror, do not make it worse by letting him go there."

"Worse, girl? there is no worse!" cried Vine, sternly. "I thank my God that we are living in a land where stern, good laws are pre-eminent, and where justice rules with unswerving hand. You know not what you say."

"Yes, father—dearest father, help him to go and repent the evil he has done."

"Go and repent? Yes, that is the only hope; but it shall be as the honest repentant man, ready to acknowledge and bear the punishment of his crime."

"Father!"

"Yes; look at him—look at the base, cowering wretch, ready to go and hide his face in any shelter to escape the fate he has earned! Look at his guilty conscience, branding him even now! And you say, let him go!"

"Yes, father. What could I say?"

"Nothing!" cried Harry, turning round, as the trampled worm turns beneath the boot that crushes it into the earth. "It is true; I struck poor old Van Heldre down; but whatever I may have thought before, I did not go to steal that money. I did not steal it. And now what do you want me to do?"

"Go: act as a man who claims such descent as ours should do, in the country which opened to him its arms, and whose laws he has transgressed. The police are here from London. Go and give yourself up; suffer your punishment as one who would atone, and years hence in the future, when you are freed, come to me and ask my pardon—kneeling humbly by my grave."

"Father!"

"No more. The way is open now. Go at once, before you are dragged through the streets handcuffed like some common felon. To save us from disgrace you say—that is the only way."

He stood erect, with his eyes flashing, knit brows, and nostrils quivering, pointing to the door, while with his left arm he supported Louise, whose face gazed wildly into

his, no mean representative of that *Haute Noblesse* which had sought refuge here when persecution drove them from their land.

"Father! Harry!" cried Louise, but only the latter spoke.

"Yes," he said, drawing himself up. "You are right, I'll go."

He strode quickly toward the door; but before he reached it, Liza threw it back.

"Miss Louise," she cried, "the police!"

With hasty stride the old man rushed to the door and thrust it to.

"Oh!" he gasped, and then after a pause there was one low, hoarse appeal to heaven for aid, "My God!"

The adjuration spoke volumes, and for a few moments the old man stood there as if in a cataleptic state. Then a change came over him, his pale face flushed, the veins in his forehead stood out and throbbed, and he dashed to his son.

"Quick, Harry! France!"

As he spoke Harry broke from him and dashed to the window, threw it open, and was about to spring out, but he drew back. There was no fancy this time; two policemen could be dimly seen below.

"Too late, father," he said calmly.

"No, my boy! this way, hush!"

He snatched open the door, and a quick-looking, well-knit man stood framed in the entry.

"Ah!" he said sharply, as he fixed Harry with his eye, "Mr. Henry Vine, I arrest you on a warrant. Robbery and attempt to murder."

"No," roared the father frantically; and he flung himself upon the officer. "Run, Harry, run!"

Louise stood clinging to the ironwork of her bedstead, sick with horror, as a terrible struggle ensued. It only lasted a few moments; and as she saw her father and the detective officer wrestling together, her brother clenched his fists, set his teeth, and dashed at them.

"No, no; run!" roared the father in a voice she did not know; and in obedience, Harry dashed through the doorway and was gone.

"You're mad, old man!" cried the detective, tearing himself free, drawing back, and then rushing towards the door.

But with a wonderful display of activity and vigour, the old naturalist sprang at him once more, and with clenched fist struck him so fierce a blow full on the cheek that the man swerved sideways, and would have fallen but for the wall.

"When I come back!" he roared savagely, as he recovered himself; and, springing through the door, he bounded down the stairs after Harry Vine, father and sister staggering to the landing just as the door across the hall swung to with a heavy bang, and the sounds of feet rapidly beating the shingle rose loudly on the silence of the night.

CHAPTER XXIX.—ON HIS BEHALF.

"WHAT have I done? what have I done?" groaned Vine. "I might have forgiven him and let him escape, and then—— Louise, Louise, my child, come with me. We must find him and help."

Louise hurried back into her room to get hat and scarf, and returned to the landing to find her father and Aunt Margaret face to face.

"It is a judgment upon you, George—a judgment!" cried the old lady excitedly. "Yes; you dragged the poor boy down to that wretched life, and in his madness and misery he made one bold stroke for freedom."

"Louise, my child, quick!" cried Vine. "I cannot answer her now. Quick! get me away, or I shall say words to her that I shall repent as long as I live."

"I say it is a judgment!" cried Aunt Margaret. "Poor boy! if you had taken my advice——"

The door closed. They were out in the clear, starry night, hurrying down the path toward the town, but Aunt Margaret's words were ringing in Vine's ears. A judgment.

Why? What had he done?

"Have I been to blame? Is she right? Have I been to blame?" he muttered, as they hurried down, the words being the secret communings of his heart, but they were loud enough for Louise to hear, and as she clung to his arm she whispered emphatically—

"No, father, no!"

"No? Louise, what are you saying?"

"That you have not been to blame. My dear, patient, indulgent father."

"Indulgent?" he said hoarsely. "Yes; indulgent. I have been indulgent, and yet heaven knows how I have striven to make ours a happy home for all."

"And you have, father," sobbed Louise, "till Harry proved so wilful and went astray."

"Yes; went astray. But he must go, my child; he must not be taken. I have a little money with me, and will send him more. I

want to do that which is just and right, but I could not bear to see him taken off to gaol."

Louise uttered a low moan as they hurried on down the path.

"Where will he go? Where will he hide?" whispered Vine excitedly. "He could not escape by the road, the railway station is certain to be watched, and there is the telegraph."

"Stop!" said Louise, holding one hand to her head, as in the terrible confusion of conflicting thought she tried to recall something her brother had said.

"Yes, I recollect now," she said. "He told me he meant to escape across to France, and that he would ask one of the fishermen to sail with him to St. Malo."

"Hah! yes. Then he will escape. Whom did he say?"

"I cannot recollect the name, and yet it is familiar."

"Try, my child, try."

"I am trying hard, father," said Louise sadly, "but I cannot recollect."

"Oh!" groaned her father, as they hurried on down the path, "for pity's sake, try, my child, try."

"Yes, I remember," she cried at last—"Paul."

"Dick Paul—the man who sailed with us to the rocks near Scilly?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Hah! then if he has escaped so far he will be there."

"Do you know which is his cottage?"

"Yes, I know. Quick, girl, quick!"

They almost ran down the rest of the way, each looking excitedly about in the expectation of there being a hue and cry, and of seeing the fugitive rush by, hunted by a senseless crowd, eager to see him caught.

But all was perfectly still, the great stars shone down on the sleepy place, the lights burned in windows here and there, and as they reached a turn where the harbour lay before them the light at the mouth shone out like a lurid, fiery eye, staining the calm water with a patch of light, which seemed weird and strange amidst the spangled gleams reflected from the stars. Hardly a sound, till a swing door was opened a short distance in front, and there floated out in harmony one of the West Country ditties the fishermen loved to sing. The door swung to, and the part-song became a murmur.

Vine gripped his daughter's hand with spasmodic violence, but she did not wince. There was a pain, an agony in her breast

which neutralised all other, as she hurried on by her father's side, thinking now of her erring brother, now of Duncan Leslie. That dream, that growing love which she had tremblingly avowed to herself she felt for the frank, manly young mine-owner, was over, was crushed out, with all its bright-hued hopes of happiness; but he had said he loved her, and offered his aid. Why was he not there now to help, when her brother was in such peril? Why was he not there?

The answer came like a dull blow. She had reviled him, insulted him, and driven him away. Then her heart replied: He loves me, he will forgive my hasty words, and will save my brother if I humble myself and ask.

She started back to the reality from what seemed a dream, as her father hurried on along by a row of ill-built, rugged cottages on the cliff.

"It is in one of these," he said huskily, "but I cannot recall which."

As he hesitated one of the doors was opened and a great, burly merman appeared, pipe in mouth.

"Dick Paul's," he said, in answer to a question, "first door further on. Fine night, master."

"Yes, yes; thank you, thank you," cried Vine hastily.

"But he arn't at home."

"What?"

"Him and four more went out at sundown to shoot their nets."

Vine uttered a low groan.

"Good night!" said the man, and he moved off.

"Stop!" cried Vine, and the man's heavy boots ceased to clatter on the rugged pebbles with which the way was paved.

"Call me, Master Vine?"

"Yes. You know me?"

"Know you? Ay, and the young lady too. Liza Perrow's Uncle Bob. Didn't I take you 'long the coast one day?"

"Yes, yes, of course," said Vine hastily.

"Look here, my man; you have a boat."

"Third share, master; just going out now. My mates are waiting yonder."

"In the harbour?"

"Ay. That's their lantern."

"Look here, Perrow," said Vine excitedly, as he held the man tightly by the arm, "you are going fishing?"

"Going to have a try, master."

"And you will perhaps earn a pound a-piece."

"If we are lucky. Pr'aps naught."

"Perrow," whispered the old man, with his lips close to the man's face, "will you do me a service—a great service?"

"Sarvice, sir?—Ay, sure I will."

"Then look here. Your boat would sail across to France?"

"To France?" said the great bluff fellow, with a chuckle. "Why, didn't some of our mates sail to Spain in a lugger a foot shorter than ours, and not so noo a boot! France, ay, or Spain either."

"Then look here; take a passenger over for me to-night; and I'll give you fifty pounds."

"Fifty pounds, Master Vine?"

"Yes. Be ready; take him safely over, and bring me back word from him that he's safe, and I'll pay you a hundred."

"Will you shake hands on that, master?"

"You will do it?"

"Do it for you, Master Vine? Why, sir, bless you, we'd ha' done it for five. But if you tempt poor men wi' a big lump o' money like that—Do it? I should think we will."

"But your partners?" said Louise excitedly.

"Never your mind about them, miss. I'm cap'n o' our boot. Where's our passenger? Lor, miss, don't do that."

The man started, for Louise had caught his rough hand and kissed it.

"I'll soon bring him to you," said the old man, with his voice trembling; "but look here, my man—you must ask no questions, you will not be put off, you will not refuse at the last moment?"

"Look here, Master Vine, sir," said the man stolidly, "I arn't a fool. Hundred pounds' a lot o' money, and of course it's to smuggle some one away on the quiet. Well, so be it."

"Hah!" ejaculated Vine.

"It's to 'blige you as I've knowd for a kind-hearted gent these ever so many years, though there was that bit o' trouble 'bout my brother's lass, as I don't believe took that there money."

"No, no, she was innocent," cried Louise.

"Thanks for that, miss, and—say, has young Master Harry been up to some game?"

There was no reply.

"Never mind. Don't you speak without you like, Master Vine, sir. Yonder's our boot, and I'll go down to her, and she shall lie off just outside, and I'll wait in our little punt down by the harbour steps. Will that do?"

"Yes; and you will trust me to pay you a hundred pounds?"

"Trust you?"

The man uttered a low chuckle.

"How long will he be, master?"

"I—I don't know. Wait till he comes."

"Master Harry?" whispered the man.

"Yes."

"All right, sir. You trust me. I'll trust you. Night, miss. I'll wait there if it's a week."

"Hah!" ejaculated Vine, as the man's heavy step went on before them. "There is a way of escape for him. I am a father, and what I ought to do by my friend pales before that. Now to find him, my child, to find him. He *must* escape."

Louise clung to his arm, and they stood there on the cliff path listening, and each mentally asking the question, what to do?

"If I could only get the faintest clue of his movements," muttered Vine. "Louise, my child, can you not suggest something?"

She did not answer, for a terrible dread was upon her now. Her brother might have been taken; and if so, there was no need to hesitate as to the way to go.

As if the same thoughts had impressed him, Vine suddenly exclaimed,

"No, no, they would not have taken him. The man was a stranger, and Harry would be too quick."

For the next hour they hurried here and there, passing Van Heldre's house, where a dim light in the window showed where the injured man lay. There was a vague kind of feeling that sooner or later they would meet Harry, but the minutes glided slowly by, and all was still.

Out beyond the harbour light the faint gleam of a lantern could be seen, showing that Bob Perrow had kept faith with them, and that the lugger was swinging in the rapid current, fast to one of the many buoys used by the fishermen in fine weather. But there was no sign or sound apparent; and, with their hearts sinking beneath the impression that Harry had been taken, and yet not daring to go and ask, father and daughter still wandered to and fro along the various streets of the little town.

"Can he have taken boat and gone?" whispered Vine at last.

"No," said Louise, "there would not have been time, and we should have seen the lights had a boat gone out."

"George!"

Two figures suddenly appeared out of the darkness, and stopped before them.

"Luke? You here?"

"Yes; have you seen him?"

"No; but is—is he—"

"No, Mr. Vine," said Leslie quickly. "I have been up to the station twice."

"Sir!"

"For heaven's sake don't speak to me like that, Mr. Vine," cried Leslie. "I know everything, and I am working for him as I would for my own brother."

"Yes, it's all right, George," said Uncle Luke, with his voice softening a little. "Leslie's a good fellow. Look here; we must get the young dog away. Leslie has chartered a fast boat, and she lies in the head of the harbour ready."

"Ah!"

It was an involuntary ejaculation from Louise.

"We'll have him taken across the Channel if we can find him. Where can he be hidden?"

"We have been twice on to your house, Mr. Vine," said Leslie, who kept right away from Louise, and out of delicacy seemed to ignore her presence, but spoke so that she could hear every word. "I have three of my miners on the look out—men I can trust, and law or no law, we must save him from arrest."

"Heaven bless you, Mr. Leslie. Forgive—"

"Hush, sir. There is no time for words. The men from London with our own police are searching in every direction. He got right away, and he is hiding somewhere, for he certainly would not take to the hills or the road, and it would be madness to try the rail."

"Yes," said Uncle Luke. "He's safe to make for the sea, and so get over yonder. There's a boat lying off though, and I'm afraid that's keeping him back. The police have that outside to stop him."

"No; that is a boat I have chartered, Luke, waiting to save my poor boy."

"Then before many hours are gone he'll be down by the harbour, that's my impression," said Uncle Luke. "Confound you, George, why did you ever have a boy!"

George Vine drew a long breath and remained silent.

"If you will allow me, gentlemen," said Leslie, "I think we ought not to stay here like this. The poor fellow will not know what precautions his friends have taken, and some one ought to be on the look out to give him warning whenever he comes down to the harbour."

"Yes; that's true."

"Then if I may advise, I should suggest,

sir, that you patrol this side to and fro, where you must see him if he comes down to make for the west point; I'll cross over and watch the east pier, and if Mr. Luke Vine here will stop about the head of the harbour, we shall have three chances of seeing him instead of one."

Louise pressed her hand to her throbbing heart, as she listened to these words, and in spite of her agony of spirits, noted how Leslie avoided speaking to her, devoting himself solely to the task of helping her brother; and as she felt this, and saw that in future they could be nothing more than the most distant friends, a suffocating feeling of misery seemed to come over her, and she longed to hurry away, and sob to relieve her overcharged breast.

"Leslie's right," said Uncle Luke, in a decisive way. "Let's separate at once. And look here, whoever sees him is to act, give him some money, and get him off at once. He must go. The trouble's bad enough now, it would be worse if he were taken, and it's the last thing Van Helder would do, hand him to the police. Leslie!"

He held up his hand, but the steps he heard were only those of some fishermen going home from the river.

"Now, then, let's act; and for goodness' sake, let's get the young idiot away, for I warn you all, if that boy's taken there'll be far worse trouble than you know of now."

"Uncle Luke!" cried Louise piteously.

"Can't help it, my dear. There will, for I shall end a respectable life by killing old Crampton and being hung. Come along, Leslie."

The little party separated without a word, and Louise and her father stood listening till the steps of their late companions died away.

CHAPTER XXX.—"IN THE QUEEN'S NAME."

As they stood together at the lower end of the rocky point listening and waiting, it seemed to Louise Vine as if she were about to be an actor in some terrible scene.

Vine muttered a few words now and then, but they were inaudible to his child, who clung to his arm as he walked untiringly to and fro, watching the harbour and the way back into the town, while when he paused it was to fix his eyes upon the dimly-seen lantern of the lugger lying out beyond the point. The portion of their walk nearest the town was well kept and roughly paved with great slabs of granite, in which were here and there great rings for mooring pur-

poses, while at some distance apart were projecting masses roughly hewn into posts. But as the distance from the town increased and the harbour widened, the jutting point was almost as if it had been formed by nature, and the footing was difficult, even dangerous at times.

But in his excitement Vine did not heed this, going on and on regardless of the difficulties, and Louise unobtrusively walked or at times climbed along till they were right out at the extreme point where, some feet below them, the water rushed and gurgled in and out of the crevices with terrible gasping noises, such as might be made by hungry sea monsters thronging round to seize them if either of them should make a slip.

Here Vine paused again and again to watch the lantern in the lugger, and listen for the rattle of oars in the rowlocks, the oars of the boat conveying his son to the men who would at once hoist the sails and bear him away to a place of safety. But the dim light of the horn lantern rose and fell, there was no rattle of oars, not even the murmur of a voice; nothing but the sucking, gasping noises at their feet, as the tide swirled by like the race of waters from some huge mill.

Louise clung more tightly to her father's arm, as he stood again and again where she had often from a rock behind watched her uncle deftly throwing out his line to capture some silvery-sided bass or a mackerel, glowing with all the glories of the sea at sunrise.

"If he should slip," she said to herself, as she tightened her grasp of her father's thin arm, "if he should slip!" and she shuddered as she gazed down into the deep, black rushing water, where the star reflections were all broken up and sparkled deep down as if the current were charged with gold dust, swirling and eddying by. Then she started as her father spoke aloud to himself.

"No, no, no!" he murmured. Then sharply, "Come, let us get back."

Louise crept along by him in silence, her heart giving one violent leap, as Vine slipped once on the spray-wet rocks, but recovered himself and went on without a word. Again and again, she suffered that terrible catching of the breath, as her father slipped, caught his foot in some inequality, or would, but for her guidance, have stumbled over some projecting rock post and been thrown into the harbour. For, as he walked on, his eyes were constantly searching the dark sur-

face as he listened intently for some token of the escaping man.

But all was still as they neared the town, still with the silence of death. No one could have told that there were watchers by the ferry, where a rough boat was used for crossing from side to side of the harbour; that two boats were waiting, and that Duncan Leslie was patrolling the short arm of granite masonry that ran down to the tower-like building where the harbour lantern burned.

"Hist!" whispered Louise, for there was a step some little distance away, but it ceased, and as she looked in its direction, the cliffs seemed to tower up behind the town till a black, jagged ridge cut the starry sky.

"Let's go back," said her father, huskily. "I fancied I heard a boat stealing along the harbour; we cannot see the lugger light from here."

"George!" came from out of the darkness ahead.

"Yes, Luke!" was whispered back sharply, and the old man came up.

"Seen anything of him?"

"No. Have you?"

"Not a sign. I sent one of the fishermen up to the police to see what he could find out, and——"

"Uncle!" panted out Louise, as she left her father to cling to the old man.

"Poor little lassie! poor little lassie!" he said tenderly, as he took her and patted her head. "No news, and that's good news. They haven't got him, but they're all out on the watch; the man from London and our dunderheads. All on the watch, and I fancy they're on the look out close here somewhere, and that's what keeps him back."

Louise uttered a low moan.

"Ah, it's bad for you, my dear," said Uncle Luke, whose manner seemed quite changed. "You come with me, and let me take you home. We don't want another trouble on our hands."

"No, no," she said firmly, "I cannot leave him."

"But you will be ill, child."

"I cannot leave him, uncle," she said again; and going back to her father, she locked her fingers about his arm.

"Hi! ho! look out!" came from a distance; and it was answered directly by a voice not a hundred yards away.

A thrill of excitement shot through the little group as they heard now the tramp of feet.

"I knew it," whispered Uncle Luke. "He's making for the harbour now."

"Ah!" gasped Vine, as he almost dragged Louise over the rugged stones.

"Stop where you are," said Uncle Luke, excitedly: and he placed something to his lips and gave a low shrill whistle.

It was answered instantly from the other side of the harbour.

"Leslie's on the look out. Yes, and the men with the boat," he whispered, excitedly, as another low whistle was heard.

Then there was a few moments' silence, as if people were listening, followed by steps once more, and a quick voice exclaimed from out of the darkness,

"Seen him?"

Neither of the group answered, and a man stepped up to them and flashed the light of a lantern quickly over them before closing it again.

"That's you, is it?" he said. "I'll have a word with you by-and-by; but look here, I call upon you two men in the Queen's name to help me to take him. If you help him to get away, it's felony, so you may take the consequences. You haven't got to do with your local police now."

The man turned away and walked swiftly back toward the town, the darkness seeming to swallow him up. He paused for a few moments at the edge of the harbour, to throw the light of his lantern across the water.

"The London man," said Uncle Luke, unconcernedly. "Well, God save the Queen, but I'm sure she don't want us to help to capture our poor boy."

CHAPTER XXXI.—"OH! ABSALOM, MY SON, MY SON."

HARRY VINE had but one thought as he dashed out of his father's house, and that was to escape—far away to some other country where neither he nor his crime was known—to some place where, with the slate of his past life wiped clean, he might begin anew, and endeavour to show to his father, to his sister, perhaps to Madelaine Van Heldre, that he was not all bad. How he would try, he told himself. Only let him get aboard one of the fishing luggers, and after confiding in some one or other of his old friends, the bluff fishermen who had often given him a sail or a day's fishing, beg of him to take him across to Jersey or St. Malo; anywhere, so as to avoid the terrible exposure of the law—anywhere to be free.

"I'd sooner die than be taken," he said to himself as he sped on downward at a rapid rate.

The way to the harbour seemed clear,
XXX—30

and, though the officer was pursuing him, Harry had the advantage of the darkness, and the local knowledge of the intricate ways of the little town, so that he felt no fear of being able to reach the harbour and some boat. He was reckoning without his host. His host, or would-be host, was the detective sergeant who had gone about his business in a business-like manner, so that when Harry Vine was congratulating himself upon the ease with which he was able to escape, one of the local policemen started from his post right in the fugitive's way, nearly succeeding in catching him by the arm, an attention Harry avoided by doubling down one of the little alleys of the place. Over and over again he tried to steal down to the harbour, but so sure as he left his hiding-place in one of the dark lanes or among the fishermen's stores he heard steps before him, and with the feeling that the whole town had now risen up against him, and that the first person he encountered would seize and hold him until the arrival of the police, he crept back, bathed with cold perspiration, to wait what seemed to be an interminable time before he ventured again.

His last hiding-place was a wooden shed not far from the water-side—a place of old ropes and sails, and with a loft stored full of carefully dried nets, put away till the shoals of fish for which they were needed visited the shore. Here in profound ignorance of what had been done on his behalf, he threw himself down on a heap of tarred canvas to try and devise some certain means of escape. He had a vague intention of getting the fishermen to help him; but after thinking of several he could not decide which of the sturdy fellows would stand by such a culprit as he. And as he lay there the bitter regrets for the past began to attack him.

"Louise—sister," he muttered to himself, "I must have been mad. And I lie here groaning like the coward I am," he said fiercely, as, thrusting back all thoughts of the past with the intention of beginning afresh, he stole out once more into the dark night, meaning to get to the harbour, and, failing a better means, to take some small sailing-boat, and to trust to his own skill to get safely across.

The place was far more quiet now; and, avoiding the larger lanes, he threaded his way through passage after passage among the net stores and boat-houses till he reached the main street, along which he was walking noiselessly when a heavy regular pace ahead

checked him, and, turning shortly round, he made for the first narrow back lane, reached it, and turned trembling as he recognised that it was the familiar path leading by the back of Van Helder's, the way he knew so well.

Hurrying on, he had nearly reached the bottom when he became aware of the fact that there was a policeman waiting. He turned sharply back, after nearly walking into the arms of one of his enemies, and was nearly at the top once more when he found that the man whom he had tried to avoid was there too waiting.

"I'm caught," he said bitterly, as he paused midway. "Shall I dash for liberty? No," he said bitterly; "better give up."

He raised his hand to guide himself silently along, when he shivered, for it touched a gate which yielded, and as the steps advanced from front and rear, he stepped down. Fate in her irony had decided that, to avoid arrest, he should take refuge in the premises of the man he had injured. The steps came nearer, and trembling with horror the fugitive glanced upward to see that two windows were illumined, and there was light enough to show that the door leading into the corridor was open. He shrank from it, and was then driven to enter and stand inside, listening, for the steps stopped outside, the door yielded, and a voice said:

"Couldn't have been him. He wouldn't have gone there."

The gate swung gently to and the fugitive began to breathe more freely, for, after a low whispered conversation, it was evident that the watchers were about to separate, when there was a loud cough which Harry knew only too well; and to his horror he saw faintly in at the end of the passage, his figure more plain by a light in the hall, the short stooping figure of Crampton coming towards him. To have stepped out into the yard would have been into the light, where the old man must have seen him; and, obeying his first instinct, Harry crouched down, and as Crampton advanced, backed slowly along the corridor till farther progress was stayed by the outer door of the office. Harry sank down in the corner, a dark shapeless heap to any one who had approached, and with heart throbbing, he waited.

"He is coming into the office," he thought.

But as the old man reached the opening into the yard he paused. There was a faint rustling, then a flash, and a match flared out illumining the old clerk's stern countenance, and it seemed as the tiny splint burned that

discovery must take place now. But Crampton was intent upon the business which had brought him there. He had stolen out from his self-appointed task of watching over the house to have his nightly pipe, and for fully an hour, Harry Vine crouched in the corner by the office door seeing over and over again the horrors of the past, and trembling as he waited for the fresh discovery, while old Crampton softly paced the little yard, smoking pipe after pipe.

That hour seemed as if it would never end, and at last in despair Harry was about to rise, when he heard Madelaine's voice, gently calling to the old man.

"Hah!" he said softly; "a bad habit, Miss Madelaine, but it seems to soothe me now."

Would he fasten the door and gate, and complete the horror of Harry's position by making him a prisoner? The young man crouched there trembling, for Crampton recrossed the yard, and there was the sound of two bolts being shot. Then he regained the glass door, and was about to close that.

"No," said Madelaine softly; "the night is so hot. Leave that open, Mr. Crampton."

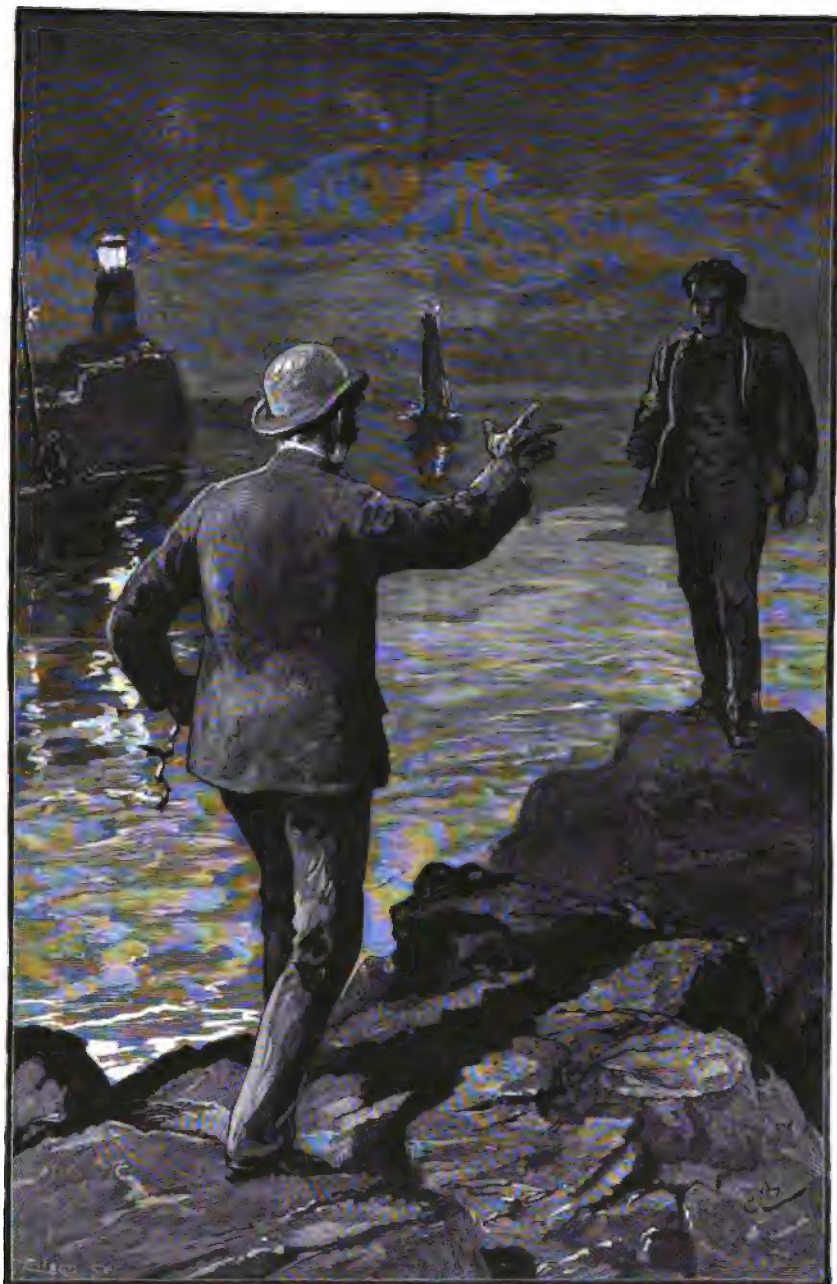
"Yes, my dear; yes, my dear," sighed the old man. "I shall be in the little room, and no one is likely to come here now."

Gone at last; and trembling so in his wild excitement that he could hardly stir, Harry Vine literally crept along the corridor, rose up and ran across the yard with the horrible sensation that the old clerk's hand was about to descend upon his shoulder. The two bolts were shot back with a loud snap, the gate was flung open; and, reckless now, he dashed out and down the narrow lane.

"He could bear no more," he said. "The harbour and a boat." He ran now rapidly, determined to end the terrible suspense, and for the first few moments, he felt that his task would be easy; then he heard a warning shout, and in his dread took refuge in the first alley leading down to the harbour.

Steps passed, and he emerged at the lower end, gained the main street by returning through another of the alleys by which, after the fashion of Yarmouth, the little town was scored.

"Five minutes will take me there now," he panted; and, forcing himself to walk, he was hurrying on when a shout told him that his enemies were well upon the alert. With the horrible sense of being hunted, he dashed on, blindly now, reckless as to which way he went, so long as he reached the water-side. As he ran, he was



"Will you give in?" cried the officer.

about to strike down to the left where the landing steps lay ; and had he reached them there was a boat and men waiting, but the London detective had discovered that and was on the alert.

Harry almost ran into his arms, but with a cry of rage he doubled back and ran for the shore, where he might set pursuit at defiance by hiding in the rocks below the cliff. But another man sprang up in his way, and in his despair he ran off to his left again, right along the great pier, towards the point.

"We've got him now," shouted a voice behind as Harry rushed out, just conscious of a shriek as he brushed by a group of figures, hardly seen in the darkness. He heard, too, some confused words in which "boat" and "escape" seemed to be mingled. But in his excitement he could only think of those behind, as there came the patter of his pursuers' feet on the rough stones.

There was a shrill whistle from the other side of the harbour, followed by a hail, and the splash of oars in the darkness, while a low "ahoy!" came from off the point.

"Yes," muttered the officer between his teeth, "you're a nice party down here, but I've got my man."

What followed was the work of moments. Harry ran on till the rugged nature of the point compelled him to walk, then step cautiously from rock to rock. The harbour was on one side, the tide rushing in on the other ; before him the end of the point, with its deep water and eddying currents, which no swimmer could stem, and behind him the London officer with the local police close up.

There was a boat, too, in the harbour, and the fugitive had heard the whistle and cries. He saw the light of the lugger out ahead, and to him, in his mad horror of capture,

they meant enemies—enemies on every hand.

And so he reached the extreme point, where, peering wildly about, like some hunted creature seeking a way of escape, he turned at bay.

"There, sir, the game's up," cried the officer. "You've made a good fight of it, so now give in."

"Keep back!" roared Harry hoarsely. And he stooped and felt about for a loose piece of rock where every scrap had been washed away.

"Will you give in?" cried the officer.

"Keep back!" cried Harry again, in a tone so fierce that for a moment the officer paused.

There was another whistle from across the harbour, a shout and a hail out of the darkness, but nothing save the dim lantern light could be seen.

"Now then, you two," said the officer decidedly, "back me up."

There was a faint click as he drew something from his pocket and without hesitation stepped boldly over the few feet which separated him from Harry Vine.

Panting, half wild, hearing the whistles, the cries, and still divining nothing but that there were enemies on every hand, the young man uttered a hoarse cry as the detective caught at his breast. With one well-aimed blow he struck out, sent the man staggering back, and then, as those who had watched and waited came panting up, he turned quickly, stepped to the very edge, raised his hands, and plunged into the rushing tide.

"Harry! my son!" rang out on the darkness of the night.

But there was no answer. The black water seemed to flash with a myriad points of light, and then ran, hissing and rushing in a contending current, out to sea.

A LIFE TOLD IN A PRAYER.

Short Sunday Readings for June.

By THE REV. T. VINCENT TYMMS.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read 1 Chron. iv. 9-10; Ps. xxvii.; Phil. i. 1-20.

AN ANCIENT PRAYER.

THERE are places in the Bible from which most readers are repelled as dry and thirsty regions where no water is. One of these places lies in the opening chapters of

the First Book of Chronicles. For several pages scarcely an incident relieves the monotony of genealogies which to the impatient seem endless and unprofitable. Chapter follows chapter crowded with names which, to modern ears, are neither musical nor famous. Catalogues of sons and daughters and wives, but scarcely a gleam of light on all the love and hate, the grief and joy, the shame and

glory of the human lives they represent. For the ethnologist, the historian, and the critical microscopist there are no doubt promising materials; but who can extract spiritual water from these sandy wastes? What living interest can be excited, what sympathies aroused, what mental culture be promoted by dragging our weary eyes over this expanse of names? We sometimes groan over the tedious prolixity of modern biographies, and begrudge the hours required for their perusal; but, laying aside many portly volumes as too long for such a busy age, we pass to these ancient records, and turn unread the few leaves which preserve the memorials of hundreds of chief men because they are too short! What a comment on the emptiness and obscurity of earthly glory, when generations of heroes, judges and bards, are thus neglected, and these names, which once were clothed with mystic power and thrilled men's hearts with passionate affections, are scarcely glanced at as dusty relics of ages the world is willing to forget!

But a better reward awaits the reader of these chapters than any vague suggestions. Hidden from many dainty readers of the Bible, there lies a precious fragment of spiritual biography in the midst of this dried field. It contains nothing that could well be called an incident, and yet it is a rich revelation of a worthy man's life. It simply tells us that a child was borne in sorrow by a nameless woman, that he became more honourable than his brethren, prayed a certain prayer, and that God granted his request. The narrative is little longer than an epitaph. It lies imbedded in a genealogical list, but makes no mention of the man's tribe or family, his place of abode, his social calling or station, the number of his days, the manner of his death, or the date of his career. The prayer which has been preserved was probably offered by Jabez at some great crisis of his history. The chronicler no doubt knew the man's story, and may have left it unwritten, as perfectly familiar in his day. But how remarkable for the author or editor of a pedigree to forget his immediate business and omit even those special details which would connect Jabez with his ancestors and his posterity! We can well afford, however, to forgive these omissions, for this prayer tells no more of the real man, "the hidden man of the heart," than we know of some whose deeds and words are preserved in ponderous books, whose figures are graven in marble, and

whose faces linger for our gaze through the magic of the painter's art.

A man's life may be told in his prayers at least as truly as in his actions. Indeed we never know people aright unless we know whether they pray, and what things they pray for. It is rightly said that "actions speak louder than words," but even actions are deceptive. We often do the things we would not, and find not how to do the things we would, but who can understand our faults or virtues, our failures or our victories, unless they know how we deplore the evil and disclaim the merit of the good before the great heart-searcher? Men's actions are often ambiguous, often inconsistent with each other, and often at variance with their most cherished purposes; but their prayers honestly told reveal the essential qualities of their spirits. One whose soul is full of music, of generous feelings and poetic thought, may be compelled to spend his days in menial drudgery, but if we could overhear his secret prayers we might catch the organ tones of a now "mute inglorious Milton." Another may be driven to spend his strength in battle-fields, although his heart is set on peace. If we only knew the story of David's actions we might be inclined to describe him as a passionate soldier with a soldier's vices. But, reading his prayers, we are convinced that his heart was not in camps, and that his great crimes were the bitter fruits of declension from himself as a man of God. He would rather build a Temple than scatter armies; and after his great transgression not merely cried for mercy when punishment was denounced, but moaned and sighed for purity as sick men yearn for health. The prayers of David lay bare that invisible arena whereon his true fight was fought and reveal those aspirations after holiness and divine communion which neither an outlaw's troubles nor royal cares could quench. A simple incident from common life to-day may show the same truth in another form. The wife of a working man was recently touched with the love of Christ, and her whole character was suddenly transformed. She had inherited a passionate temper, and time had not improved it. Her scolding voice and rasping sarcasms had made home wretched to her husband, who answered railing with oaths, and sometimes when defeated by her superior tongue, with blows. Now, all this was changed. The shrew was tamed, and for some weeks a great peace settled down upon the household. But one morning the old

fire blazed up again under some grievous provocation, and hot words having once burst forth, the woman's anger against herself mingling with the shame of failure and disgrace, made passion more furious and ungovernable than it had ever been before. Hastening his escape, the man went out to his work, muttering words of scorn about the religion which thus speedily proved vain. Before going very far he found that in his excitement he had left his tools behind and reluctantly turned back. Hoping to avoid notice he opened the door softly and was creeping along the passage to an outhouse when he heard his wife's voice. She was evidently in distress, but to whom could she be talking? Standing silently in the doorway he looked into the room and all was plain. The woman sat by the fire-side rocking herself to and fro, her apron drawn up over her face, with hands pressed against the bowed head while she moaned with strong agony and tears, "O God, forgive me for speaking so to my dear husband! O God, I never thought to do it again! O Lord, I have lost his love for ever now, and I deserve that, but O Christ, I have driven him away from Thee!" What a revelation of that woman's true self and of the religion she had learned to prize! That simple prayer melted the listener's heart. He understood it all now. Visions of new life and tender joys flooded his mind. With a great lump in his throat which choked all words, he uncovered the tear-distorted face, and the kiss which sealed his penitent forgiveness was a new marriage vow. No confessions, no apologies, no promises, not even months of sweet reasonableness could have revealed what that prayer unveiled. So it must ever be. We never know another human being until we know how he views himself in God's presence: the deepest secrets, the profoundest verities, the holiest emotions of the inner life can find no language but in prayer.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Gen. xxii. 1-18; Matt. v. 1-16.

THE DIVINE BLESSING.

Interpreting the life of Jabez by his recorded prayer, the first clause goes far to show what manner of man he was. "Oh, that Thou wouldst bless me indeed." God's blessing must needs include all good gifts and perfect boons. Thus we see Jabez presenting himself before the God of his fathers, as a creature of many wants and fears, of

small power yet immeasurable desires, to entreat the favour of Heaven upon his ways. It may be urged that there is nothing very special or peculiar in this plea, and the assertion is true. Millions have offered up the same entreaty, and are offering it in substance every day. But partly because the prayer is so broad and common it enables us to determine the class to which Jabez belonged. The broadest distinction which can be drawn between men is precisely this, that in some there is an intense longing for the Divine blessing, while others either ignore God or wish to live as far as possible in independence. It is a distinction which runs across and cuts down deeper than the divisions of Church and sect, and yawns into a wider gulph of separation than that which severs the various religions of mankind. There is more in common between a true worshipper of the Father as declared by Christ, and a poor heathen whose soul thirsts and cries out for the help of an unknown God, than there is between a godly and an ungodly man bowing side by side in a Christian sanctuary. For those who are not deceived by differences of form and language, there is a deep unity of spirit to be seen in all who bow before the Ineffable. In "the dim cathedral wrapped in reverend gloom," where the organ music swells to storms of sound and faints to silvery whispers, and throngs kneel down before the uplifted host; in the village meeting-house, devoid of ornament, where simple psalm tunes, sung by untrained voices, and plain prayers and exhortations fill the hour of service; in the stately mosque, where at the call to prayer, "the busy crowd, merchant, and prince, and water-carrier, all" turn from the world, and kneel, "facing the holy city;" and in the heathen temple, where rites obscene and murderous attest the intensity of human hunger for the favour of a higher power, in all places where prayer is made, a sympathetic ear can catch from some among the crowds a tone of common helplessness and supplication. "Oh, that Thou wouldst bless me indeed!" It was the birth cry of the supplanter, Jacob, on the night of his transformation into Israel. It is the appeal of prodigals as they return to seek the Father they once left, and the birthright they profanely sold. It is the sigh of all who find that earthly gain, and fame, and pleasure, pall and disgust while the heart has no holy fear on which to live. Happy are they who have learned to sum up all their needs in this desire for a heavenly

benediction. God's blessing is like the sunshine, which glorifies all beauty and redeems from unsightliness the barest stretch of moor or sand. There is no lot, however lowly, it cannot lighten up with joy and cause for praise. Within and without our nature it makes the difference between night and day. It maketh the poorest rich, and addeth no sorrow, and we are only wise and right in our attitude as needy beings, when all our hopes and aspirations are clustered in this daily prayer: "Oh, that Thou wouldest bless me indeed!"

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Prov. xxx. 1-12; Luke xii. 13-34.

PROSPERITY.

When entreating God's blessing we do well to let Him choose His gifts, but in sincere deference to His will may ask "whatsoever we desire." When Agur prayed "give me neither poverty nor riches," he used his free discretion, and many have commended his wisdom. But when Jabez prayed "and enlarge my border," he also was within his rights as a suppliant, and if fewer have been found to verbally approve his request, his prayer has been far more widely echoed in men's hearts. Jabez clearly felt that an increase of property and influence would be a blessing, and he frankly asked for it. Critics may insist that there was nothing religious in his wish, and hold that it betrays an earth-hunger which deserves no praise. With such there need be no contention, but let them be careful lest in judging Jabez they condemn themselves. If a man is ashamed to ask God to improve his income, he ought to be ashamed to take any steps to further such an end himself. To a Christian it should become an axiom that there is nothing worth working for which is not worth praying for. Assuredly the prayer for temporal increase is inferior to the spirit of sacrifice. The cry, "enlarge my border" is a lower note than "Thy kingdom come." But it is a far higher thing to submit our earthly desires to God than to profane what is secular by prayerless thought and labour, as the manner of some purists in prayer seems to be. No man will rise to the loftier heights of spirituality and sacrificial love who is afraid to present his lesser wishes to the Lord. If wealth be pursued as a thing apart from the sphere of religion, the seeker will thereby be withdrawn in heart and mind from Christ during a large proportion of his

time. But if prosperity be sought from God and subject to His wiser will, all business may be made God's work, and be discharged in calm dependence on His blessing. If riches be thus sought, success and failure will alike become a recognised means of Divine discipline, and either can be borne without injury to faith and cheerfulness. If obtained as from above they will usually be employed as a talent intrusted by the Giver, and should they be denied, or, harder still, be lent for a season and withdrawn, there will never fail to come instead a diviner gift, a costlier blessing, even a rich unfolding of that love which is better than all gold and silver, and more to be desired than the heritage of many worlds. "I was never rich until God impoverished me," said a fallen millionaire. The blessing of Levi was to have "no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance;" and those who without affecting indifference to prosperity are content to do their work and leave results to God, will be raised to a higher plane than that of resignation when their prayer is disallowed. They will be enabled to rejoice as David did in an hour of outward desolation.

"The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup:
Thou maintainest my lot.
The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places—
Yea, I have a goodly heritage."

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Gen. xxviii. 10-22; John xv. 12-27.

THE HELP OF GOD'S HAND.

No hint is given as to the work which occupied the hands of Jabez, but the integrity of his business shines out in the plea, "and that Thine hand might be with me." We cannot expect God's hand to work in opposition to His will, therefore only in a life of obedience can He be our helper, and those who resist His counsel must find the hand of divine power against them. This prayer shows us then not only that Jabez submitted his desire for prosperity to God, but that he sought it in fit and honourable ways. He may, as tradition tells, have been a sort of literary man, or he may have been like the patriarchs, a pastoral chieftain. These suppositions have an interest of their own, but are quite secondary in importance. The great fact which most concerns us is, that whether he handled pen or crook or spade he was pure in purpose and able to rejoice in the thought, "Thou God seest me."

There would be a blessed deliverance from much that is debasing in thought and spirit if

every man and woman could learn to seek the invisible hand which Jabez craved to feel beside his own. Multitudes are obliged to spend long days in toil that has no natural glory, fires no enthusiasm, and apparently leads to no satisfying end. Many of these labourers hate their work and do it of constraint, feeling demeaned by the necessity. Yet no duty can be mean. Nothing that is well done will be despised of God. If ill done, any work becomes an ill-deed, a misdeed. But the most obnoxious trade may become a school of sacred service if all be done faithfully, cheerfully, and earnestly, as a thing of need and use. The hand of God may be with the hard soiled hand of a craftsman as truly as with a king decreeing righteous laws, or with an inspired prophet writing heavenly visions upon parchment, or with a psalmist penning a song of praise to be a joy for ever. Jabez tending cattle with God's hand in his, would be more gloriously placed than some anointed priest busied in the temple with sacrifice or censor, but with no hallowed sense of the Divine presence, and no inward consecration to the service of the sanctuary. The high places of visible honour among men are steeps which few may climb,—

"While Duty is a path which all may tread.
And if the Soul of Life and Thought be this,
How best to speed the mighty scheme which still
Fares onward day by day—the Life of the World,
Which is the sum of petty lives, that live
And die so this may live—how then shall each
Of that great multitude of faithful souls
Who walk not on the heights, fulfil himself,
But by the dutious Life which looks not forth
Beyond its narrow sphere, and finds its work,
And works it out."

He who personally ministers to birds and flowers will not deny his help to the least of human servants; He whose inspiration was the strength of ancient herdsmen and shepherds, as well as of prophets and apostles; He whose power dwelt in the hand of the village carpenter of Nazareth, will not scorn to aid our small endeavours to do well. The hand which once was laid so tenderly upon the brows of infants, brought for a blessing to His arms, which touched the leper's skin, the dumb man's lips, and the blind man's eyes, which poured water on the hot and road-stained feet of peasant followers, and at last was lovingly outstretched that a finger of unbelief might probe the print of Roman nails: that hand will disdain no human need, and will never be withdrawn from one who seeks to clasp it for support. To all who cry with Jabez, "that thine hand may be with me," the answer

made to his forefather must still hold good: "Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee 'to the promised land,' for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

FIFTH SUNDAY.

Read Ps. cxvi.; 2 Tim. iv. 1—18.

DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL.

There is still another side of life on which the Divine blessing is our hope. It is touchingly laid bare in this closing plea: "And that thou wouldest keep me from evil that it be not to my sorrow." There is here a pathetic play upon the man's own name, an ancient Hebrew pun, yet spoken with solemn earnestness and quivering lips. His mother called him Jabez because she bare him in sorrow, and he entreats that evil may not bring him to sorrow, may not fulfil the grievous omen of his name by making him Jabez indeed. Such language not obscurely suggests that his boyish days were darkened by the shadow of that affliction which accompanied his birth. It has in it the plaintive tone of one whose early years had been familiar with sadness, and had witnessed the weary weakness and consuming waste of energy which great trials sometimes bring. Some sore calamity must have befallen his parents before Jabez came into the world. A sudden stroke may have swept away their possessions, or the father's death may have left a mourning and impoverished widow to bear her last child in a house made desolate. Such incidents have been common in all ages, and are transpiring daily. All around us families are growing up in sorrow. We see strong, prosperous lives smitten down, promising careers cut short, noble men crippled in a moment in body, mind, or means. The victims of slander, fraud, violence, or so-called accident, are scattered thickly on the field; broken reputations and wounded spirits are common, and the dusty ruins of slowly-piled up fortunes are constantly in sight. Society is full of evil, and the world's coasts are covered with the wreckage of once goodly lives. From such distresses no courage or watchfulness can guard; we have no refuge or defence but in God. It would be foolish to ask exemption from all participation in the sorrows of the world, for sorrow is the pressure of the potter's moulding fingers on our human clay; it is the vine-dresser's knife, the refiner's fire.

Christ was a man of sorrows, and His followers must also be acquainted with grief. Sorrow unless poisoned by some ingredient of guilty passion is not an evil to be banished by divine pity from the school of life. When in hushed hours of reverie we let the past file by us in review it seldom appears that times of gaiety and mirth have borne such large interest as those more hallowed seasons when grief has stolen to our hearts with whispered chidings, and with words of wisdom only to be heard in solemn quiet. Counting up their gains and losses many can relate—

"how there has sprung
From out the chastening wear of grief a scope
Of sobered interest bent on vaster ends
Than hitherto . . . and sympathies
For struggling souls, that each held dear within
A sacred meaning, known or unrevealed."

Yet Christ has taught His disciples when they pray to say, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." The prayer of Jabez, therefore, is an old-world breathing of that new-world supplication, and it corresponds to that high priestly intercession which spreads a rainbow arch of heavenly promise over all our days. "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them from the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Offering up as from ourselves the prayer of Jabez, we may, therefore, intrust ourselves securely to the God of Israel, and may advance into the unknown future without disheartening alarms, not fearing, when we enter into densest clouds of mystery, and even when led through gloomiest mountain gorges singing the high strain of David's pastoral song:

"He guideth me in the paths of righteousness, for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

There remains but one short sentence to complete the tale of Jabez' life. "And God granted him that which he requested." The chronicler has set down the simple fact with studied brevity, and left it to carry its own lesson and shine star-like to the glory of God. Thus the prayer and the story of Jabez are ended with a Divine benediction. He was born amid sorrow into an evil world. He lived a life of faith and hope before the God of Israel; he trusted in the Lord and was not put to shame. His prayer was no vain outcry of unsatisfied desire, no wild sobbing of a human spirit left to bewail itself alone, for the God of Bethel heard and answered his requests. What more can we need to know? Jabez stands forth in simple piety an

evidence of the sameness of human need and Divine faithfulness in all generations. If therefore we call on the same God we shall receive like blessings. He may not enlarge our earthly borders, but will presently cause us to inherit all things. His hand will be with us in all our undertakings. No evil breath will be allowed to blast our energies with that sorrow of the world which worketh death. Our prayers may not be preserved for future ages to repeat, but we shall enjoy their perpetual answer from One who never forgets a petition. Our names may find no chronicle in the baldest genealogy, but will be written down in the Lamb's Book of Life. To join the "choir invisible" of those who live again in the reverential memories of men is a poor object of ambition. The reading of an old list of worthies whom the world has no time to mention might alone suffice to dissipate such thirst for a fictitious immortality. But faith rises from these scant records to the Book of Remembrance above. The lives of all who ever walked and worked, suffered and strove on earth, are written upon leaves which time can never stain, and in characters which never fade. The small and the great are all watched over, and their tale of experience is preserved in heavenly archives with equal love and care. Nor is this all. The memory of vanished lives would be a poor reward even if eternal and entire. Our lives here are never finished. The completest tale that is ever told becomes an abruptly ended chapter when death arrests its flow. There is always a yearning for another chapter to be added; nay, rather there is always a sense of having read the opening of a drama, the introduction of a tale which ages only can complete. We leave these catalogues of names as we turn from a crowded graveyard with its lettered monuments, rejoicing to believe that there is a sequel to each obliterated story, and touched anew with a solemn hope of life for evermore. For most of us the end of the earthly story will be a little-noticed death among the obscure multitude of mortals, but faith anticipates a future course amid the glorified multitude immortal, where, in the vision of One who is more honourable than those He deigns to call His brethren, we shall feel that we are blessed indeed, that He has enlarged our border, that His hand has been with us, that He has delivered us from evil, and thus, that God has not only granted our requests, but has done for us exceeding abundantly above all we ever asked or thought.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

IF any one had told Roy that his fate was to be seriously affected by Mrs. James Horner, he would scarcely have credited the idea. But the romances of real life are not as a rule spoiled by some black-hearted villain, but are quite unconsciously checked by uninteresting matrons, or prosaic men of the world, who, with entire innocence, frustrate hopes and in happy ignorance go on their way, never realising that they have had anything to do with the actual lives of those they meet. If the life at Rowan Tree House had gone on without interruption, if Sigrid had been unable to find work and had been at perfect leisure to consider Roy's wooing, it is quite probable that in a few weeks their friendship might have ended in betrothal. But Mrs. James Horner gave a children's party, and this fact changed the whole aspect of affairs.

"It is, as you say, rather soon after my poor uncle's death for us to give a dance," said Mrs. Horner, as she sat in the drawing-room of Rowan Tree House discussing the various arrangements. "But you see it is dear Mamie's birthday, and I do not like to disappoint her; and Madame Lechertier has taken the idea up so warmly, and has promised to come as a spectator. It was at her suggestion that we made it a fancy-dress affair."

"Who is Madame Lechertier?" asked Sigrid, who listened with all the interest of a foreigner to these details.

"She is a very celebrated dancing mistress," explained Cecil. "I should like you to see her, for she is quite a character."

"Miss Falck will I hope come to our little entertainment," said Mrs. Horner graciously. For, although she detested Frithiof, she had been, against her will, charmed by Sigrid. "It is, you know, quite a small affair—about fifty children, and only from seven to ten. I would not, for the world, shock the congregation, Loveday, so I mean to make it all as simple as possible. I do not know that I shall even have ices."

"My dear, I do not think ices would shock them," said Mrs. Boniface, "though I should think perhaps they might not be wholesome for little children who have got heated with dancing."

"Oh, I don't really think they'll be shocked at all," said Mrs. Horner, smiling. "James could do almost anything before they'd be shocked. You see, he's such a benefactor to the chapel and is so entirely the leading spirit, why, where would they be without him?"

Mrs. Boniface murmured some kindly reply. It was quite true, as she knew very well. James Horner was so entirely the rich and generous head of the congregation that everything had to give way to him, and the minister was not a little hampered in consequence. It was perhaps the perception of this which made Mr. Boniface, an equally rich and generous man, play a much more quiet part. He worked quite as hard to further the good of the congregation, but his work was much less apparent, nor did he ever show the least symptom of that love of power which was the bane of James Horner's existence.

Whether Mr. Boniface entirely approved of this children's fancy-dress dance, Sigrid could not feel sure. She fancied that in spite of all his kindly tolerant spirit he had an innate love of the older forms of Puritanism, and that his quiet, home-keeping nature could not understand at all the enjoyment of dancing or of character-dresses. Except with regard to music, the artistic side of his nature was not highly developed, and while his descent from Puritan forefathers had given him an immense advantage in many ways, and had undoubtedly helped to make him the conscientious, liberty-loving, God-fearing man he was, yet it had also given him the Puritan tendency to look with distrust on many innocent enjoyments. He was always fearful of what these various forms of amusement might lead to. But he forgot to think of what dulness and dearth of amusement might lead to, and had not fully appreciated the lesson which Englishmen must surely have been intended to learn from the violent reaction of the Restoration after the restrictions of the Commonwealth.

But no matters of opinion ever made even a momentary discomfort in that happy household. Uniformity there was not, for they thought very differently, and each held fast to his own view; but there was something much higher than uniformity, there was unity, which is the outcome of love.

Little differences of practice came from time to time; they went their various ways to church and chapel on Sunday, and Roy and Cecil would go to hear Donati at the opera-house, while the father and mother would have to wait till there was a chance of hearing the celebrated baritone at St. James's Hall; but in the great aims of life they were absolutely united, and worked and lived in perfect harmony. At length the great day came, and Mr. Boniface and Roy on their return from town were greeted by a bewitching little figure on the stairs, with curly hair combed out to its full length and a dainty suit of crimson velvet trimmed with gold lace.

"Why, who are you?" said Mr. Boniface, entering almost unconsciously into the fun of the masquerade.

"I'm Cinderella's prince," shouted Lance, gleefully, and in the highest spirits the little fellow danced in to show Frithiof his get-up, capering all over the room in that rapturous enjoyment of childhood, the sight of which is one of the purest pleasures of all true men and women. Frithiof, who had been tired and depressed all day, brightened up at once when Lance, who was very fond of him, came to sit on his knee in that ecstasy of happy impatience which one only sees in children.

"What is the time now?" he asked every two minutes. "Do you think it will soon be time to go? Don't you almost think you hear the carriage coming?"

"As for me," said Sigrid, "I feel like Cinderella before the fairy godmother came. You are sure Mrs. Horner will not mind this ordinary black gown?"

"Oh, dear, no," said Cecil. "You see, she herself is in mourning; and besides, you look charming, Sigrid."

The compliment was quite truthful, for Sigrid, in her quiet black dress, which suited her slim figure to perfection, the simple folds of white net about her neck, and the delicate blush roses and maidenhair which Roy had gathered for her, certainly looked the most charming little woman imaginable.

"I wish you could come too," said Cecil, glancing at Frithiof, while she swathed the little prince in a thick plaid. "It will be very pretty to see all the children in costume."

"Yes," he replied; "but my head would never stand the noise and the heat. I am better here."

"We shall take great care of him," said Mrs. Boniface; "and you must tell us all about it afterwards. Don't keep Lance up

late if he seems to get tired, dearie. Good-bye, and mind you enjoy yourself."

"There goes a happy quartette," said Mr. Boniface, as he closed the door behind them. "But here, to my way of thinking, is a more enviable trio. Did you ever see this book, Frithiof?"

Since his illness they had fallen into the habit of calling him by his Christian name, for he had become almost like one of the family. Even in his worst days they had all been fond of him, and now in these days of his convalescence, when physical suffering had brought out the gentler side of his nature, and his strength of character was shown rather in silent patience than in dogged and desperate energy, as of old, he had won all hearts. The proud, wilful isolation which had made his fellow-workers detest him had been broken down at length, and gratitude for all the kindness he had received at Rowan Tree House had so changed him that it seemed unlikely that he would ever sink again into such an extremity of hard bitterness. His laughter over the book which Mr. Boniface had brought him seemed to his host and hostess a promising sign, and over "Three in Norway" these three in England passed the pleasant evening which Mr. Boniface had predicted.

Meanwhile Sigrid was thoroughly enjoying herself. True, Mr. and Mrs. Horner were vulgar, and now and then said things which jarred on her, but with all their failings they had a considerable share of genuine kindness, and the very best side of them showed that night, as they tried to make all their guests happy. A children's party generally does call out whatever good there is in people; unkind gossip is seldom heard at such a time, and people are never bored, for they are infected by the genuine enjoyment of the little ones, the dancers who do not, as in later life, wear masks, whose smiles are the smiles of real and intense happiness, whose laughter is so inspiring. It was, moreover, the first really gay scene which had met Sigrid's eyes for nearly a year, and she enjoyed to the full the quaint little cavaliers, the tiny court ladies, with their powdered hair and their patches; the Red Riding Hoods and Bo-peeps; the fairies and the peasants; the Robin Hoods and Maid Marians. The dancing was going on merrily when Madame Lechertier was announced, and Sigrid looked up with interest to see what the lady who was pronounced to be "quite a character" was like. She saw a tall and wonderfully graceful woman, with an expres-

sive but plain face. In repose her expression was decidedly autocratic, but she had a most charming smile, and a perfect manner. The Norwegian girl took a great fancy to her, and the feeling was mutual, for the great Madame Lechertier, who, it was rumoured, was of a keenly critical disposition, instantly noticed her, and turned to the hostess with an eager question.

"What a charming face that golden-haired girl has!" she said in her outspoken and yet courteous way. "With all her simplicity there is such a pretty little touch of dignity. See how perfect her bow is! What is her name? And may I not be introduced to her?"

"She is a friend of my cousin's," explained Mrs. Horner, glad to claim this sort of proprietorship in any one who had called forth compliments from the lips of so critical a judge. "She is Norwegian, and her name is Falck."

Sigrid liked the bright, clever, majestic-looking Frenchwoman better than ever after she had talked with her. There was, indeed, in Madame Lechertier something very refreshing. Her chief charm was that she was so utterly unlike any one else. There was about her an individuality that was really astonishing, and when you heard her talk you felt the same keen sense of novelty and interest that is awakened by the first sight of a foreign country. She in her turn was enchanted by Sigrid's perfect naturalness and vivacity, and they had become fast friends when presently a pause in the music made them both look up.

The pianist, a pale, worn-looking lady, whose black silk dress had an ominously shiny back, which told its tale of poverty, all at once broke down, and her white face touched Sigrid's heart.

"I think she is faint," she exclaimed. "Do you think I might offer to play for her?"

"It is a kind thought," said Madame Lechertier, and she watched with interest while the pretty Norwegian girl hastened to the piano, and with a few hurried words relieved the pianist, who beat a hasty retreat into the cooler air of the hall.

She played extremely well, and being herself a born dancer, entered into the spirit of the waltz in a way which her predecessor had wholly failed to do. Madame Lechertier was delighted, and when by-and-by Sigrid was released she rejoined her, and refused to be borne off to the supper-room by Mr. Horner.

"No, no," she said; "let the little people be attended to first. Miss Falck and I mean to have a quiet talk here."

So Sigrid told her something of her life at Bergen, and of the national love of music and dancing, and thoroughly interested her.

"And when do you return?" asked Madame Lechertier.

"That depends on whether I can find work in England," replied Sigrid. "What I wish is to stay in London with my brother. He has been very ill, and I do not think he ought to live alone."

"What sort of work do you wish for?" asked Madame Lechertier.

"I would do anything," said Sigrid. "But the worst of it is everything is so crowded already, and I have no very special talent."

"My dear," said Madame Lechertier, "it seems to me you have a very decided talent. You play dance music better than any one I ever heard, and that is saying a good deal. Why do you not turn this to account?"

"Do you think I could?" asked Sigrid, her eyes lighting up eagerly. "Do you really think I could earn my living by it?"

"I feel sure of it," said Madame Lechertier. "And if you seriously think the idea is good I will come and discuss the matter with you. I hear you are a friend of my old pupil, Miss Boniface."

"Yes, we are staying now at Rowan Tree House; they have been so good to us."

"They are delightful people—the father is one of nature's true gentlemen. I shall come and see you, then, and talk this over. To-morrow morning, if that will suit you."

Sigrid went home in high spirits, and the next day, when as usual she and Frithiof were alone in the morning-room after breakfast, she told him of Madame Lechertier's proposal, and while they were still discussing the matter the good lady was announced.

Now, like many people, Madame Lechertier was benevolent by impulse. Had Sigrid been less attractive, she would not have gone out of her way to help her; but the Norwegian girl had somehow touched her heart.

"It will be a case of 'Colours seen by candlelight will not look the same by day,'" she had reflected as she walked to Rowan Tree House. "I shall find my pretty Norse girl quite commonplace and uninteresting, and my castle in the air will fall in ruins."

But when she was shown into the room where Sigrid sat at work, all her fears vanished. "The girl has bewitched me!" she thought to herself. "And the brother."

what a fine-looking fellow! There is a history behind that face if I'm not mistaken."

"We have just been talking over what you said to me last night, madame," said Sigrid brightly.

"The question is," said Madame Lechertier, "whether you are really in earnest in seeking work, and whether you will not object to my proposal. The fact is, that the girl who for some time has played for me at my principal classes is going to be married. I have, of course, another assistant upon whom I can, if need be, fall back; but she does not satisfy me, we do not work well together, and her playing is not to be compared to yours. I should only need you in the afternoon, and during the three terms of the year. Each term is of twelve weeks, and the salary I should offer you would be £24 a term—£2 a week, you see."

"Oh, Frithiof!" cried Sigrid, in great excitement, "we should be able to keep Swanhild. We could have her over from Norway. Surely your salary and mine together would keep us all?"

"Who is Swanhild?" asked Madame Lechertier.

"She is our little sister, madame. She is much younger—only eleven years old, and as we are orphans, Frithiof and I are her guardians."

Madame Lechertier looked at the two young faces, smiling to think that they should be already burdened with the cares of guardianship. It touched her, and yet at the same time it was almost comical to hear these two young things gravely talking about their ward.

"You see," said Frithiof, "there would be her education, one must not forget that."

"But at the high schools it is very cheap, is it not, madame?" said Sigrid.

"About ten pounds a year," said Madame Lechertier. "What is your little sister like, because if she is at all like you——"

"Here is her photograph," said Sigrid, unfastening her writing-case and taking out Swanhild's picture. "This is taken in her peasant costume which she used to wear sometimes for fun when we were in the country. It suits her very well, I think."

"But she is charming," cried Madame Lechertier. "Such a dainty little figure—such well-shaped legs! My dear, I have a bright thought—an inspiration. Send for your little Swanhild, and when you come to me each afternoon bring her also in this fascinating costume. She shall be my little pupil-

teacher, and though, of course, her earnings would be but small, yet they would more than cover her education at a high school, and she would be learning a useful profession into the bargain."

She glanced at Frithiof and saw quite plainly that he shrank from the idea, and that it would go hard with his proud nature to accept such an offer. She glanced at Sigrid, and saw that the sister was ready to sacrifice anything for the sake of getting the little girl to England. Then, having as much tact as kindness, she rose to go.

"You will talk it over between you and let me know your decision," she said pleasantly. "Consult Mr. and Mrs. Boniface, and let me know in a day or two. Why should you not come in to afternoon tea with me to-morrow, for I shall be at home for once, and can show you my canaries? Cecily will bring you. She and I are old friends."

When she was gone Sigrid returned to the room with dancing eyes.

"Is she not delightful," she cried. "For myself, Frithiof, I can't hesitate for a moment. The work will be easy, and she will be thoroughly kind."

"She has a bad temper," said Frithiof.

"How do you know?"

"Because no sweet-tempered woman ever had such a straight, thin-lipped mouth."

"I think you are very horrid to pick holes in her when she has been so kind to us. For myself I must accept. But how about Swanhild?"

"I hate the thought for either of you," said Frithiof moodily.

Somehow, though his own descent in the social scale had been disagreeable enough, yet it had not been so intolerable to him as this thought of work for his sisters.

"Now, Frithiof, don't go and be a goose about it," said Sigrid caressingly. "If we are ever to have a nice cosy little home together we must certainly work at something, and we are not likely to get lighter, or more congenial, or better paid work than this. Come, dear, you have got, as Lance would say, to 'grin and bear it.'"

He sighed.

"In any case, we must give Swanhild herself a voice in the matter," he said at length. "Accept the offer if you like, provisionally, and let us write to her and tell her about it."

"Very well, we will write a joint letter and give her all sorts of guardianly advice. But, all the same, you know as well as I do that Swanhild will not hesitate for a moment.

She is dying to come to England, and she is never so happy as when she is dancing."

Frithiof thought of that day long ago, when he had come home after meeting the Morgans at the Bergen landing quay, and had heard Sigrid playing as he walked up the garden path, and had found Swanhild dancing so merrily with Lillo, and the old refrain that had haunted him then returned to him now in bitter mockery,

"To-day is just a day to my mind;
All sunny before and sunny behind,
Over the heather."

When Roy came home that evening the matter was practically decided. Frithiof and Sigrid had had a long talk in the library with Mr. and Mrs. Boniface, and by-and-by in the garden, Sigrid told him gleefully what she called the "good news."

"I can afford to laugh now at my aluminium pencils and the embroidery patterns, and the poodle shaving," she said gaily. "Was it not lucky that we happened to go to Mrs. Horner's party, and that everything happened just as it did?"

"Do you really like the prospect?" asked Roy.

"Indeed I do. I haven't felt so happy for months. For now we need never again be parted from Frithiof. It will be the best thing in the world for him to have a comfortable little home; and I shall take good care that he doesn't work too hard. Mr. Boniface has been so good. He says that Frithiof can have some extra work to do if he likes; he can attend some of your concerts, and arrange the platform between the pieces; and this will add nicely to his salary. And then, too, when he heard that I had quite decided on accepting Mme. Lechertier's offer, he proposed something else for us too."

"What was that?" said poor Roy, his heart sinking down like lead.

"Why, he thinks that he might get us engagements to play at children's parties or small dances. Frithiof's violin-playing is quite good enough, he says. And don't you think it would be much better for him than poring so long over that hateful work of Herr Sivertsen's?"

Roy was obliged to assent. He saw only too clearly that to speak to her now of his love would be utterly useless—indeed, worse than useless. She would certainly refuse him, and there would be an end of the pleasant intercourse. Moreover, it would be far more difficult to help them, as they were now able to do in various small ways.

"Frithiof is rather down in the depths about it," said Sigrid. "And I do hope you will cheer him up. After all, it is very silly to think that there is degradation in any kind of honest work. If you had known what it was to live in dependence on relations for so long you would understand how happy I am to-night. I, too, shall be able to help in paying off the debts!"

"Is her life also to be given up to that desperate attempt?" thought Roy despondently.

And if Sigrid had not been absorbed in her own happy thoughts, his depression, and perhaps the cause of it, would have been apparent to her. But she strolled along the garden path beside him, in blissful ignorance, thinking of a busy, successful future, in which Roy Boniface played no part at all.

She was his friend, she liked him heartily. But that was all. Whether their friendship could ever now deepen into love seemed doubtful.

CHAPTER XXI.

DURING the next few days Sigrid was absorbed in deep calculations. She found that, exclusive of Swanhild's small earnings, which would be absorbed by her education, and the few extras that might be needed, their actual yearly income would be about £150. Frithiof's work for Herr Sivertsen, and whatever they might earn by evening engagements could be laid aside towards the fund for paying off the debts, and she thought that they might perhaps manage to live on the rest. Mrs. Boniface seemed rather aghast at the notion, and said she thought it impossible.

"I don't suppose that we shall spend as little on food as Frithiof did when he was alone," said Sigrid, "for he nearly starved himself; and I don't mean to allow him to try that again. I see that the great difficulty will be rent, for that seems so high in London. We were talking about it this morning, and Frithiof had a bright idea. He says there are some very cheap flats—workmen's model lodgings—that might perhaps do for us; only of course we must make sure that they are quite healthy before we take Swanhild there."

"Clean and healthy they are pretty sure to be," said Mrs. Boniface, "but I fancy they have strict rules which might be rather irksome to you. Still, we can go and make inquiries. After all, you would in some ways be better off than in ordinary lodgings,

where you are at the mercy of the landlady."

So that afternoon they went to an office where they could get information as to model dwellings, and found that four rooms could be obtained in some of them at the rate of seven and sixpence a week. At this their spirits rose not a little, and they drove at once to a block which was within fairly easy distance both of the shop and of the rooms in which Madame Lechertier gave her afternoon dancing-classes.

To outward view the model dwellings were certainly not attractive. The great high houses with their uniform ugly colour, the endless rows of windows, all precisely alike, the asphalt courtyard in the centre, though tidy and clean, had a desolate look. Still, when you realised that one might live in such a place for so small a sum, and thought of many squalid streets where the rental would be twice as high, it was more easy to appreciate these eminently respectable lodgings.

"At present we have no rooms to let, sir," was the answer of the superintendent to Frithiof's inquiry.

Their spirits sank, but rose again when he added, "I think, though, we are almost certain to have a set vacant before long."

"Could we see over them?" they asked.

"Well, the set that will most likely be vacant belongs to a north-country family, and I daresay they would let you look in. There is one of the children. Here, Jessie, ask your mother if she would mind just showing her rooms, will you?"

The child, glancing curiously at the visitors, led the way up flight after flight of clean stone stairs, past wide-open windows, through which the September wind blew freshly, then down a long passage until at length she reached a door, which she threw open to announce their advent. A pleasant-looking woman came forward and asked them to step in.

"You'll excuse the place being a bit untidy," she said. "My man has just got fresh work, and he has but now told me we shall have to be flitting in a week's time. We are going to Compton Buildings in the Goswell Road."

After Rowan Tree House, the rooms, of course, felt tiny, and they were a good deal blocked up with furniture, to say nothing of five small children who played about in the kitchen. But the place was capitally planned, every inch was turned to account, and Sigrid thought they might live there very com-

fortably. She talked over sundry details with the present owner.

"There's but one thing, miss, I complain of, and that is that they don't put in another cupboard or two," said the good woman. "Give me another cupboard and I should be quite content. But you see, miss, there's always a something that you'd like to alter, go where you will."

"I wonder," said Sigrid, "if we took them, whether I could pay one of the neighbours to do my share of sweeping and scrubbing the stairs, and whether I could get them to scrub out these rooms once a week. You see, I don't think I could manage the scrubbing very well."

"Oh, miss, there would be no difficulty in that," said the woman. "There's many that would be thankful to earn a little that way, and the same with laundry work. You won't find no difficulty in getting that done. There's Mrs. Hallifield in the next set; she would be glad enough to do it, I know, and you couldn't have a pleasanter neighbour; she's a bit lonesome, poor thing, with her husband being so much away. He's a tram-car man, he is, and gets terrible long hours weekday and Sunday alike."

Owing to the good woman's north-country accent Sigrid had not been able quite to follow this last speech, but she understood enough to awaken in her a keen curiosity, and to show her that their new life might have plenty of human interest in it. She looked out of one of the windows at the big square of houses and tried to picture the hundreds of lives which were being lived in them.

"Do you know, I begin to like this great courtyard," she said to Cecil. "At first it looked to me dreary, but now it looks to me like a great, orderly human hive; there is something about it that makes one feel industrious."

"We will settle down here, then," said Frithiof smiling; "and you shall be queen bee."

"You think it would not hurt Swanhild?" asked Sigrid, turning to Mrs. Boniface. "The place seems to me beautifully airy."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Boniface, "I think in many ways the place is most comfortable, and certainly you could not do better, unless you gave a very much higher rent."

But nevertheless she sighed a little, for though she admired the resolute way in which these two young things set to work to make the best of their altered life, yet she could not help feeling that they scarcely

realised how long and tedious must be the process of slowly economising on a narrow income until the burden which they had taken on their shoulders could at length be removed. Even to try to pay off debts which must be reckoned by thousands out of precarious earnings which would be counted by slow and toilsome units, seemed to her hopeless. Her kind, gentle nature was without that fibre of dauntless resolution which strengthened the characters of the two Norwegians. She did not understand that the very difficulty of the task incited them to make the attempt, nerved them for the struggle, and stimulated them to that wonderful energy of patience which overcomes everything.

As for Sigrid, she was now in her element. A true woman, she delighted in the thought of having rooms of her own to furnish and arrange. She thought of them by day, she dreamt of them by night; she pored over store lists and furniture catalogues, and amused them all by her comments.

"Beds are ruinously dear," she said, after making elaborate calculations. "We must have three really comfortable ones since we mean to work hard all day, and they must certainly be new; the three of them with all their belongings will not leave very much out of twelve pounds I fear. But then as to chairs and tables they might well be second-hand, and we won't go in for a single luxury; it will look rather bare, but then there will be less trouble about cleaning and dusting."

"You will become such a domestic character that we shan't know you," said Frithiof laughing. "What do you think we can possibly furnish the rooms on?"

"Wait a moment and I'll add up my list," she said cheerfully. "I never knew before how many things there were in a house that one can't do well without. Now that must surely be all. No, I have forgotten brushes and brooms and such things. Now then for the adding up. You check me, Cecil, for fear I make it too little—this is a terrible moment."

"Twenty-eight pounds!" exclaimed both girls in a breath.

"You can surely never do it on that?" said Cecil.

"It seems a great deal to me," said Sigrid; "still, I have more than that over from uncle's fifty-pound cheque, even after Dr. Morris is paid. No, on the whole, I think we need not worry, but may spend as much as that with a clear conscience. The thing

I am anxious about is my weekly bill. Look here, we must somehow manage to live on £145 a-year, that will leave five pounds in case of illness or any great need. For charity it leaves nothing, but we can't give while we are in debt. £2 15s. a week for three of us! Why, poor people live on far less."

"But then you are accustomed to such a different way of living," said Cecil.

"That's true. But still, I think it can somehow be done. You must still go on with your sixpenny dinners, Frithiof, for it will fit in better. Then as you and Swan-hild will be out all day and I am out for a great part of the year in the afternoon, I think our coals will last well, only one fire for part of the day will surely not ruin us."

"Let me see that neatly arranged paper," said Frithiof, "I have become rather a connoisseur in the matter of cheap living and you had better take me into your counsels."

"You don't know anything about it," said Sigrid laughing. "Yours was not cheap living but cheap starving, which in the end is a costly affair."

Frithiof did not argue the point, having in truth often known what hunger meant in the old days; but he possessed himself of the paper and studied it carefully. It contained for him much more than the bare details, it was full of a great hope, of an eager expectation, the smallness of each item represented a stepping-stone in the highway of honour, a daily and hourly clearing of his father's name. He looked long at the carefully considered list.

	£	s.	d.
Food	1	2	0
Rent	0	7	6
Fuel and Light	0	2	0
Laundress	0	5	0
Charwoman	0	3	0
Clothing	0	14	0
Extras	0	1	6
Total	£2	15	0

"With a clever manager it will be quite possible," he said, "and you are no novice, Sigrid, but have been keeping house for the last eleven years."

"After a fashion," she replied, "but old Gro really managed things. However, I know that I shall really enjoy trying my hand at anything so novel, and you will have to come and see me very often, Cecil, to prevent my turning into a regular house-keeping drudge."

Cecil laughed and promised, and the two girls talked merrily together as they stitched

away at the household linen, Frithiof looking up from his newspaper every now and then to listen. Things had so far brightened with him that he was ready to take up his life again with patience, but he had his days of depression even now, though, for Sigrid's sake, he tried not to give way more than could be helped. There was no denying, however, that Blanche had clouded his life, and though he never mentioned her name, and as far as possible crowded the very thought of her out of his mind, resolutely turning to work, or books, or the lives of others, yet her influence was still strong with him, and was one of the worst foes he had to fight against. It was constantly mocking him with the vanity of human hopes, with the foolishness of his perfect trust which had been so grossly betrayed; it was an eternal temptation to think less highly of women, to take refuge in cynical contempt, and to sink into a hard joyless scepticism.

On the other hand, Sigrid, as his sister, and Cecil, as a perfectly frank and outspoken friend, were no small help to him in the battle. They could not altogether enter into his thoughts or wholly understand the loneliness and bitterness of his life, any more than he could enter into their difficulties, for, even when surrounded by those we love, it is almost always true that

"Our hermit spirits dwell and range apart."

But they made life a very different thing to him and gave him courage to go on, for they were a continual protest against that lowered side of womanhood that Blanche had revealed to him. One woman having done her best to ruin the health alike of his body and his soul, it remained for these two to counteract her bad influence, and to do for him all that can be done by sisterly love and pure unselfish friendship.

If there is one thing more striking to an observer of life than any other it is the strange law of compensation, and its wholly unexpected working. We see people whose lives are smooth and easy rendered miserable by some very trifling cause. And, again, we see people whose griefs and wrongs are heartrending, and behold in spite of their sorrows they can take pleasure in some very slight amusement, which seems to break into their darkened lives with a welcome brightness enhanced by contrast. It was thus with Frithiof. He entered, as men seldom trouble themselves to enter, into all the minutiae of the furnishing, spent hours in Roy's work-

shop busy at the carpenter's bench over such things as could be made or mended, and enjoyed heartily the planning and arranging which a year ago he would have voted an intolerable bore.

At length the day came when they were to leave Rowan Tree House. Every one was sorry to lose them, and they felt going very much, for it was impossible to express how much those restful weeks had done for them both. They each tried to say something of the sort to Mr. and Mrs. Boniface, but not very successfully, for Sigrid broke down and cried, and Frithiof felt that to put very deep gratitude into words is a task which might well baffle the readiest speaker. However, there was little need for speech on either side.

"And when you want change or rest," said Mrs. Boniface, shaking his hand warmly, "you have only got to lock up your rooms and come down here to us. There will always be a welcome ready for the three of you. Don't forget that."

"Let it be your second home," said Mr. Boniface.

Cecil, who was the one to feel most, said least. She merely shook hands with him, made some trifling remark about the time of Swanchild's train, and wished him good-bye; then, with a sore heart, watched the brother and sister as they stepped into the carriage and drove away.

That chapter of her life was over, and she was quite well aware that the next chapter would seem terribly dull and insipid. For a moment the thought alarmed her.

"What have I been doing," she said to herself, "to let this love get so great a hold on me? Why is it that no other man in the world seems to me worth a thought, even though he may be better, and may live a nobler life than Frithiof?"

She could not honestly blame herself, for it seemed to her that this strange love had, as the poet says, "Slid into her soul like light." Unconsciously it had begun at their very first meeting on the steamer at Bergen; it had caused that vague trouble and uneasiness which had seized her at Balholm, and had sprung into conscious existence when Frithiof had come to them in England poor, heartbroken, and despairing. The faithlessness of another woman had revealed to her the passionate devotion which surged in her own heart, and during these weeks of close companionship her love had deepened inexpressibly. She faced these facts honestly, with what Mrs. Horner would have termed

provoking. I specially wanted to see him on a matter of urgency."

"Will you not come in and wait?" said the child. "Frithiof will soon be home."

"Thank you," said old Herr Sivertsen. "These stairs are terrible work. I shall be glad not to have to climb them again. But houses are all alike in London—all alike! Storey after storey, till they're no better than the tower of Babel."

Sigrid came forward with her pretty, bright greeting and made the old man sit down by the fire.

"Frithiof has gone for a walk with a friend of his," she explained. "But he will be home in a few minutes. I always persuade him to take a good walk on Saturday if possible."

"In consequence of which he doesn't get through half as much work for me," said Herr Sivertsen. "However, you are quite right. He needed more exercise. Is he quite well again?"

"Quite well, thank you; though I suppose he will never be so strong as he once was," she said a little sadly. "You see over-work and trouble and poor living must in the long run injure even a strong man."

"There are no strong men nowadays, it seems to me," said the old author gruffly. "They all knock up sooner or later—a degenerate race—a worthless generation."

"Well, the doctor says he must have had a very fine constitution to have recovered so fast," said Sigrid. "Still, I feel rather afraid sometimes of his doing too much again. Were you going to suggest some more work for him?"

"Yes, I was; but perhaps it is work in which you could help him," said Herr Sivertsen, and he explained to her his project.

"If only I could make time for it," she cried. "But you see we all have very busy lives. I have to see to the house almost entirely and there is always either mending or making in hand. And Swanhild and I are out every afternoon at Madame Lecher-tier's academy. By-the-bye, that is why we have on these peasant costumes, which must have surprised you."

"It is a pretty dress, and takes me back to my old days at home," said Herr Sivertsen. "As to the work, do what you can of it, there is no immediate hurry. Here comes your brother!" and the old man at once buttonholed Frithiof, while Roy, who had returned with him, was ready enough to talk with Sigrid as she stood by the fire making toast, little Swanhild in the mean-

time setting the table for afternoon tea, lighting the lamp, and drawing the curtains.

Herr Sivertsen found himself drinking tea before he knew what he was about, and the novelty of the little household quite shook him out of his gruff surliness. Strange by-gone memories came floating back to him as he listened to the two girls' merry talk, watched them as suddenly they broke into an impromptu dance, and begged them to sing to him the old tunes which for so many years he had not heard.

"I am sorry to say," observed Sigrid laughing, "that our next-door neighbour, Mrs. Hallifield, tells me the general belief in the house is that we belong to the Christy Minstrels. English people don't seem to understand that one can dance and sing at home for pure pleasure and not professionally."

After that the old author often paid them a visit, and they learnt to like him very much and to enjoy his tirades against the degenerate modern race. And thus with hard work, enlivened now and then by a visit to Rowan Tree House, or by a call from the Bonifaces, the winter slipped by, and the trees grew green once more, and they were obliged to own that even this smoky London had a beauty all its own.

"Did you ever see anything so lovely as all this pink may and yellow laburnum?" cried Sigrid, as one spring evening she and Frithiof walked westward to fulfil one of the evening engagements to which they had now become pretty well accustomed.

"No; we had nothing equal to this at Bergen," he admitted, and in very good spirits they walked on, past the great wealthy houses; he with his violin case, and she with a big roll of music, well content with the success they had worked hard to win, and not at all disposed to envy the West-end people. It was indeed a great treat to Sigrid to have a glimpse of so different a life. She had toiled so often up the long stone stairs, that to be shown up a wide carpeted staircase, into which one's feet seemed to sink as into moss, was a delightful change, and snugly ensconced in her little corner behind the piano, she liked to watch the prettily decorated rooms and the arrival of the gaily dressed people. Frithiof, who had at first greatly disliked this sort of work, had become entirely accustomed to it: it no longer hurt his pride, for Sigrid had nearly succeeded in converting him to her doctrine, that a noble motive ennobles any work; and if ever things annoyed him or chafed his

independence, he thought of the debts at Bergen, and was once more ready to endure anything. This evening he happened to be particularly cheerful; things had gone well lately at the shop; his strength was increasing every day, and the home atmosphere had done a great deal to banish the haunting thoughts of the past which in solitude had so preyed on his mind. They discussed the people in Norwegian during the intervals, and in a quiet way were contriving to get a good deal of fun out of the evening, when suddenly their peace was invaded by the unexpected sight of the very face which Frithiof had so strenuously tried to exile from his thoughts. They had just finished a waltz. Sigrid looked up from her music and saw, only a few yards distant from her, the pretty willowy figure, the glowing face and dark eyes and siren-like smile of Lady Romiaux. For a moment her heart seemed to stop beating, then with a wild hope that possibly Frithiof might not have noticed her, she turned to him with intense anxiety. But his profile looked as though it were carved in white stone, and she saw only too plainly that the hope was utterly vain.

"Frithiof," she said in Norwegian, "you are faint. Go out into the cool and get some water before the next dance."

He seemed to hear her voice, but not to take in her words; there was a dazed look in his face, and such despair in his eyes that her heart failed her. All the terrible dread for his health again returned to her. It seemed as if nothing could free him from the fatal influence which Blanche had gained over him.

How she longed to get up and rush from the house! How she loathed that woman who stood flirting with the empty-headed man standing at her side! If it had not been for her perfidy how different all might now be!

"I can't help hating her!" thought poor Sigrid. "She has ruined Frithiof's life, and now in one moment has undone the work of months. She brought about my father's failure; if she had been true we should not now be toiling to pay off these terrible debts—hundreds of homes in Bergen would have been saved from a cruel loss—and he—my father—he might have been alive and well! How can I help hating her?"

At that moment Blanche happened to catch sight of them. The colour deepened in her cheeks.

"Have they come to that?" she thought. "Oh, poor things! How sorry I am for them! Papa told me Herr Falck had failed;

but to have sunk so low! Well, since they lost all their money it was a mercy that all was over between us. And yet, if I had been true to him——"

Her companion wondered what made her so silent all at once. But in truth poor Blanche might well be silent, for into her mind there had flashed a dreadful vision of past sins; standing there in the ball-room in her gay satin dress and glittering diamonds, there had come to her almost for the first time a sense of responsibility for the evil she had wrought. It was not Frithiof's life alone that she had rendered miserable. She had sinned far more deeply against her husband, and though in a sort of bravado she tried to persuade herself that she cared for nothing, and accepted the invitations sent her by the people who would still receive her at their houses, she was all the time most wretched. So strangely had good and evil tendencies been mingled in her nature that she caught herself wondering sometimes whether she really was one woman; she had her refined side and her vulgar side; she could be one day tender-hearted and penitent, and the next day a hard woman of the world; she could at one time be the Blanche of that light-hearted Norwegian holiday, and at another the Lady Romiaux of notoriety.

"How extraordinary that I should chance to meet my Viking here!" she thought to herself. "How very much older he looks! How very much his face has altered! One would have thought that to come down in the world would have cowed him a little; but it seems somehow to have given him dignity. I positively feel afraid of him. I, who could once turn him round my finger—I, for whom he would have died! How ridiculous of me to be afraid! After all, I could soon get my old power over him if I chose to try. I will go and speak to them; it would be rude not to notice them in their new position, poor things."

With a word of explanation to her partner she hastily crossed over to the piano. But when she met Frithiof's eyes her heart began to beat painfully, and once more the feeling of fear returned to her. He looked very grave, very sad, very determined. The greeting which she had intended to speak died away on her lips; instead, she said rather falteringly—

"Will you tell me the name of the last waltz?"

He bowed, and began to turn over the pile of music to find the piece.

"Frithiof," she whispered, "have you forgotten me? Have you nothing to say to me?"

But he made as though he did not hear her, gravely handed her the music, then, turning away, took up his violin and signed to Sigrid to begin the next dance.

Poor Blanche was eagerly claimed by her next partner, and with burning cheeks and eyes bright with unshed tears, was whirled off, though her feet seemed weighted and almost refused to keep time with that violin whose tones seemed to tear her heart. "I have no longer any power over him," she thought. "I have so shocked and disgusted him that he will not even recognise me—will not answer me when I speak to him! How much nobler he is than these little toads with whom I have to dance, these wretches who flatter me, yet all the time despise me in their hearts! Oh, what a fool I have been to throw away a heart like that, to be dazzled by a mere name, and, worst of all, to lose not only his love but his respect! I shall see his face in a moment as we go past that corner. There he is! How sad and stern he looks, and how resolutely he goes on playing! I shall hate this tune all my life long. I have nothing left but the power to give him pain—I who long to help him, who am tortured by this regret!"

All this time she was answering the foolish words of her partner at random. And the evening wore on, and she laughed mechanically and talked by rote, and danced, oh, how wearily! thinking often of a description of the *Inferno* she had lately seen in one of the magazines, in which the people were obliged to go on pretending to amuse themselves, and dancing, as she now danced, when they only longed to lie down and die.

"But, after all, I can stop," she reflected. "I am not in the *Inferno* yet—at least I suppose not, though I doubt if it can be much worse than this. How pretty and innocent that little fair-haired girl looks—white net and lilies of the valley; I should think it must be her first dance. Will she ever grow like me, I wonder? Perhaps some one will say to her, 'That is the celebrated Lady Romiaux.' Perhaps she will read the newspapers when the case comes on, as it must come soon. They may do her terrible harm. Oh, if only I could undo the past! I never thought of all this at the time. I never thought till now of any one but myself."

That thought of the possibility of stopping the dismal mockery of enjoyment came to

her again, and she eagerly seized the first opportunity of departure; but when once the strain of the excitement was over her strength all at once evaporated. Feeling sick and faint, she lay back in a cushioned chair in the cloak-room; her gold plush mantle and the lace mantilla which she wore on her head made her look ghastly pale, and the maid came up to her with anxious inquiries.

"It is nothing but neuralgia," she replied wearily. "Let them call my carriage."

And then came a confused sound of wheels outside in the street and shouts echoing through the night, while from above came the sound of the dancers, and that resolute, indefatigable violin still going on with the monotonous air of "Sir Roger de Coverley," as though it were played by a machine rather than by a man with a weary head and a heavy heart. Blanche wandered back to recollections of Balholm; she saw that merry throng in the inn parlour, she saw Ole Kvikne with his kindly smile, and Herr Falck with his look of content, and she flew down the long lines of merry dancers once more to meet Frithiof—the boyish, happy-looking Frithiof with whom she had danced "Sir Roger" two years ago.

"Lady Romiaux's carriage is at the door," said a voice, and she hastily got up, made her way through the brightly lighted hall, and with a sense of relief stepped into her brougham. Still the violin played on, its gay tune ringing out with that strange sadness which dance music at a distance often suggests. Blanche could bear it no longer; she drew up the carriage window, sank back into the corner, and broke into a passionate fit of weeping.

It was quite possible for Lady Romiaux to go, but the dance was not yet over, and Frithiof and Sigrid had, of course, to stay to the bitter end. Sigrid, tired as she was herself, had hardly a thought for anything except her twin. As that long, long evening wore on it seemed to her that if possible she loved him better than she had ever done before; his quiet endurance appealed to her very strongly, but for his sake she eagerly wished for the end, for she saw by the look of his forehead that one of his worst headaches had come on.

And at length the programme had been toiled through. She hurried down-stairs to put on her cloak and hat, rejoining Frithiof in a few minutes in the crowded hall, where he stood looking, to her fond fancy, a thousand times nobler and grander than any of the other men about him.

He gave a sigh of relief as they passed from the heated atmosphere of the house into the cool darkness without. The stars were still visible, but faint tokens of the coming dawn were already to be seen in the eastern sky. The stillness was delightful after the noise of the music and dancing, which had so jarred upon him; but he realised now how great the strain had been, and even out here in the quiet night it seemed to him that shadowy figures were being whirled past him, and that Blanche's eyes were still seeking him out.

"You are very tired?" asked Sigrid, slipping her arm into his.

"Yes, tired to death," he said. "It is humiliating for a fellow to be knocked up by so little."

"I do not call it 'little,'" she said eagerly. "You know quite well it was neither the heat nor the work which tired you. Oh, Frithiof, how could that woman dare to speak to you!"

"Hush!" he said sadly. "Talking only makes it worse. I wish you would drive the thought out of my head with something else. Say me some poetry—anything."

"I hardly know what I can say unless it is an old poem that Cecil gave me when we were at Rowan Tree House, but I don't think it is in your style quite."

"Anything will do," he said.

"Well, you shall have it then; it is an old fourteenth-century hymn." And in her clear voice she repeated the following lines as they walked home through the deserted streets:—

"Fighting the battle of life,
With a weary heart and head;
For in the midst of the strife
The banners of joy are fled!

Fled, and gone out of sight,
When I thought they were so near,
And the murmur of hope this night
Is dying away on my ear.

"Fighting alone to-night,
With not even a stander-by
To cheer me on in the fight,
Or to hear me when I cry;
Only the Lord can hear,
Only the Lord can see,
The struggle within, how dark and drear,
Though quiet the outside be.

"Lord, I would fain be still
And quiet behind my shield,
But make me to know Thy will,
For fear I should ever yield;
Even as now my hands,
So doth my folded will,
Lie waiting Thy commands,
Without one anxious thrill.

"But as with sudden pain
My hands unfold and clasp,
So doth my will stand up again
And take its old firm grasp;
Nothing but perfect trust,
And love of Thy perfect will,
Can raise me out of the dust,
And bid my fears be still.

"Oh, Lord, Thou hidest Thy face,
And the battle-clouds prevail;
Oh, grant me Thy sweet grace,
That I may not utterly fail.
Fighting alone to-night,
With what a beating heart!
Lord Jesus in the fight,
Oh! stand not Thou apart!"*

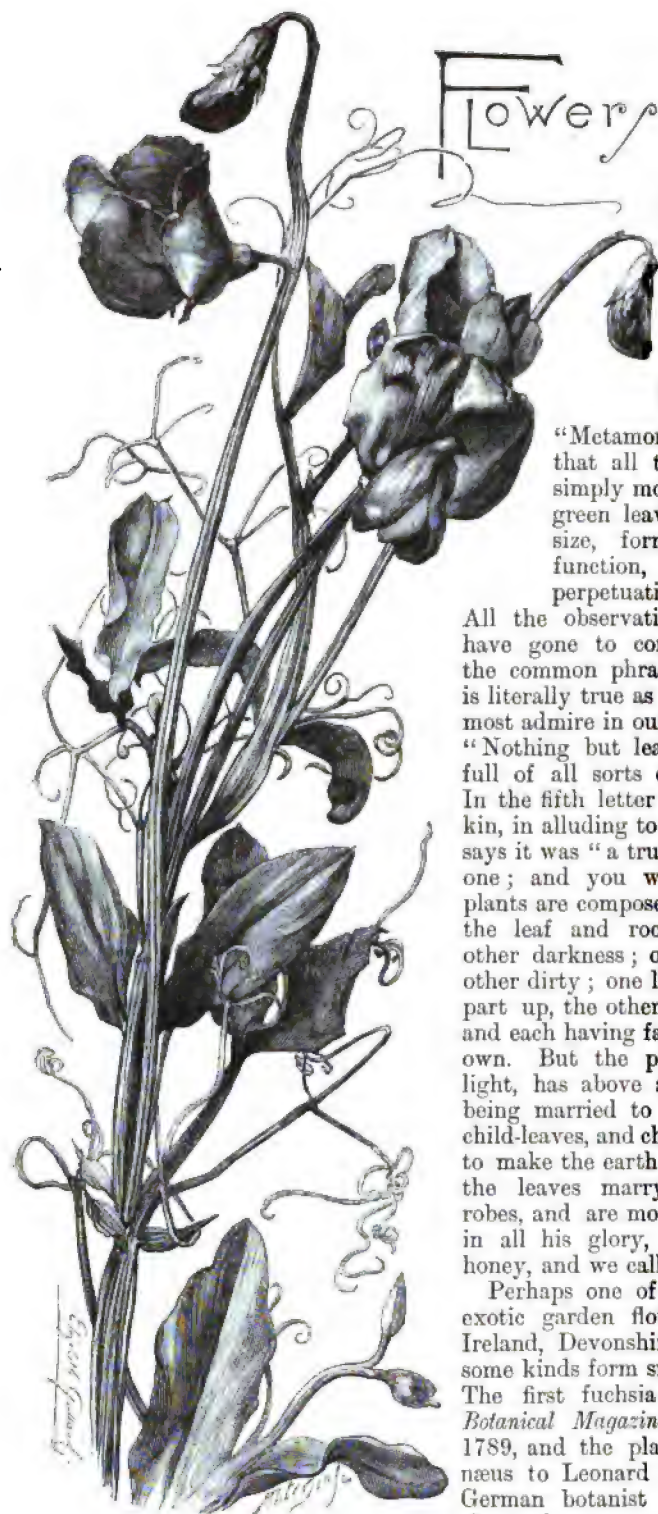
He made no comment at all when she had ended the poem, but in truth it had filled his mind with other thoughts. And the dim, dreary streets through which they walked, and the gradually increasing light in the east, seemed like a picture of his own life, for there dawned for him in his sadness a clearer revelation of the Unseen than had ever before been granted him.

* By permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., from "Rays of Sunlight for Dark Days."

IN SECRET PLACES.

UNGATHERED beauties of a bounteous earth,
Wild flowers which grow on mountain paths untrod,
White water-lilies looking up to God
From solitary tarns—and human worth
Doing meek duty that no glory gains,
Heroic souls, in secret places sown,
To live, to suffer, and to die unknown—
Are not that loveliness and all these pains
Wasted? Alas, then does it not suffice
That God is on the mountain, by the lake,
And in each simple duty, for whose sake
His children give their very blood as price?
The Father sees! If this does not repay,
What else? For plucked flowers fade, and praises slay!

ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.



Sweet Peas.

Flower & Leaves

By F. W. BURBIDGE.

FIRST PAPER.

IT is now nearly a hundred years ago since Goethe pointed out in his "Metamorphoses of Plants" the fact that all the parts of a flower are simply modifications of the ordinary green leaves; these being altered in size, form, colour, texture, and function, so as to promote the perpetuation of the species by seed.

All the observations of the past century have gone to confirm this view, so that the common phrase, "nothing but leaves," is literally true as applied to the flowers we most admire in our gardens or in the fields. "Nothing but leaves;" but then leaves are full of all sorts of beautiful potentialities. In the fifth letter of "Fors Clavigera," Ruskin, in alluding to this discovery of Goethe's, says it was "a true discovery and a notable one; and you will find that in fact all plants are composed of essentially two parts, the leaf and root—one loving light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one, which loves the light, has above all things the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves, and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair for ever. And when the leaves marry they put on wedding-robes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey, and we call them 'flowers.'"

Perhaps one of the most widespread of exotic garden flowers is the fuchsia. In Ireland, Devonshire, and the Isle of Man, some kinds form small trees in the open air. The first fuchsia was illustrated in the *Botanical Magazine* issued on October 1st, 1789, and the plant was dedicated by Linnaeus to Leonard Fuchs, a very celebrated German botanist of the early half of the sixteenth century. Mr. Lee, the founder of the still existing firm of nurserymen at Ham-

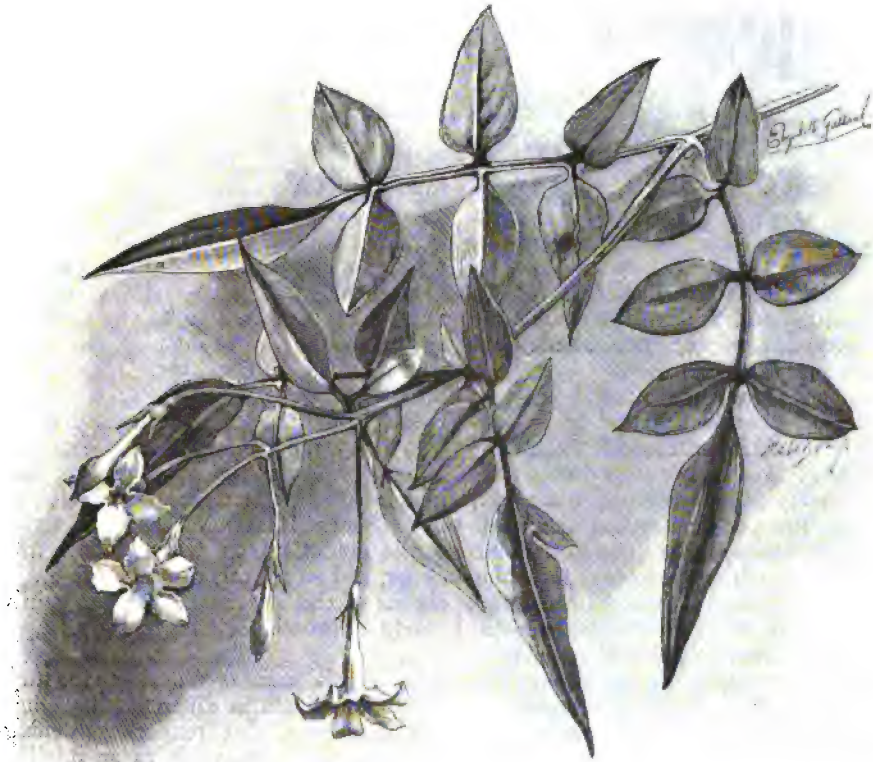
mersmith, was the first to obtain and increase this plant for sale, and the traditional account of his good fortune in the matter may interest some of those who now admire the fuchsia as a popular garden flower.

A hundred years ago the vineyard nursery garden near Kensington was as renowned for its rare collection of exotics, as it had been at a still earlier date for its flourishing vineyard, and the good wine made and sold on the premises. One day, a visitor fond of plants called and was shown all the floral treasures of the place by the proprietor himself.

"Ah, Mr. Lee," said the visitor at part-

ing, "I saw a wonderful plant flowering in a cottage window at Wapping the other day, with drooping crimson flowers, and buds like coral ear-drops, and I have seen nothing so beautiful in your green-houses to-day."

The great nurseryman was a little piqued at the idea of anything in a window being compared with his choicest hot-house rarities, and curiosity prompted him to make minute inquiries, the result being that he drove down to Wapping the next day, and there, sure enough, in the window of a humble dwelling was the first fuchsia he had ever seen. Half beside himself with the exultation of such a beautiful discovery, he soon



White Jasmine.

introduced himself to the owner of the plant, who told him that her Jack the sailor had brought it home with him on his return from South America, and that poor as she was nothing would induce her to part with the plant, or, as she called it, "her keepsake." After some persuasion, however, Mr. Lee induced her to let him take away the plant, and in return he emptied his pockets of all

the money he had about him (several guineas), at the same time promising that a plant should be returned to her after he had succeeded in increasing it from cuttings or slips. And so from the cottage window at Wapping, the first fuchsia was brought to the aristocratic side of London, and the story spread, and the highest and fairest women in England drove to the great nursery



Virginia Stock.

at
Ham-
mer-
smith
to see
the won-
derful prize.
And soon
afterwards the
plant found its

way at a high price into the conservatories of the wealthy, and finally came back again into cottage windows and more homely gardens, as we see it now.

Belonging to the same natural order as the fuchsia, we have the stately yellow-flowered "evening primroses" (*enothera*), which expand their soft petals just as the light fades away in the evening; while their first cousins, the godetias, spread their brilliant satin-like petals wide open in the blazing mid-day sun. The one opens its flashing colours to the bees and the butterflies of noon, while the other lights its lamps at eventide, and seems to prefer the society of the nocturnal moths, or of the bats and the owls. Why nearly related plants should differ so much in habit or appearance or in action, is not so easy to tell; but as no result is without a cause, so it follows that the smallest garden is full of problems that even Darwin or his followers have not yet solved.

Here by the roadside is a cottage; it is a mud-walled cottage with a thatched roof, over which an old crimson china-rose scrambles and blossoms luxuriantly. In the little front garden there are blue lobelias, mignonette, a jasmine bush, and old cabbage-roses, larkspurs, stocks, sunflowers, and bushes of lavender and of rosemary, to say nothing of the odds and ends which, although less noticeable, go to make such a garden homely

and satisfying. In the vegetable plot behind are peas wandering higher than their stakes, and scarlet-runners in full bloom. On the manure-heap a vegetable marrow was planted, and it has wandered half way across the garden, and a few grains of Indian corn scattered beside it have yielded a grassy cluster as high as a man. The bees are busy among the beans, the apples are changing colour on the solitary tree, and one catches the fragrance of mint, and thyme, and savory, and balm—a fragrance distilled by the subtle alchemy of a golden day in August, when the work in Nature's laboratory is in full swing.

When we turn to study the many variations and adaptations of the plants it is like the beginning of a fairy tale. As we have said, plants never vary without a cause, so that every difference is an adaptation, a meeting of some special want felt by the plant under various altered circumstances or surroundings. The old botanical notion that a species was a fixed quantity is now obsolete, and we are daily obtaining evidence that by changing the environment of a plant we can sometimes, if not often, change the plant itself; that is to say, that what in a dry field is supposed to be one species, in a marshy field or a wet ditch is now and then transmuted into another. Of course this does not always, or often, take place very rapidly, but that it sometimes does so is proved by the behaviour of a grass called *Festuca pratensis*, which as growing in the inundated or water meadows of North Charford (South Hants) varies by a series of gentle gradations on the one hand into *F. elatior*, and on the other into *F. loliacea*. Specimens of the last-named species again very nearly approach *Lolium perenne*, in every way.

It is this natural tendency to vary as shown by plants in different soils, climates, and situations, that renders gardening so interesting and enjoyable as an intellectual game. Those who imagine that the growing of one's own fruits, vegetables, or flowers is a dull or dreary pursuit should consult a little book entitled "My Summer in a Garden," by Charles Dudley Warner, wherein the ethical value of tools and weeds are alluded to in an amusing way. Another celebrated American writer, the late Rev. E. P. Roe, was very fond of gardening, and almost as proud of his fruit and vegetable crops as of his literary labours. "Gardening," said Mr. Roe in one of his essays called "The Home Acre," "gardening is a game of

skill at which man plays with nature, and she so manages matters that the game is always varied, never twice alike, and if the man watches her play pretty closely she will generally allow him to win." It is garden-loving writers like Mr. Roe, Mr. R. D. Blackmore, Canon Ellacombe, Dean Hole of Rochester, and others, that make us wish to realise the dream of Abraham Cowley, the poet-laureate, who in writing to John Evelyn from Chertsea in 1666 says, "I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always, that I might be master at last of a *small house and large garden*, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life to the culture of them, and study of nature." No branch of natural history is more interesting or instructive than that relating to leaves, which may, and do, vary in almost every way, now turning themselves into tendrils and hooks, or again into fly-traps of many kinds, into bracts, sepals, petals, stamens, and ovaries, and now and then into the most dainty and shapely of vegetable pitchers or urns. The so-called "pitcher plants" are indeed amongst the wonders of the vegetable world, and are perhaps the most peculiar of all the modifications of true leaves. In the Eastern Archipelago the *nepenthes*, or true pitcher plants, attain their largest size and proportions, the plants growing wild in the wet ditches and in the jungle. *Nepenthes Rajah** produces great swollen purple urns capable of holding from one to two quarts of water, and another kind has more slender pitchers of a brick-red colour, and varying in length from twelve to eighteen inches. The function of these curious leaf-urns is to entrap insects of various kinds, these being attracted by nectar-secreting honey glands. The rims of the pitchers are reflexed inwards, like an eel-trap, so that if once a fly, or beetle, or moth enters it is impossible for it to escape, and it becomes immersed in a digestive or peptonised fluid, with which each pitcher is nearly filled by secretion before the lid opens or expands.

This elaborate modification of the leaf seems to have been brought about in order to supplement the food supply of the plant. One of two things must have happened long ago. Either the use of the pitchers as insect-traps caused the roots of these plants to lose vigour, and to relax their labours, or they were originally too feeble to enable the

plants to compete in the battle of life, and so the leaf-urns were developed and utilised as fleshpots from sheer necessity. The first



Fuchsia.

* In St. John's "Life in the Forests of the Far East," vol. i. p. 334, a pitcher of this plant is mentioned which held four pints of water, and in another was discovered a drowned rat!

of these "guesses at truth" is most likely to be the correct one, since we find many instances of the organs of plants losing their function by disuse, or by competition. Sir Joseph Hooker, who long ago made a special study of the nepenthes, points out that the urn or pitchers are developed from a gland produced at the growing point of the midrib, which midrib is prolonged far beyond the leaf-blade itself. This lengthening out of the midrib is no unusual occurrence among plants, and is very marked in the case of the common garden pea, where the lengthened portion beyond the leaflets is specialised into the form of tendrils, by the aid of which the plant climbs, and spreads itself into the light and air. The scarlet-runner bean and the hop-plant attain the same object by turning their stems into vegetable snakes, and so climbing or twining up their supports. The pitcher plants also climb up brushwood in the jungle, and as their pitchers are half full of water as a rule, and consequently heavy, they are supported by their prolonged stalks or midribs, which take a turn around any twig or branchlet which comes in their way. This is done before the formation of the pitchers, and so strong are these supports, and so firmly do they grip the adjacent branchlets, that it is only by sheer force that the pitchers can be torn away. The prolonged midrib then, as we have seen, serves two distinct uses. Firstly, it holds up the plant, and secondly, bears and upholds its delicately modelled water-jars or urns. Now the most unobservant student will at once wonder why these curious vessels are formed—in a word, of what use are they to the plants that produce them; for we must remember that leaf-pitchers are produced not only by nepenthes, but by other plants, such as the "Huntsman's Cup" of Canada (*Sarracenia*), the "Darlingtonia" of California, and the "Pixies' Pitcher" of King George's Sound (*Cephalotus*), plants which belong to natural orders or families quite distinct from nepenthes. The Borneans call the nepenthes the "Monkey's Cooking Pot," and an early European notion was that the pitcher plants grew in arid or waterless districts, and so secreted water in ready-made drinking-cups for the thirsty traveller. The very reverse of this is a fact, for they are usually found in wet ditches or on mountain-tops actually in cloud zones, where rain is frequent and little streams of water trickle down from the rocky watersheds above. Another fallacy connected with pitcher plants was that of their lids

closing to entrap the fly. This is not the case. Their lids are firmly closed until they are very nearly fully grown, and until the digestive fluid is already distilled inside; but when once they open, they never close again, but act as a roof or watershed over the mouth of the urns. In gardens these beautiful plants are grown for ornament, but however lovely nature frames or fashions a plant or a bird or an animal, it is never for ornament, but for some actual purpose or use. Now, as we have seen, wherever these nepenthes or pitcher plants of other kinds are wild, they are found to be insect-traps of the most deadly description. This is the notable point in common between all pitcher bearers, and the opinion now generally accepted is, that the decomposition of the animal matter in the peptonised fluid secretions of the plant in some way affords manurial stimulant or food which for some reason or other the plants cannot, or do not, obtain in the usual manner; that is to say, by means of their roots. We must look a little further into the matter, to see if this is true. One of the elementary axioms in gardening is this: "The power of absorption and of assimilation possessed by green leaves compensates for the absence of roots, or for weakened root action." It is this power which enables us to cause slips and cuttings to throw out roots, when planted in a warm and moist atmosphere. All we have to do, even with the most delicate cuttings of exotic plants, is to plant them in a heated glass-covered case, or we can place an inverted bell-glass over them, so as to prevent the leaves shrivelling up by over-evaporation. The world of plants is full of "compensation clauses." Thus, if the climate prevents seeds from ripening, vegetative stolons or runners, as in the strawberry, are produced; or, as in one section (*Fourcroya*) of the genus of American agaves, little bulbs are actually borne on the flower spike instead of true seeds.

The early English gardeners always instinctively felt that a plant could absorb gaseous food by means of its leaves; hence their practice of forcing or cultivating vines, melons, cucumbers, &c., on or above beds of fermenting leaves or farmyard refuse. More recently it has been proved, by physiological experiments, that leaves do really possess this power of absorbing matter as held in solution by aerial moisture, or by water. Hence we need not feel at all surprised to find these pitcher plants helping themselves to animal or nitrogenous food in the way we

have shown. But there is another loophole in our argument that requires explanation, viz., Why should the nepenthes and other plants which entrap insects require more food than is obtainable by the roots in the ordinary way? We must here explain the singular fact that all the plants which entrap insects are remarkable for their weak and slender or enfeebled root-power. The stems and leaf-stalks of nepenthes being filled with spiral tissue and tough fibro-vascular bundles, are as strong almost as hempen cords. So strong are they, that the Borneans use them in binding faggots and in mending fences. For the latter purpose they are singularly fitted, and the fence-mending being done in the dry season, the stems are so hygrometrical, that when the rainy season sets in, they contract and grip the woodwork in a remarkable way. The roots of these plants, on the other hand, are few and weakly in proportion to the strength and vigour of the above-ground growth; and this disparity is so marked, that one must perforce attribute their vigorous strength to the food-supplying pitchers, rather than to the feeble roots. Why nepenthes originally became weak-rooted we do not quite know, but that the heat of the tropical plains is now too great for them is shown by their retreat to the mountain-sides nearly everywhere they are found. The genus is focussed in Borneo, and the three or four finest kinds wild there are, so far as is known, restricted to the cloud-zone on Kina Balu, 6,000 to 10,000 feet high; and these species speedily die if brought down to the comparatively dry and arid plains below. The same is true of the "Blood-red Pitcher Plant" of Mount Ophir, and of a still rarer endemic species (*N. Wardii*), which is nearly extinct, being restricted to one of the highest mountains in the Seychelles. Plants retreat to the mountains, from the too great heat of the plains, but there is another reason. They do so to avoid competition with the rampant lowland vegetation, and it seems not only probable, but very possible, that



Go Letia.

these pitcher plants, being inherently weakly-rooted, have really died out in large numbers, especially in days long ago before the insect-traps were formed which enabled them to live and prosper better in the tropical struggle for root-room, air, light, and moisture.

But some one will ask the question : " Ah ! but if insects or animal food is essential, and, as you say, thus useful to plants in a state of nature, why do they thrive so well at Edinburgh, or at Kew, or at Veitch's of Chelsea, or in other hothouses, where their natural insect supply is mainly absent ? " The answer is simple. By isolating the plants in our gardens and watering them regularly we remove all competition, we also compensate them for their loss of animal food by giving them manurial stimulants. Notwithstanding this, however, they still hanker after their flesh-pots, and many a stray fly, and beetle, and spider, and cockroach finds its way into these dangerous pitchers, from the depths of which no insect traveller returns.

It only remains for me to say that pitcher-bearing plants of all kinds bear flowers in addition to these urns, which however varied in form, and flower-like so far as colouration is concerned, are nevertheless simply highly developed or specialised forms of leaves, and are not to be confounded with the flowers or the fruit. In the group nepenthes the flowers are small and of a dull chocolate colour borne on erect spikes. Another proof of the high state of development to which these nepenthes have attained is the fact of their being dioecious, that is having the pollen-bearing blossoms on one individual plant and the fruit-bearing flowers on another.

Other curious modifications of leaves are illustrated by the " Venus' Fly

Trap " of Corolina, which catches flies on the rat-trap principle. The *Droseras*, or " Sundews," again, of our own bogs and marshes catch flies on the birdlime plan, that is to say the secretion of glutinous matter by the glandular hairs with which their leaves are covered.

Although these insect-trapping plants are so singular, we must remember that even the most simple leaf represents a dynasty older than the Pharaoh's, and is to be reckoned amongst the miracles of our time. When you hold between your fingers a green leaf of any kind you have before your eyes an epitome of nature's great laboratory, an analogue of the lungs and stomach in the animal world. The vegetable chemistry of the universe is carried on by leaves, and has been so carried on in all past ages. We have only to look at the products of plants generally

to understand how constant and unceasingly this work goes on. " Be aye stickin' in a tree, Jock, it'll grow while ye're sleepin'," is said to have been the parting injunction of an old laird to his son, and the words illustrate a great fact, and possess a world of meaning. The green leaves are always forming something for our use and enjoyment. Coal, oil, timber, spices, fibres of many kinds, flowers of all colours, fruits for food or medicine, and last, but by no means least, they preach to us all a sermon on useful labour and self-abnegation.

" Throughout the earth the gospel preached by nature to man is that of growth. This is the glorious marvel that is ever with us. Seed grain climbing to waving harvest, acorn springing up to towering oak ; black coal crystallising to diamond, and flint gathering the heat of the earth till as opal it meets the dawn with tints pure as its own ; while on every lowliest grass-blade and leaf is written the story of ascension."



Blue Lobelia.

THE BARD OF BENDERLOCH.

By WILLIAM JOLLY, H.M. INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

I.—THE MAN AT HOME.

"I dwell in the house of the rock,
Like a bird in its breezy nest,
With an ocean of beauty around,
And a fountain of songs in my breast."

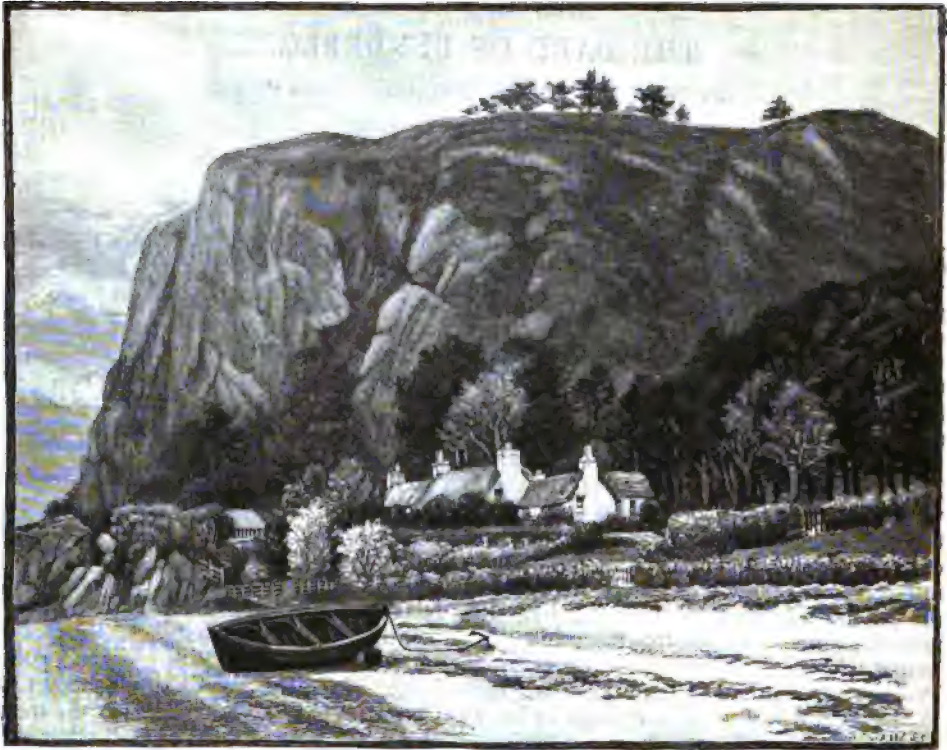
IT is now many years since I first shook hands with John Campbell of Ledaig, gardener, postmaster, and poet, in the bright society of the author of this tribute to his worth, the genial "Apostle of the Celts," who then still lived on the bay of Oban. We had left the pretty nook of Altnacraig, on its rock facing Dunolly, and had wandered over the trap hills to Connel Ferry. Crossing Loch Etive below the strange salt-water falls there, we walked along Ossian's Plains of Lora on the old sea-beach, to the grand conglomerate cliff that towers above John's picturesque retreat. We found him where he loves to be, among his flowers, beaming like the morning, and delighted to meet his grey-haired friend. The joy was mutual, for, as Professor Blackie says, "There are few men in that part of the world for whom he has so great a respect as John." Through the scarlet drapery of the tropeolum and the scent of the honeysuckle, we entered his artistic cottage, greeted his comely dame, and rested for a little after our journey, amid the flashing fancies of the two poets. Then out again in the sunlight, we examined his wonderful garden, with its winding walks and luxuriant blossoms, where flourish, in open air, musky citisus, escalonia, agapanthus, blue gum, and other exotics, there quite at home. We climbed to the high bower below the precipice at its head, and under the shadow of the stately plane and the lowlier vine and fig, viewed the wide-sweeping landscape, all finely unified by the battlemented towers of Dunstaffnage. After descending to the bottom of his famous strawberry slopes, then hanging with tempting fruit, we dropped into his celebrated Cave. This is a curious and comfortable room, partly natural and partly artificial, formed by his own hands among the great blocks of conglomerate, piled there on the sandy shore, just above tide-mark. Here we held pleasant converse while enjoying the luscious berries and looking out on the tumbling waves below, as we sat at the rustic table made out of the stem of the oak on which Bruce rested after his victory on 'Loch Awe.

Leaving the erratic professor to rove and

soliloquise at his will, John and I set out for the Fort of the Sons of Usnach, known to fame as Berigonium, the reputed seat of the early Dalriad kings, and possibly the first resting-place of the Stone of Destiny, now in the grey old abbey on the Thames. I was fortunate in making first acquaintance with the interesting vitrified fort in such pleasant and inspiring company.

There was a peculiar attractiveness in the good poet, with his well-marked features, deep-set eye, thoughtful brow, elastic tread, warm grasp, and bright, informing talk. I had long wished to know him for his character and his songs, and I was not disappointed. His somewhat quaint aspect and small stature, and his appropriate poetical home, added the requisite piquancy to the picture. That day was pleasant and memorable; and we took hold of each other with a bond that time has only made the closer.

As we passed the monolith that stands alone on the way to the fort, I picked up the *petite* Fairy Flax, then in bloom; and we admired its pure white floret, pretty acute leaflets, and graceful stem, the best natural example of Hogarth's line of beauty. After pointing out its artistic utilisation by some clever artist for brackets in churches and halls, new and interesting to John, I asked him if he had specially noticed the tiny plant. "Noticed it!" exclaimed he. "I love it for both its sake and my own, and I owe it undying gratitude!" Then, flower in hand, he told me how for years he had been a miserable dyspeptic, his case beyond medical skill and his life pure misery, causing him, in melancholy spasms, to wish it ended. One day, when in despair, he was visited by a wise old Highland woman, full of the traditional medicinal lore of the Celts in regard to the wild plants. She told him of the wonderful virtues of this humble Cathartic Flax, shown in its name, and described how to make a decoction of it, with assurances of happy relief. He tried it hopelessly, as he had a hundred other remedies, but its effects were magical, and he was permanently cured. His days became not only bearable but bright, occasional relapses being speedily



John Campbell's home.

rectified by its aid ; and now for many years he has almost done without its merciful services, a new and happy man. Certainly John has reason to know the *Lios na bean sìth*, or Fairy Woman's Flax, as it is called in Gaelic, and the Highland muse to thank that old woman for her timely advice.

That was a happy visit, and it introduced me to no common personality. Though I had seen him occasionally, circumstances prevented any lengthened intercourse till two years ago, when I passed part of two days at Ledaig and got still nearer the man, in the glowing days of autumn ; and we have often met since then.

We spent the time together—all too short—in pleasant talk and geological ramble ; for I was bent on an examination of the controverted conglomerate of Geikie's Old Red "Lake of Lorn," which rises so splendidly above John's house. He entered heartily into the subject, according to his wont, and accompanied me to every point, hard though many of them were to reach ; for his intellectual appetite is keen and his pluck perfect.

The cliff, he told me, is called by the euphonious name of Dun-bhail-an-righ, generally spelt and pronounced Dunvalanree,

that is, the dun or hill of the king's town, probably that of Beregonium. It forms a splendid precipice, with bold grim front, smiling kindly, however, on John's home, sheltering it from east and north, and reflecting the sun's warmest rays on the rare plants that flourish at its feet. We passed the old graveyard of Kiel,* with its ruined chapel on its farther side, specially noticed by the Wordsworths in their Highland journey of 1803, for its neatness, "within the sound of the gentlest waves of thesea and near so many quiet and beautiful objects." We then traversed the causeway that formed the ancient approach to the fort, on the old beach just above the gravelly strand. John remembers when it was a well-marked pathway about three yards wide, with steep sides ; he recalls with indignation when it was ploughed over by a smith, with the appropriate name of "Satan," till he was stopped by General Campbell of Loch Nell, whose wise interdict has preserved its original slope nearest the fort.

We went through the rocky gap, under

* That is, *kill*, church or churchyard, which, it seems, is the real name of the district ; Selma, the Ossianic name of the village beyond, being a modern interpolation of General Campbell's, late of Loch Nell.

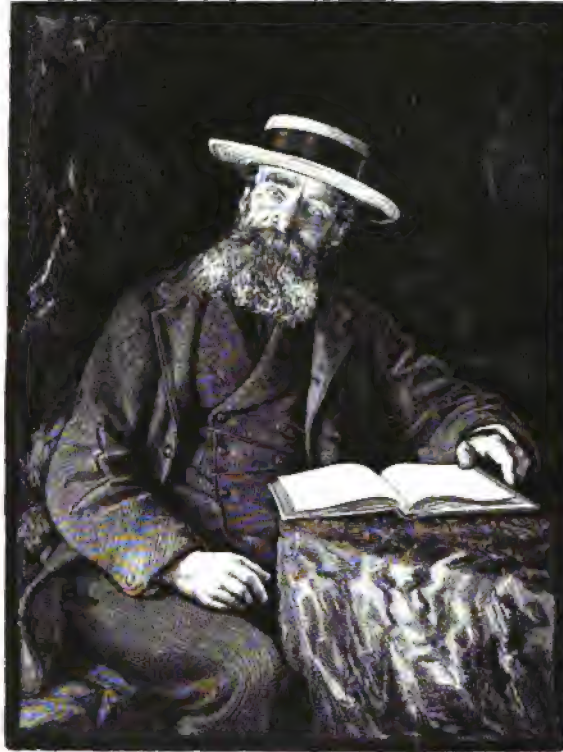
its precipitous front, "the Pass of the Foal," where the working of the ancient sea is interestingly shown in well-worn potholes in the slate. From the summit, the view on every side is expansive and wonderful, especially over the isthmus between Loch Etive and Loch Creran, the region of Benderloch, that is, of the bens between the lochs. On the west side of the fort stretches a bare flat plain, called the Tralee or Grey Strand, a fine example of an old sea-beach, formed when the ridge of the fort rose like a rocky isle in the surges that rolled between the twin lochs. John described the fair that used to be held yearly on this plain at Old New Year's Day, when the whole countryside assembled and danced in harmless joy to the merry music of the pipes. The green grass that covers it was then also the common pasture of flourishing crofters. These glimpses of happy scenes were recalled by the patriotic poet with lively regret.

We examined the walls of the great fort, with their strong vitrification; the ancient well that supplied its inmates, cut in the living rock, once filled with clear water, but now a stagnant pool; and the dismantled Druid circle on the top of its northern height. This circle was removed by a vulgar merchant to build prosaic houses at Selma. The Vandal deed, as John considered it, was satirised by James Shaw, the local poet, and brought neither fame nor fortune to the perpetrator, for he failed in business, a fate which was popularly deemed to be a just punishment for the desecration.

After crossing the limestone ridge near the school of Selma, we began to breast the wooded hill that grandly fronts the plain and rises into the Heights of Lora. It was no easy task, for, above the long grassy slope at its base, it becomes a sheer precipice of conglomerate some fifty feet high, the continuation of the Dunvalanree Cliff above John's cottage. By means of a vertical cleft in its front, like the celebrated "Catnick" up

Salisbury Crags under Arthur Seat, on hands and knees, with fingers and feet, we gained the summit. It was a remarkable feat for an old man of sixty-four, of which he might feel pardonably proud! Few could have done it, except his friend, the poetical professor, who, at a like age, surmounted with me Mount Hecla in South Uist.

We were more than rewarded, not only by the elation of victory and the prospect, but by discovering what we sought—



John Campbell in his Rock-room.

a splendid junction of the conglomerate with the overlying volcanic trap. Just a little below the brow of the cliff, the old lava stream beautifully overlaps the conglomerate, and the very hand can be thrust where the two unite, in as fine a line of geological contact as you may well go hundreds of miles to see. Though no geologist, as a genuine lover of nature John was delightfully interested at this vivid glimpse of the palæontological forces which had formed the cliff that shields his home and warms his floral treasures.

The scene from the top was simply magnificent, commanding a glorious prospect of Lorn, Mull and Morven, around the vivid green of Lismore, which is set as an emerald

in the huge ocean trough of Loch Linnhe. In quiet pride, John pointed out its features with feelings that prompted his fervid patriotic strains—

"Dear land of my fathers, my home in the Highlands!
 'Tis oft that I think of thy bonnie green glens,
 Thy far-gleaming lochs, and thy sheer-circled corries,
 Thy dark frowning cliffs, and thy glory of bens!"*

We then crossed the grassy hill to the bed of the stream that dashes down the wooded dell behind John's house, full of rocky retreats and happy seclusion, loved by the poet. By a pleasant, devious path, we descended through an embowering wood to his cosy ingle, just in time to escape a threatening rain-storm that darkened the rest of the day.

During our ramble and frequent restings, we held happy discourse on many things. John has a genial flow of quiet and effective talk, and I directed its current mainly to his own experiences, to know the man better, and trace the unobtrusive development of this "violet by a mossy stone, deep hidden in a dell;" for he has seen little of the great world, and has spent his life and nursed his muse mostly within the breezy warmth of Dunvalanree.

It was quite charming to sit in the snugger that forms his parlour, after our delightful scramble up the cliff and down the burn. It had an air at once so cosy and tasteful, so comfortable and cultured, with books and pictures on table and wall, the joisted roof above, and the carpet below. While the clock quietly echoed the muffled tread of time on the mantelpiece, the telegraph rapped its messages in the window, and his active daughters flitted to and fro in attendance. The windows were finely obscured by festoons of bright and beautiful flowers, that seemed to enjoy their places, and showed a vigorous health nowhere surpassed.

Soon we were sipping a pleasant cup of tea at the snow-white table, presided over by his daughter Annie, the good mother being otherwise occupied in the glowing kitchen. When we had finished, he rose and shook hands with me, explaining, to my look of inquiry, that this was a hearty old Highland custom after eating, and saying that he liked to keep up things having the flavour of age and the touch of humanity in them.

The man undoubtedly wields over his friends a powerful charm, exerted without effort, but warm and real; and they vie with each other in expressing it. Tom McEwan's

clever chalk drawing of him hangs on the wall; another, by a female hand, is the frontispiece to his poems; the striking portrait accompanying this paper is from a photo. by an admiring amateur, taken in the rock-room; a water-colour sketch by another artist looks down on his guests; some honourable diplomas from various societies, at home and abroad, accompany these gifts; and many beautiful books lie about, the offerings of appreciative visitors. His literary friend, Mr. Anderson Smith,* who dwells not many miles off on Loch Creran, and other authors, have sounded his praises in prose, and Professor Blackie and other poets have often blossomed into verse on the same congenial theme, while several translators have given his poems in English dress.

In spite of his long, hard, but successful struggle for bread, his life has been unusually serene in that smiling Eden of flowers and fruits. His Eve, more sensible than the early mother, has led him into no difficulties, his family has been blessed to him, and his home has been made rarely happy. But sorrow and death have deepened and sanctified experience, and even tragedy has at least glanced on their seclusion.

His only two boys have passed away to a fairer garden on the further shore. The elder was a wonderful child of eight, "thoughtful beyond his years and passionately fond of poetry," of "remarkable intelligence and still more remarkable piety." His story has been told by the minister, and commemorated in a sad and effective native elegy by the sorrowing father, whose eyes still gather tears at the mention of his name.

The Rock-room at the garden foot, which in strong winds is lashed by the spray of the waves, was wrecked by the terrific storm of the last Sunday of '79, now sadly known to history as the Tay Bridge Gale. While John was preparing it for the Sabbath meeting, which he has held for some forty years, the wild ocean suddenly swooped in through the window, extinguished the fire, and remorselessly swept the whole interior down to the beach below. John was crushed in dismay against the door, which, opening inwards, prevented his exit. There he would certainly have perished, in the scene of his peaceful labours, caged in his own handicraft, had not his family, fearing evil, and alarmed at his delay in the thundering storm, rushed down the garden, driven in the treacherous door, and drawn him forth

* From the poem "The Gael in a Foreign Land," translated by Professor Blackie.

* The author of "Benderloch" and other works, brightly descriptive of the region and its natural life.

just in time for his rescue, drenched but devoutly grateful.

Two years later, when the awful November storms burst on our coasts and devastated our forests, it was still worse. John went to the restored cave in fear of disaster. All at once, the window was dashed in and the room invaded by billow after billow of terrific fury, which in a few minutes again left it a ruin. The wall was broken down, the floor destroyed, and every article of furniture carried out into the deep, except the lamp in the roof, which continued securely swinging in the angry swish of the waves. The contents were borne all round the bay to Beregonium and Loch Nell shore opposite, and "Bruce's table," massive as it is, was broken in two. So devastating was the spring-tide which accompanied this storm, that it cut away permanently a fourth of the garden that lay along the shore.

Again, undaunted, John renewed and strengthened the room, and replaced its scattered furnishings. There you can still sit in ease and comfort and look out on the calm serenity of ocean, which has thus twice shown that beneath the smile of nature there

often lurks a direful frown. The scene recalls John's own lines, for it unites—

"The sweet-sounding plash of the light-rippling billows,
As they beat on the sand where the white pebbles lie,
And their thundering war when, with whirling commotion,
They lift their white crests in grim face of the sky."

But time summoned me from the cosy hearth, amid the flowers and the books, to the drenching rain without. Like the true gentleman he is, he accompanied me through the dripping wet, along the road to the end of his garden, the boundary of his lands, according to the ancient custom of the chiefs; for, as he himself truly sings,

"Dear to his heart are the chivalrous ways
And the kindly regards of the old Highland days."

Warmly shaking hands, and repeating a Gaelic proverb which tells that, however happy the meeting and the intercourse, parting must follow in all human affairs, he bade me Godspeed.

As I trudged through the damp towards Connel Ferry and the station, I thanked God that He had made such good and happy souls, whom to know is to love, and that fate had brought me into near relations with not a few of them.

(To be continued.)

THE HEBREW EXODUS.

By CANON ISAAC TAYLOR.

AMONG the most notable results of recent archaeological research is the determination of the route taken by the Hebrews when they went up out of Egypt. This remarkable discovery not only sets finally at rest a prolonged controversy, but establishes the minute accuracy of a Biblical narrative which has hitherto presented formidable difficulties.

We possess two parallel narratives of the departure from Egypt—one given in Exodus xiv., which is didactic in intention, the other contained in Numbers xxxiii., which is bald in style and severely historic. For popular pulpit exegesis the first is the more instructive and important; but the secular historian will regard the second as the most valuable for his purpose. The date and authorship of the first account is a matter of controversy, with which we need not here concern ourselves, but the second account is admitted by the most sceptical critics to be a contemporary narrative. In its present form it is probably the oldest and most venerable document enshrined in the Bible. Unlike the

narrative in the book of Exodus, it professes to have been written by the actual hand of Moses himself: "And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys. . . . And these are their journeys according to their goings out;" or, as we might put it: "These are their marches according to their camps." This enumeration of the places of encampment is singularly destitute of rhetorical or poetical adornments; it bears all the marks of extreme antiquity, and it seems impossible to believe that such a list of mere names can have been transmitted by oral tradition. It must either be, as it professes to be, a contemporary written record, or it must have been deliberately concocted at some later period. If, therefore, on geographical grounds, we can establish the strict historic accuracy of any portion of this list of stations; if, above all, we can show that the true solution of the difficulties of the narrative is of such an unexpected character that it could not have been invented at a later period, it follows that one portion, at all events, of the Pentateuch is contemporary

with the events which it records; and if this can be done, even for a single verse, the objection falls to the ground that the Hebrews, when they left Egypt, were not acquainted with the art of writing. It seems possible in this manner to establish the important proposition that there were absolutely contemporary materials for the composition of the Pentateuch.

The account of the camps and marches given in the book of Numbers begins as follows: "And they journeyed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow of the Passover. . . . And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses and pitched in Succoth. And they journeyed from Succoth and pitched in Etham, which is in the edge of the wilderness. And they journeyed from Etham, and turned back unto Pi-hahiroth, which is before Baal Zephon, and they pitched before Migdol. And they journeyed from before Hahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness: and they went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched in Marah. And they journeyed from Marah and came unto Elim, and in Elim were twelve springs of water and three score and ten palm trees; and they pitched there. And they journeyed from Elim, and pitched by the Red Sea."

This narrative may be summarised as follows:—

On the 14th of Abib they celebrated the Passover in Rameses.

On the 15th they left Rameses and camped in Succoth.

On the 16th they left Succoth and camped in Etham.

On the 17th they turned back and camped between Hahiroth and Migdol.

On the 18th they crossed the sea.

On the 19th, 20th, and 21st they wandered in the desert and camped at Marah.

On the 22nd they reached the wells at Elim.

On the 23rd they camped by the Red Sea.

We have now to attempt to reconcile the account of the journeys of these nine days with the geographical conditions.

The old view was that Goshen was near On (Heliopolis), a few miles from Cairo, and that the Hebrews went by the direct caravan route from Cairo to Suez, the route followed by a railway now disused. The distance is eighty miles, through a waterless desert. The host of the Hebrews, encumbered with their flocks and herds, could not have marched more than ten or twelve miles a day, and the

journey must have taken them a week. They could not have performed it in the three days allowed by the narrative, and it is more than doubtful if, owing to the want of water, they could have accomplished it at all.

It was supposed that the Red Sea was crossed at some point which has been variously placed six, twelve, fifty, and even sixty miles below Suez. This presents great difficulties. How could the flocks and herds have scrambled over the sharp ledges of the coral rocks and through vast quantities of tangled sea-weed? Only ten miles below Suez the Red Sea is ten miles broad—too much for the passage to have been effected within the assigned time; and twenty miles below Suez the sea is twenty miles broad and very deep. A wind strong enough to have driven back such a vast body of water would have been too violent for women and children to have stood against it, and would have raised blinding clouds of sand. Even with a moderate simoon travellers have to lie with their faces on the ground to escape suffocation. And such a wind would have overturned the Egyptian chariots, which were mere frames of wood, so light that a man could easily lift them, as may be seen by the specimen in the Museum at Florence. Moreover, if the passage had been through the deep gulf of the Red Sea, the Egyptians would hardly have ventured to march into such a chasm to a nearly certain doom.

If, on the other hand, the passage be placed nearer to Suez, where the water is comparatively shallow, there would have been no need for the Hebrews to have crossed the sea at all, as they could without difficulty have marched round the head of the gulf. Moreover, as the gulf shoals very gradually from Suez, the waters could not have been a wall unto them on the left hand, as on this side the sea would be shallower than at the actual point of passage.

There is another difficulty, which by itself seems fatal to the hypothesis of a passage in the neighbourhood of Suez. There are only two places where the Red Sea is narrow enough to have been crossed in a single night; one is six miles below Suez, the other twelve. Now, after crossing they wandered for three days in the desert of Etham, during which time, according to the narrative in the book of Exodus, they found no water. But the Ayun Mousa, or Wells of Moses, consisting of about half-a-dozen copious springs, are on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, some nine miles below Suez. If they crossed at either of the possible points, one six miles, the

other twelve miles below Suez, they must have occupied three days in reaching these springs, which are not more than three miles from the point where they crossed. The difficulty is still greater if, as seems most probable, we are to identify the Wells of Moses with Elim, and not with Marah.

The hypothesis that they crossed in the neighbourhood of Suez seems therefore to present insuperable difficulties. Moreover the narrative does not affirm that they crossed the Red Sea at all, but rather implies that they did not. We are told they crossed a sea, the Yam Suph, or "sea of reeds," and after five days camped by another sea, which is called the Red Sea.

In view of these objections other theories have been proposed. In 1873 Dr. Beke urged that it was the Gulf of Akabah which was crossed, and not the Gulf of Suez; but this presents even greater difficulties, as we should have to place Sinai east of Akabah, and to suppose that Pharaoh marched two hundred miles in three days from Tanis or Memphis, which is quite incredible.

A third theory is that of Dr. Schleiden, which was ably advocated by Brugsch Bey before the Congress of Orientalists in 1874, and for some years received considerable support from scholars. Dr. Brugsch argued that the route of the Exodus was along a narrow sandbank dividing Lake Serbonis from the Mediterranean, of which Milton speaks—

"The great Serbonian bog,
Twixt Damietta and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk."

This sandbank formed a dangerous, but not impracticable passage between Egypt and Palestine. Strabo tells us of a high tide in his own time by which this sandbank was submerged; and here, according to Diodorus Siculus, the army of Artaxerxes II. was engulfed when attempting to invade Egypt. We therefore know that a catastrophe similar to that which overwhelmed the army of Pharaoh actually occurred at this spot. Dr. Brugsch supports his theory by ingenious geographical arguments and identifications. He supposes that the Hebrews started from the field of Zoan, which he correctly identified with Tanis, where we know that the Pharaohs of that time frequently resided; and he argues that since Rameses II. built much at Tanis, it may have been called Pi-Ramessu, the city of Rameses. He places Succoth half-way between Tanis and Pelusium, which would make the first day's march of the Hebrews about thirty miles, which perhaps is not an absolutely impossible dis-

tance for them to have traversed. He places Migdol at the edge of the desert, and identifies it with Tel-es-Samout; Samout being an Egyptian translation of the Semitic name Migdol, "the Tower." Etham he identifies with the fortress of Khetam, and Baal Zephon with Baali Zupuna, close to Mount Casius. This would give thirty miles for the second day's march, and forty miles for the third day. The Serbonian Lake, now almost dried up, he identifies with the Yam Suph, or sea of reeds, which has been wrongly translated Red Sea. As the Serbonian Lake was shallow, and lies nearly east and west, there is no difficulty in understanding how a strong east wind might have laid it dry, while it would be flooded by a high tide accompanied by a change in the direction of the wind.

The objections to this ingenious theory lie partly in the doubtfulness of some of the geographical identifications, but mainly in the distances. A hundred miles must have been traversed by Pharaoh in two days, and by the Hebrews in three, or rather in two, as they lost a day when they turned back from Etham and camped near Migdol. Sheep could not be driven such a distance in the time allowed, especially as they would have to stop and graze. The difficulty as to the subsequent marches is as great. In three days or four at the outside, the host of the Israelites, with its flocks and herds, must have marched more than one hundred miles across the desert, from the Mons Casius to the Wells of Moses. But a greater difficulty is the passage of the Pelusiatic arm of the Nile, of which there is no mention in the Biblical account. The river could only be crossed at Khetam, which is depicted in a contemporary sculpture at Karnak, where we see two fortresses connected by a bridge. To take Khetam would have required a regular siege. Moreover the whole of this northern road to Syria was protected by fortresses, and garrisoned by Egyptian troops, to guard against the incursions of the nomads of the desert, and a wall was built at El Kantara, the only practicable passage between Lake Menzaleh and Lake Ballah.

It will therefore be seen that the difficulties in the way of Brugsch's theory are quite as formidable as those which beset the Suez hypothesis.

Hitherto all had been guess work. Another guess, which now turns out to have been correct, had been advanced some thirty years ago, but it was manifest that the route taken by the Hebrews could only be definitely

settled in the way by which Schliemann determined the site of Troy, namely by systematic excavation.

The Council of the Egyptian Exploration Fund, founded in 1883 by Sir Erasmus Wilson, resolved therefore, as one of their earliest tasks, to solve the problem by the spade. It was plain that if the site of only one of the Hebrew camps could be positively determined, the question of the route would be set at rest for ever. M. Naville, an eminent Egyptologist, was selected to conduct the expedition, and he fortunately determined to commence operations on a mound called Tell-el-Maschutah, which lies on the sweet-water canal of M. Lesseps, about ten miles west of Ismailia, the central station on the Suez Canal. Tell-el-Maschutah, "the Mound of the Statue," is so called from a monolith of red granite, representing Rameses II. seated between two gods, Ra and Tum. Hence he concluded that the ancient city inhumed in this mound must have been as old as the time of Rameses, and therefore older than the Exodus. He conjectured that the mound might conceal the ruins of one of the two cities, either Rameses or Pithom, which were built by the Hebrews during their bondage. If Tum, one of the gods represented on the monolith, was, as seemed probable, the tutelary deity of the place, it would have been called Pi-tum (Pithom) "the city of Tum."

M. Naville had hardly begun to dig before he found he was on the track of important discoveries. He unearthed a fortified city containing structures unlike anything hitherto known in Egypt. He found a number of rectangular vaults, with walls from two to three yards in thickness, solidly built of sundried bricks and mortar. These vaults could not have been habitations, as they had no doors, windows, or lateral communications, and could have been entered only from the top. They were evidently intended for granaries, in which corn could be stored to provision an Egyptian army about to cross the desert for the invasion of Asia. This hypothesis was confirmed by the discovery of an inscription in which one of the officials is described as the *Mer-ar*, or "Keeper of the Storehouse." Some of the bricks used in the construction of the store-chambers were made with straw and some without. From other inscriptions it appeared that the founder of the city was Rameses II., and that it had two names, a sacred or temple name, Pi-Tum; and a civil name, Thuku or Thuket, applied to the district in which it stood,

which would correspond, according to the rules of transliteration, to the Hebrew Succoth.

Five important facts were ascertained. First, this must have been the site of the city of Pithom, built by the Hebrews. Pithom and Rameses are called "store cities" in the Hebrew Bible, and "fortified cities" in the Septuagint. Both descriptions are correct, as Pithom was both a fortified city and a store city.

Secondly, since Pithom was built by Rameses II., he must have been the Pharaoh of the oppression, and the Exodus must have taken place under his son and successor, Menephtah. We therefore obtain for the Exodus the date of about 1302 B.C., or nearly 190 years later than Archbishop Ussher's chronology, given in the margin of our Bibles.

Thirdly, since Succoth was the name of the district in which Pithom stood, we recover the position of the first encampment of the Hebrews. It was not the city of Pithom, which would have been too small to hold them, even if the Egyptian garrison had permitted them to enter within the walls, but it was the fertile plain round Pithom which was watered from the Nile by a canal constructed by the Pharaohs, the course of which can still be traced a little to the south of Pithom.

The fourth discovery was a long inscription of Ptolemy Philadelphus, from which we learn that in the immediate neighbourhood of Pi-Tum there was an important place called Pi-keheret or Pi-kereret. Moreover, in certain lists of Egyptian nomes or provinces the capital of the eighth nome is stated to be either Pi-Tum or Pi-Keheret; but whichever name is given as the capital, it is added that it stood in the district of Thuku (Succoth). Pi-Keheret was a sanctuary of Osiris, as Pi-Tum was of Tum, and the two temples seem to have stood in much the same relation as St. Paul's Cathedral in London and St. Peter's Abbey at Westminster. This is curiously confirmed by the Septuagint version, which instead of making the Hebrews pass by Pihahiroth, made them pass by Eroth or Ero, which, as we shall presently see, was the later name of Pithom itself. We may probably regard Pihahiroth and Pithom as twin names of the city which was the capital of the district of Succoth.

We have therefore recovered the second and fourth camps of the Israelites. On the 15th of Abib they camped in Succoth; on the 16th at Etham on the edge of the wilder-

ness; on the 17th they turned back to Pihahiroth, and camped between Hahiroth and Migdol. Their fourth camp was therefore only a little in advance of their second. They lost the greater part of two days in going to Etham and returning to Pihahiroth. But Succoth and Pihahiroth are fifty miles from Suez, and as they crossed the sea on the 18th it is plain that they could not have crossed what we now call the Red Sea.

But now comes the most important discovery of all: two inscriptions which prove beyond controversy that the Red Sea formerly extended about fifty miles farther north than it does now, and washed the very walls of Pithom. From these inscriptions we discover the Roman and Greek names of Pi-Tum. It was called Ero, Ero Castra, or Heroöpolis, names which doubtless merely embody the Egyptian designation, "store city." We know from classic writers that Heroöpolis stood at the head of the Red Sea, whose western arm was called the Heroöpolitan Gulf. The geographer, Agathemerus, says that the Arabian Gulf began at Heroöpolis; and Artemidoros, who wrote about 100 B.C., informs us that ships voyaging to Ethiopia sailed from Heroöpolis. Strabo and Pliny both state that Heroöpolis stood on a gulf of the Red Sea. On the strength of these passages Heroöpolis was formerly supposed to be near Suez, but these inscriptions enable us to recover the ancient topography, and to prove that Lake Timsah and the Bitter Lakes, now traversed by the Suez Canal, were formerly part of the Red Sea, though afterwards separated from it by accumulations of drifting sand; while Lake Timsah extended ten miles further west than it does now.

It will be seen that by these discoveries the conditions of the problem are entirely altered. We now know that the Red Sea formerly extended fifty miles farther north, as far as the district of Succoth, where the Hebrews camped on the first night of their march.

It is probable that on the second day they took the regular road from Pithom to Palestine, which skirted the northern extremity of the Heroöpolitan Gulf. They advanced as far as the end of the fertile plain, and camped in Etham, at the edge of the wilderness. This place must be somewhere to the north of Lake Timsah, and not far from Ismailia. Here there is a sandy plateau, which forms the watershed between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. It is now intersected by the deepest of all the cuttings on the Suez

Canal; in fact, this is the only part of the canal where from the deck of a large steamer it is impossible to see over the banks. Along this elevated ridge of desert ran the regular and direct road from the Wady Tumilat and the land of Goshen to Pelusium, and thence on to Syria. From the Papyrus Anastasi, which gives an account of a journey of an Egyptian official who in the reign of Meneptah was sent in pursuit of fugitives from Egypt, we learn that after leaving Lake Timsah (then called Kemuer) he arrived at a foreign region called Atima, or Atuma. This was on the frontier of Egypt, and must be identified with the Etham of the Bible, which was at the edge of the wilderness. From Egyptian documents we also learn that this frontier was guarded by a fortress and a wall (shur), which explains why what is called the Desert of Etham in the book of Numbers is called the Desert of Shur in the book of Exodus. It would appear that in the first instance the Hebrews attempted to escape from Egypt by the ordinary route round the head of the gulf, but for some reason, either because they were unable to pass the wall, or because there was no water, or because they feared that they would be taken in flank by the advance of Pharaoh, they turned back and passed by Pihahiroth, or, according to the Septuagint, by Ero (Pithom), the capital of the district of Succoth, where they had camped on the first night. It was the loss of these two days which made it easy for Pharaoh to overtake them in spite of the fact that they had a day's start, while Pharaoh's march from Tanis was longer than the march of the Hebrews from Rameses. A reference to the map on page 465 shows that the direction of their retreat was directly away from the advance of the Egyptians, they fled before them, while if they had kept on in the direction they took at first they would have rushed almost into Pharaoh's arms; and in the open desert they would easily have been cut to pieces by the chariots. They therefore turned and camped before Migdol, where they were shut in between the desert and the sea. Well might Pharaoh think that they were now "entangled in the land, the wilderness had shut them in." Pharaoh had in fact headed them off from their proper route and driven them into a *cul de sac*. On their right were those steep hills of drifted sand which form so striking a feature in the landscape as seen from the landing-place at Ismailia; on the left were the broad waters of Lake Timsah, which formed the head of the old gulf; while in front there was an arid desert absolutely

impassable. They were caught in a trap from which escape seemed impossible.

Their third camp, the night before they crossed the sea, was between Hahiroth and Migdol. Pi-hahiroth, the "town or temple of Hahiroth," was, as we have seen, only another name of Pithom, or close to it, but Migdol has not been identified. The site is probably covered up by sand drifts. The name Migdol, which means a tower or fort, is not uncommon, and we may conjecture that it was a fort built to guard the passage of the shallow and narrow channel, perhaps fordable at low water, which then connected Lake Timsah with the Bitter Lakes.

Near Migdol they must have crossed. The geographical configuration of the district is now totally changed, since the old strait has been filled up by the drift from the desert, which has formed sand-hills fifty feet in height, through which the Suez Canal has now been excavated, nearly in the line of the old natural channel. The Hebrews probably crossed at the shallowest and narrowest point. We cannot precisely fix the spot, but in any case it was somewhere on that section of the Suez Canal which connects Lake Timsah with the Bitter Lakes. This fulfils all the conditions of the problem. By the route we have indicated it is three days' march from Succoth, two from Etham, and one from the camp before Hahiroth; none of the marches exceeding twelve miles.

The ancient channel which united the two lakes must have been a shallow tidal wash, possibly a mile or so in breadth, between the deeper basins of the two lakes. At Suez the spring tides rise seven feet, and the neap tides four feet. As the Hebrews crossed three days after the full moon, the tide would be nearly a spring tide, and the effect would be increased by the wind; since an east wind, when it reaches the Red Sea, turns down the gorge, and blows from the north. At London Bridge a strong wind makes a difference of as much as five feet in the predicted height of the tide; and it is therefore not difficult to believe that a channel, which at high water was deep enough for the passage of the ships which sailed from Heropolis, might be left dry. When the tide turned and the wind chopped, the sea would "return in his strength." The first result would be to convert the sandy bottom into a quicksand. The wheels of the chariots would be "bound" by the wet sand, so that they drave them heavily. Moreover, we read that it was not the sea, but "the earth that swallowed up the chariots;" they were

first engulfed in a quicksand, and then, after they were overthrown, the waters returned and covered the chariots. The same fate has befallen carriages caught by the tide when crossing the sands at Morcambe Bay or St. Michael's Mount.

We also read that when the Hebrews crossed the sea, the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. The Hebrew word here translated "wall" means strictly a bulwark or protection, coming from a root meaning to cover or protect. As they crossed the tidal channel connecting the two lakes, the waters of these lakes would be a "bulwark" or "protection" to them, Lake Timsah protecting them on the left, and the Bitter Lakes on the right, so that they could not be attacked on either flank.

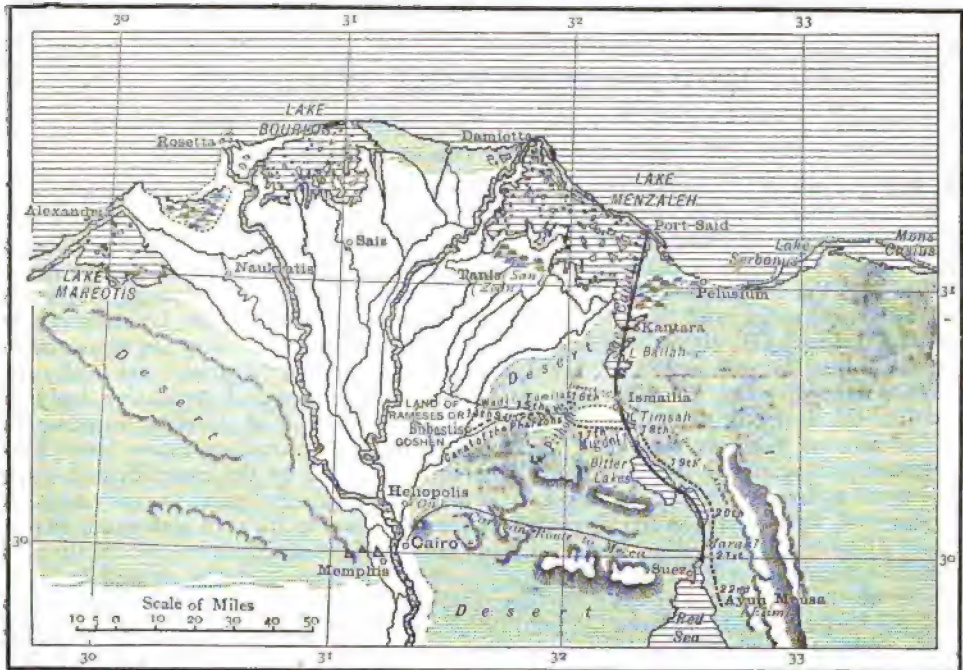
When the Hebrews camped at sunset on the 17th, the camp of the Egyptians was close behind them to the west, but they were prevented from attacking them by the pillar of a cloud, which was darkness to the Egyptians, but gave light, like a pillar of fire, to the Hebrews. Here we have a striking description of a familiar natural phenomenon of the desert. The strong east wind, as it arose, could not fail to drive before it one of the well-known Egyptian sand storms, which stalk over the desert like the pillar of a cloud. The Hebrews first saw the pillar of a cloud to the east, in front of them, and then it "removed from before them and stood behind," and it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel, and there was the cloud and the darkness, yet it gave light by night. The moon was nearly full, and on the 17th would rise nearly in the east shortly after nine o'clock, illuminating the whirling dust cloud, which would resemble a pillar of fire when looked at from the east, while from the west it would be a pillar of darkness. It was my good fortune, last February, to see one of these dust storms. As it approached the black column blotted out the sun like a pillar of darkness, and then, as it passed behind us, it was like a column of fire, illuminated with the lurid light shining through the haze.

After crossing the sea, the Hebrews wandered for three days in the wilderness of Etham, on the edge of which they had camped two days before. If we take Etham as the name of the desert north and east of Lake Timsah all is clear. They first reached this desert by the usual route north of the lake, and then turning back they would come to it again by keeping to the south of the

lake. Here they were three days without water, which hitherto they could have obtained from the fresh-water canal of the Pharaohs, whose bed can be traced a little to the south of Pithom and Pikeheret. On the third day they camped at Marah, where the water was bitter. It was probably a mere desert pool filled by the winter rains. On the fourth day they reached Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm-trees; and on the fifth day they camped by the Red Sea. One of these camps must be at the place which goes by the name of Ayun Mousa (the Wells of Moses), about nine miles south of Suez, a mile from the shore

of the Red Sea, and about fifty miles from the place where they must have crossed. At the Wells of Moses there are now some palm-trees and half-a-dozen pools, one of which is bitter, with a strong taste of magnesia. This, however, can hardly be Marah, as the distance could not easily have been traversed in three days. The pool at Marah has probably been covered up by the drifting sands.

On the fourth day they reached Elim, and if we place Elim at Ayun Mousa the Hebrews must have marched twelve miles a day, whereas if Ayun Mousa be identified with the camp by the Red Sea they would have



marched about ten miles a day. Neither solution presents any great difficulty. It will be noticed that the seven days which elapsed between the 15th, when they left Rameses, and the 22nd, when they reached Elim, correspond to the seven days of unleavened bread, traditionally observed in commemoration of the escape from Egypt. Elim was the first station where they could have halted to bake bread.

We have still to determine the position of Rameses, the place from whence they started on their march. Rameses may have been either a city or a district. If a city—the city which was built by the Hebrews—the site may be sought either at

Tell Rotab, seven miles west of Pithom, where there are ruins, probably of the age of Rameses, or at Tell-el-Kebir, twenty miles west of Pithom. But these towns, judging from the size of the mounds which cover them, must have been too small to contain the Hebrew host. It is more probable that Rameses, like Succoth, was the name of a district, and there are reasons for believing that the land of Rameses was another name for the land of Goshen. Thus the Septuagint version of Genesis xlii. 28, instead of affirming, like the Hebrew text, that Joseph met Jacob in Goshen, says that he met him near Heroöpolis, in the land of Rameses, and the Coptic version varies this by saying that he

met him near Pithom, in the land of Rameses. Hence in the neighbourhood of Pithom there was a district called Rameses or Goshen, from which the Hebrews may have set forth. They left Rameses on the morrow of the Passover, and from the mention of doors and lintels it is plain that it was believed that the first Passover was celebrated, not in tents, but in the houses in which the Hebrews had been living.

To have finally set at rest the vexed question of the route of the Exodus, and to have established so unexpectedly the minute historic accuracy of the narrative, might by itself seem an achievement on which the Egypt Exploration Fund might base a claim to liberal support; but its work in other

years has been of hardly less importance. The huge mounds which cover the site of Bubastis have been excavated; Phacusa, the chief city of the land of Goshen, and Tanis, the ancient capital of the Shepherd Kings, have been explored; while the lost site of Naucratis, a commercial settlement occupied by the Greeks in Egypt as early as the seventh century B.C., has been discovered, and priceless materials for the history of Greek art, Greek commerce, Greek metrology, and Greek epigraphy have been brought to light. The recovery of the buried city of Naucratis has done almost as much to increase our knowledge of the early arts of Greece as the recovery of Pompeii has done for those of Italy.

ENGLISH INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE.

By JOHN RAE, M.A., AUTHOR OF "CONTEMPORARY SOCIALISM," ETC.

II.—THE ORDERS AND THE GENERAL SOCIETIES.

THE first step in the organization of mutual assistance was taken by the funeral brief and the sharing-out club. Then came the local society; and now a third step is being taken, and the local society is giving place to the general society and the affiliated order. The local societies are either becoming lodges in the orders themselves, or they are dying out for want of young recruits, who prefer to join the lodge of an order. In 1886 there were as many as forty-nine working men's orders registered, and though we have no exact figures to go by, we are safe in saying that their total membership cannot be short of two millions. The Foresters had 667,570 members in 1886; the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows, 617,587; the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, 102,657 in 1878; the Druids, 72,818 in 1878; the Loyal Order of Shepherds (Ashton Lodge), 64,525 in 1883; the National Independent Order of Odd Fellows, 47,056 in 1883; the Nottingham Imperial United Order of Odd Fellows, 41,263 in 1883. Most of the orders are comparatively recent institutions, some of them, like the various branches of the Odd Fellows, for example, having risen out of secessions from previous organizations. Both the Foresters and the Odd Fellows originated in the first half of last century, but none of the existing organizations of them go back nearly so far. The Manchester Unity was founded in 1822, and the Ancient Order of Foresters in 1834. The constitution of a working man's order is the ordinary constitution of a secret society. There are

first the primary local branches, called "lodges" among the Odd Fellows, "courts" among the Foresters, "tents" among the Rechabites, "sanctuaries" among the Ancient Shepherds, and "senates" among the Ancient Romans. Then the local branches in a particular portion of country are combined into a union, called a "district," and finally there is over all a central legislative body, the general assembly of delegates meeting once a year, and a central executive body, a committee elected by the assembly and responsible to it. Every branch is really a separate society, having its own sick fund, which it raises and administers independently of the other branches or of the general body. In the same way every district has its own burial fund, to which all the branches in the district are bound to contribute, but in which branches outside the district have no manner of interest. Then there is a central fund, to meet the expenses of the general management, to which every branch contributes. Like the Freemasons, the orders generally have their "secrets," their grips and passwords, by which brother recognises brother, but they are so little of secret societies that reporters are always present at their annual meetings; and some of the orders—the Rechabites, for example, and latterly the Foresters—have discarded all affectation of mystery whatsoever.

Two of these orders, as will have been remarked, stand far ahead of the rest, having both more than 600,000 members, whereas the order that comes next has only 100,000.

These are the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows and the Ancient Order of Foresters. These orders have a large membership in the colonies and other quarters where English workmen congregate, from Constantinople to New York; but in 1884 their membership in the United Kingdom alone amounted in the case of the Foresters to 584,600, and of the Manchester Unity to 531,576. The Foresters, with 5,007 courts altogether, had 4,156 courts in the United Kingdom. The vast bulk of the members of these great orders are in England; Scotland has only 36,419 Foresters, and Ireland only 2,186, while England has 504,457. The striking progress of these two orders is due to the fact that they possess all the social attractions of the local friendly society and that they stand on a much sounder actuarial basis. The trouble of the small societies always was that they had started by promising too high a benefit for too low a contribution. From an actuarial point of view they began insolvent; they got into deep water in a few years, and after taxing the members severely with occasional levies to keep the concern afloat, they eventually went down altogether. The society that lasted a generation, said one of the assistant commissioners in 1874, was an exception. Now the orders have set themselves in earnest to cure this evil. The Manchester Unity has repeatedly altered the basis of its calculations to place it in better conformity with the results of experience and with the laws of probability. It increased its contributions in 1845, it introduced the principle of a graduated scale of premiums in 1853, it made various other alterations with a like general purpose in 1864 and 1880, and it has, since 1870, been at the expense of preparing three successive general valuations of all its lodges. It has incurred sacrifices in the cause of actuarial reform, suffering some serious secessions in consequence of its action, but the result has been in the end entirely satisfactory, and may be stated in the simplest way by saying that whereas in 1871 only 26 per cent. of the lodges under valuation were, from an actuarial point of view, in possession of a surplus, as many as 40 per cent. of them had a surplus in 1880, and the actuary who conducted the valuation of 1880 reported that 60 per cent. of them might be fairly regarded as being absolutely solvent or very nearly so. The deficit occurs most frequently in the larger lodges, but that is because the larger lodges are usually older, and made many bad bargains in their early days, before the rate of

contributions was raised. This, however, will correct itself, as the older members gradually die out.

At present every lodge stands on its own bottom, but a movement is abroad for introducing, if practicable, something more of mutual financial responsibility among the lodges. Both the Foresters and the Manchester Unity have established central relief funds, for the assistance of branches that have got into difficulties, but these funds have not had time as yet to grow to any considerable amount. Then a system of mutual agency is established between the different lodges. When a member changes his residence from one town to another, he may pay his contribution—at the old rate—to the lodge he now enters, and receive from it his benefits; but his new lodge merely acts as the agent for the old, and sends on the contributions to it and charges the benefits against it. A member of a lodge travelling in search of work, however, is entitled to relief from the lodges he comes to without his own lodge being obliged to recoup the amount. There is a tendency, too, towards making the "district" in some way a means of pecuniary support to weaker lodges. At present a lodge is not obliged to join a district, but if it does, the district is required to examine its accounts once in two years, and may expel a lodge that transgresses its rules.

The great orders have separated their lodge meetings entirely from public-houses. In many cases they have built quarters for themselves; and the newest development is the foundation of special temperance lodges, composed almost entirely of abstainers, at whose meetings intoxicating liquors are forbidden. One-fourth of the Foresters now belong to temperance courts. In 1884 the order contained 801 temperance courts, which had 138,812 members, and the funds of the temperance courts have, since 1880, increased 37 per cent., and the number of their members 21 per cent., whereas in the other courts the funds only increased 16 per cent., and the members 13 per cent. At all lodge meetings the discussion of politics and religion is tabooed.

With respect to contributions and benefits, those of the Manchester Unity may be taken as a sample. The contributions are graduated according to the amount of benefit desired, as well as the age at which the contributor enters. There are five classes of benefits, of which the lowest is 7s. a week of sick benefit, and £7 of burial money on the

death of the member, and £3 10s. on the death of his wife; and the highest 12s. a week of sick benefit, £12 of burial money on death of the member, and £6 on death of his wife. The contribution differs again according as the contributor desires sick benefit in full for twelve months and then one half for the rest of the sickness, or sick benefit in full for six months and then one half for the rest, or one or other of three more variations. But let us assume that he desires his benefit in the first of these forms. Then to get the lowest benefit of 7s. a week, &c., he must pay 1s. 1d. a month if he enters at the age of twenty, 1s. 4d. at thirty, and 1s. 11d. at forty; to get the highest benefit of 12s. a week, he must pay 1s. 10d. a month if he enters at twenty, 2s. 4d. at thirty, and 3s. 3d. at forty. Every lodge appoints one of its members visitor of the sick, on a small salary (among the Foresters 3d. a week), to report once a week on all cases of sickness, and engages a medical officer at so much per member (among the Manchester Foresters 2s. 8d.) to attend all cases gratis. There is a tendency to transfer the burial benefit to the districts so as to equalise risks better, and to establish a special superannuation benefit for old age. The special benefit to members in circumstances of temporary distress, which being beyond actuarial calculation is met by levies, seldom amounts to anything very considerable. The Foresters spent £13,397 on this benefit in 1882. Besides this regular work, the Manchester Unity, the Foresters, the Shepherds, and others of the orders maintain a life-boat each by the voluntary contributions of their members. The expenses of management in the orders remains somewhat high—it is estimated at 10 per cent. of the income, but it is nothing like the figure it reaches in some of the societies we are to consider next, the General Societies.

The General Society is one in which the members have no connection or personal acquaintance with one another, and where the management is in the hands of a committee subject to hardly more than nominal control from an annual general meeting. There are two kinds of general societies—collecting societies like the Royal Liver, and non-collecting Societies like the Hearts of Oak. The latter are usually spoken of as the “ordinary large (or general) societies.” They undertake both sick and burial business and have very much the form of an ordinary centralised insurance office of a large scale. In 1874, there were about one hundred

of them, some employing agents to collect the premiums from their members and distribute sick pay and other benefits to them, but the more important of them discarding all agents and transacting their business by Post Office order. Their members belong to a somewhat different class from the members of other friendly societies, being for the most part clerks, tradesmen, domestic servants, artisans who dislike what they call “the nonsense and the mixed company of club nights,” and wish merely to make a useful investment; and both the benefits and the contributions are usually higher than in the friendly societies of which we have previously spoken. The largest of this class of society is the “Hearts of Oak Benefit Society” of London, which in 1883 had 102,263 members, £229,843 of annual income, and £627,612 of accumulated funds. Its growth has been very rapid, for in 1865 it had only 10,571 members. As it dispenses with agents and does its business through the Post Office, its expenses are moderate, being in 1872 only a little more than 4 per cent. of its gross income (as the society itself stated it) or 7½ per cent. (as the commissioners preferred to state it, conformably to a more correct arrangement of items). It admits only males between the age of eighteen and thirty, who are in good health and earn not less than 24s. a week, and it excludes absolutely the members of a considerable number of trades, namely drug or colour grinders, water gilders, workers in white or red lead or quicksilver, gunpowder, fireworks or lucifer match makers, typefounders, stereotypers, electrotypers, workers in the manufacture of chemicals, miners, puddlers, sugar bakers, cigar makers, brass founders, gamekeepers, police constables (what can there be against a police constable’s life?) soldiers, sailors, coast-guardsmen, members of fire brigades, brewer’s draymen, grinders in dry cutlery, bakers, confectioners, millers, cement makers, plaster of Paris makers, and any other occupation the committee of the society may think dangerous to health. The members being thus a select class of comparatively young and vigorous lives, the society adheres to the old principle of a uniform rate of contribution from all, and the rate is 2s. 4d. a month for sick insurance, the same sum as we have seen an Odd Fellow of the Manchester Unity paid if he entered at the age of thirty and desired the highest sick benefit the order provides, 12s. a week. This contribution in the Hearts of Oak Society entitles one if he has been a member for a year to a sick

allowance of 18s. a week for the first twenty-six weeks, and 9s. a week for the next twenty-six, and if he is still unfit for work, he is then put on the superannuated list and gets provision according to the length of his membership; if he has been less than six years a member he gets 2s. a week, if less than eight 3s., and if more than eight 4s. a week, and he continues to receive this pension until he is restored to such a degree that he can earn 12s. a week. One who has been a member less than a year is paid at a less rate; 6s. a week, if he has been less than three months; 9s. if he has been six months, and 12s. if he has been nine months. The society undertakes other business besides the sick benefit; it has a superannuation benefit, a lying-in benefit, and others, but it has no fixed contribution for them. They are met by quarterly levies.

The general collecting societies—so termed because they collect the weekly contributions of the members from house to house—have a very numerous membership, 1,450,000 in the United Kingdom, drawn by means of canvassing agents and collectors from the poorest and most ignorant portion of the labouring population all over the country, and as the members have no possible check on the management, the societies have existed in many cases for the benefit of the management alone. Their managing expenses usually amount to 40 per cent., and in some cases as high as 74 per cent. of their gross income. The best known of them, the Royal Liver, had in 1885 an income of £300,000, but ate so much of it up in salaries, that nothing of it remained over but £1,500. During the previous ten years the secretaries and members of committee had received £120,000 of the society's money. The army of collectors and agents is very costly to keep up. The collector's post is counted so desirable, that he sometimes gets as much as £1,000 from his successor for it. One of the most censurable ways in which this class of society has in the past been known to make its money is through the forced lapsing of the members. The collector neglects to make his weekly calls, and the consequence is that the member forfeits his claim to the benefit because he has not continued his subscription. It seems to have been not uncommon for a collecting society to withdraw its agency from a place altogether, and compel the whole body of local members there to lapse. The natural lapsing of members unable to pay is always very large; in the Royal Liver it

is 13 per cent. every year; and the secretary of the Royal London Friendly Society informed the Commission of 1871, that he always calculated that at least two-thirds of the total number of persons who insured in his office and similar institutions, allowed their policies to lapse, some time or other, and consequently deprived themselves of all claim to benefits; and he added that it was possible in a burial business to carry on operations without any accumulated funds whatever, merely by virtue of the number of lapses. The societies may not be in any way responsible for causing these lapses, but they are for not having contrived a scheme for the readmission of the lapsed. The collecting societies are usually burial societies alone; the Royal Liver at one time undertook sick benefits too, but it closed its sick business to new entrants in 1863; and as burial societies they do a large business in insuring the lives of infants for small sums between 30s. and £3.

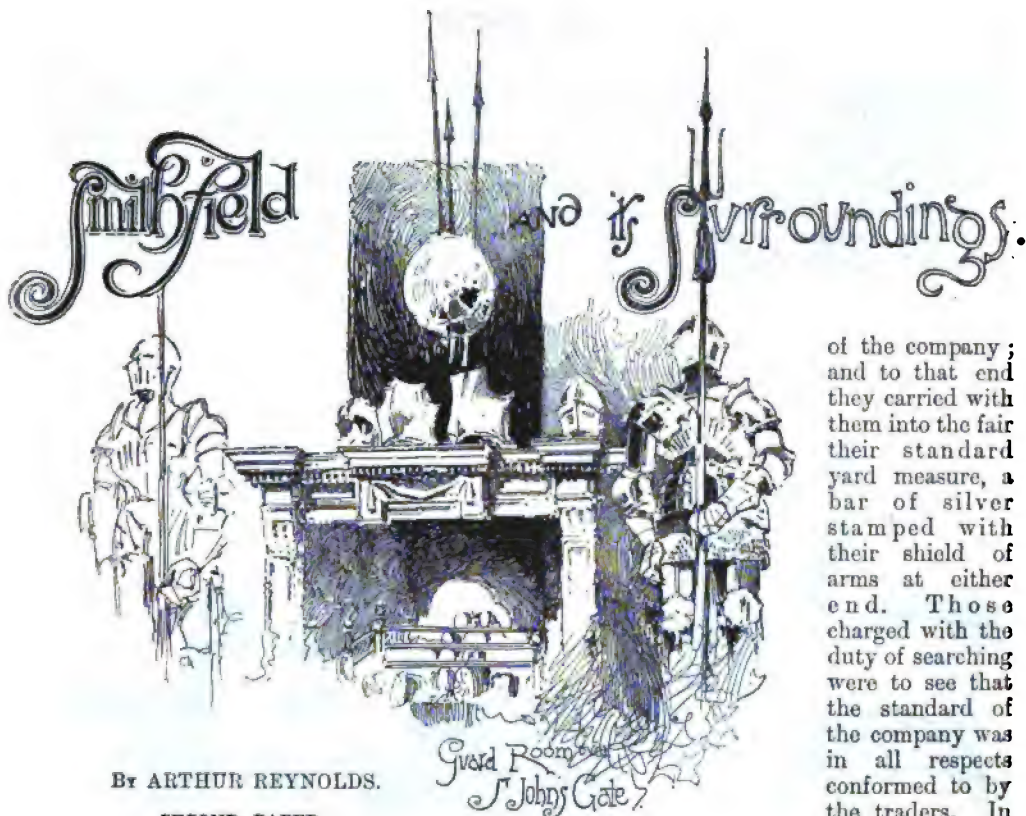
The modern improvement on the collecting society is the Commercial Company, founded by business men, who insist on the books being properly kept, and the officials effectively supervised. The million scattered and ignorant members of the great burial society are utterly helpless in the hands of their own officers; but the few partners of the burial company keep a sharp watch against mismanagement. The Prudential Assurance Company—the largest and best-known company of this kind—gives its agents and collectors no share in the management, pays them by salary instead of commission, and does the work of collection for 20 per cent. of its income, as compared with the 40 per cent. and even 70 per cent. of some of the collecting societies. It only began business as an industrial assurance company in 1854, and it had in 1867 already 358,043 policies, which had increased in 1885 to the remarkable figure of 6,659,219. Its funds in this last year were £4,255,032, and its premiums £2,794,522, which was collected by 8,898 agents, at a cost in salaries of £499,478. Its insurers are a grade superior to those of the Royal Liver, for it will not take anybody, refusing, for example, the residents in certain streets in large cities altogether. It undertakes infant lives, however, largely. It has won credit for the sound actuarial basis of its system of insurance, for the regularity of its quinquennial valuations of assets and liabilities, and for its care in preventing "artificial lapsing" of insurers. The success of the Prudential has induced some of the ordinary insurance companies to establish a

special industrial branch in their business. The Pearl Assurance Company, for instance, has now 493,437 burial policies granted for a total sum of £4,689,107. A penny a week will insure £10 at death, if one begins to contribute at the age of eleven; £8 if one begins at twenty; £6 at thirty, £3 at fifty, and so on; and every additional penny a week is at death an additional £10, £8, £6, £3, &c., as the case may be. One-sixth of the total amount of this company's industrial premiums—and therefore a much larger proportion of the number of its policies—are on the lives of children under six.

Little room is left to speak of one very important organization, which, though primarily a combination to raise wages, is practically the most complete and effective working-class insurance society that exists—viz., the Trade Union. The contribution in the trade unions is high; it is generally a shilling a week, but is liable to be raised by occasional calls to sometimes as much as half-a-crown a week; but then the benefits usually include not only a sick allowance of from 5s. to 10s. a week, a superannuation allowance of 7s. to 10s., according to length of membership, a burial allowance of £10 to £12, but also an unemployed allowance of 5s. to 10s. while out of work. This unemployed benefit is one of the most important for the working man, because, apart altogether from strikes, he is on the average, even in normal times, at least twice as many days in the year out of work as he is sick. There are two hundred and fifty-two trade unions in the country, with a total membership of probably 600,000. One of the strongest of these is the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, which has expended on its various benefits in the last thirty-six years the great sum of two millions and a half, of which £1,327,333 went to relieve the unemployed. In 1886 this society had a membership of 52,019 and an annual income of £173,937; and it had per month 3,859 members on the unemployed benefit, 1,291 on the sick benefit, and 1,480 on the superannuation benefit. The miners have, since 1862, got up outside their trade unions a number of local relief societies for the purpose of providing accident allowances and widows and orphans' annuities, on a financial basis conformable to the special risks and requirements of their trade. There are now eight of these Miners' Permanent Relief Societies in the several mining districts, the largest being the Northumberland and Durham Permanent Relief Fund, with 86,866 members.

In 1886 the eight had a total of 221,339 members, a revenue of £163,185, and funds amounting to £247,855; and they were then relieving 34,803 disabled persons, 1,793 widows, and 3,300 orphans. The amount of the allowances differs in different societies, but in the stronger ones it is 5s. to 8s. for the disabled workman, £20 to £23 of burial money, or, in case of a married member, £5 of burial money, and a permanent provision of 5s. a week to his widow for life, and 2s. or 2s. 6d. per child up to the age of twelve.

Such, then, is the remarkable shell of protective institutions with which the working classes of England have spontaneously contrived to shelter their lives. No doubt it has its defects. In some places it is still frail, but in that respect it is at present undergoing a quite satisfactory process of consolidation. A worse want is that a large body of the labouring class remain too low to scramble under its wing at all, or in country districts are too scattered to work the local lodge of an order, and too distant to be reached as yet by societies like the Hearts of Oak. In Anglesea, according to the parliamentary return of 1878-79, only 16 persons in the thousand of population were members of friendly societies, and in Cornwall only 32; while in Glamorgan there were 224, and in Derby 208. Another drawback is the frequency of lapsing from membership, and the difficulty of reassurance. Every sixth male pauper seems to have been a friendly society member who has lapsed. In 1881, out of 64,000 adult male paupers in the workhouses of England, 11,304 had belonged to benefit societies, of whom 3,913 had lost their connection through the society itself breaking up, and the remaining 7,391 from inability to continue their contributions or from secession. Still, with all their shortcomings, the friendly societies are a body of institutions of the highest present value and future possibility; they are training the mass of the people, section by section, in those habits of providence and self-government without which no compulsory or universal system of national insurance could, if established, be more than a name; and one cannot but sympathise with the recent Royal Commission which gave as its weightiest reason for deciding against a State system of insurance, that it would destroy the friendly societies. The State may wisely try all it can to help their shortcomings and glean in their leavings, but the State cannot do their work, the State cannot take their room.



By ARTHUR REYNOLDS.

SECOND PAPER.

CONNECTED with Cloth Fair as with other fairs also, there was the curious institution of the Court of Pie Powder. This court, which existed for the purposes of the fair, and whose jurisdiction extended no farther than the area within which the fair was held, took cognisance of such disputes as arose between the various traders, and administered justice in the speediest possible manner. The name Pie Powder has given rise to much speculation. It is derived from *pieds poudreux*, and is called in Latin "*Curia pedis pulverizati*,"—according to Blackstone, "because justice is done before the dust falls from the suitor's feet." The Scotch Borough Law, however, throws light on the etymology, applying to "any stranger marchand travelland through the realm . . . vagand from ane place to ane other" the name of "*pied poudreux* or Dustifute." Until very recent times this court continued to be held with all due solemnities in a room of an inn in Cloth Fair, appropriately named The Hand and Shears.

In order to further secure fair dealing among the clothiers and drapers, the Merchant Taylors' Company was specially authorised, in 22 Hen. VI., to make a search after such persons as might violate the privileges

of the company; and to that end they carried with them into the fair their standard yard measure, a bar of silver stamped with their shield of arms at either end. Those charged with the duty of searching were to see that the standard of the company was in all respects conformed to by the traders. In 1609 the Dra-

pers' Company questioned this right of search, but the Merchant Taylors replied that they had enjoyed this right quietly "sithence the seven-and-twentieth year of King Henry the Sixth, being above one hundred and three score years past, and many years before that time." Such an important duty as this annual search required some convivial additions to make it agreeable, and accordingly we read the following minute, "23 Hen. VI. In expensis for the wardens, the clerks, and bedill, with other drynkynges, in the searching tyme, and aboute gadering yn of the money for prentises."

We can picture to ourselves the scene which met the eye on those three days in each year—the Eve, the Feast, and the Morrow of St. Bartholomew. The vast precinct of the priory, with its splendid mulberry garden and its solemn buildings, the great church standing in the midst, its quiet graveyard for the time surrounded with rows of booths, in which were displayed to view the bales of clothiers and other attractive wares; the crowd of traders from over seas, and from all parts of England; the citizens of London eager for their yearly gala, or the chance of adding to their wealth by barter; my Lord Mayor with the aldermen, bravely dressed in

scarlet, proclaiming the fair open, and watching with dignified merriment the disputation of the schoolboys, or the prentice lads at play; knights and ladies with splendid trains, come to see the great show; the fun and frolic of the humbler folk; the clamour of chattering traders; the laughter of children; and, last not least, the Black Canons looking on the

motley scene with much satisfaction, perhaps, as they thought of the great addition to the revenues of their house from the toll on each person entering the precinct. All these sights and sounds made Bartholomew Fair the very joy of the good citizens of London.

We need not dwell at length upon the later history of Bartholomew Fair. It will



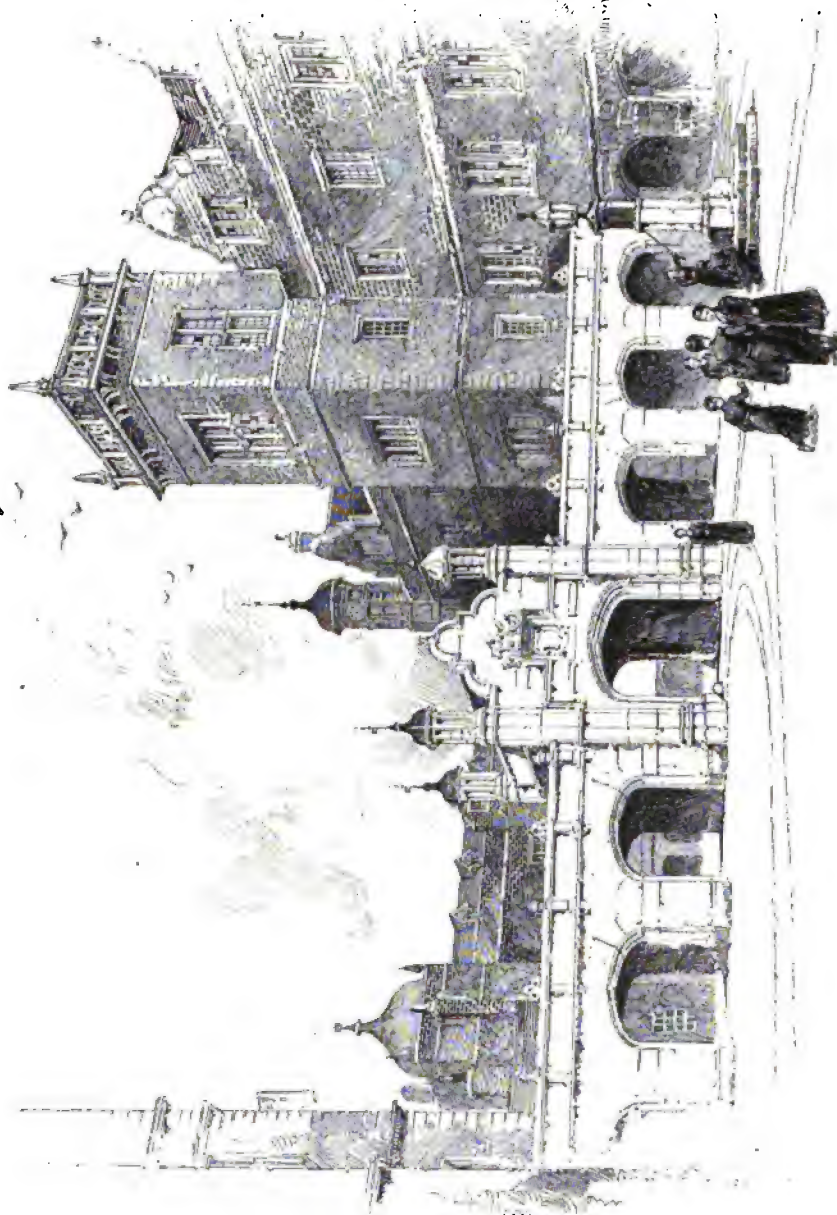
suffice to say that in process of time the old three days' limit was extended to a term of fourteen days, and that the fair overflowed from the Priory precinct—as that became crowded with streets and houses—into Smithfield itself. Its legitimate and useful purposes were no longer served, and the fair degenerated into such noisy and riotous Saturnalia that for the sake of peace it was at last extinguished.

The hospital of St. Bartholomew, founded at the same time as the Priory, although the outward evidences of its antiquity have disappeared, is nevertheless the ancient hospital

surviving under modern conditions. Originally it was a philanthropic adjunct to the Priory, and was governed by its own officers, who were responsible to the prior. At the Dissolution it was severed from the Priory, and reconstituted under Henry VIII. as "the House of the Poor in West Smithfield, in the suburbs of the City of London, of King Henry VIII.th foundation." Under this new scheme it was to maintain a considerable staff of officials, and notably eight beadles, whose duty it was to search the city for the poor and lame and ailing. The medical staff con-

The Charterhouse

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CHRIST'S HOSPITAL—THE NEW CLOISTER FROM THE GARDEN.

sisted of a surgeon and physician, provided with an ample dispensary. At the head were the Hospitaller and the Vicar of St. Bartholomew the Less, the parish church then, as now, of the hospital precinct. The hospital now carries on its work with larger means than ever, and with all the improvements in scientific appliances and all the newest modes of healing. To see now these high developments of skill and knowledge would astonish the mediæval surgeons, who had patched up the wounds of knights brought in from the field of tournament in dinted armour, or, as we have seen, the mutilated body of Wat Tyler, borne from the riot hard by the gates. They would at any rate acknowledge with pride that the hospital of to-day is the hospital of their founder, Rahere, which for more than seven centuries has kept steadily to its grand purpose of relieving pain and restoring the sick to health.

Close to this venerable hospital stood the great Franciscan house of Grey Friars, now known as Christ's Hospital or Bluecoat School. Its history is worthy of some notice, more especially as we find its site still occupied by a benevolent institution, by no means unworthy of the ancient traditions of the place.

Early in the thirteenth century a rich young Italian entered a church on a day when the gospel taken from the tenth chapter of St. Matthew was read, in which the Twelve were commissioned to go forth, providing nothing for their journey. The words, perhaps often heard before, barbed with new and wonderful force of conviction, pierced his very soul, and that day became the birthday



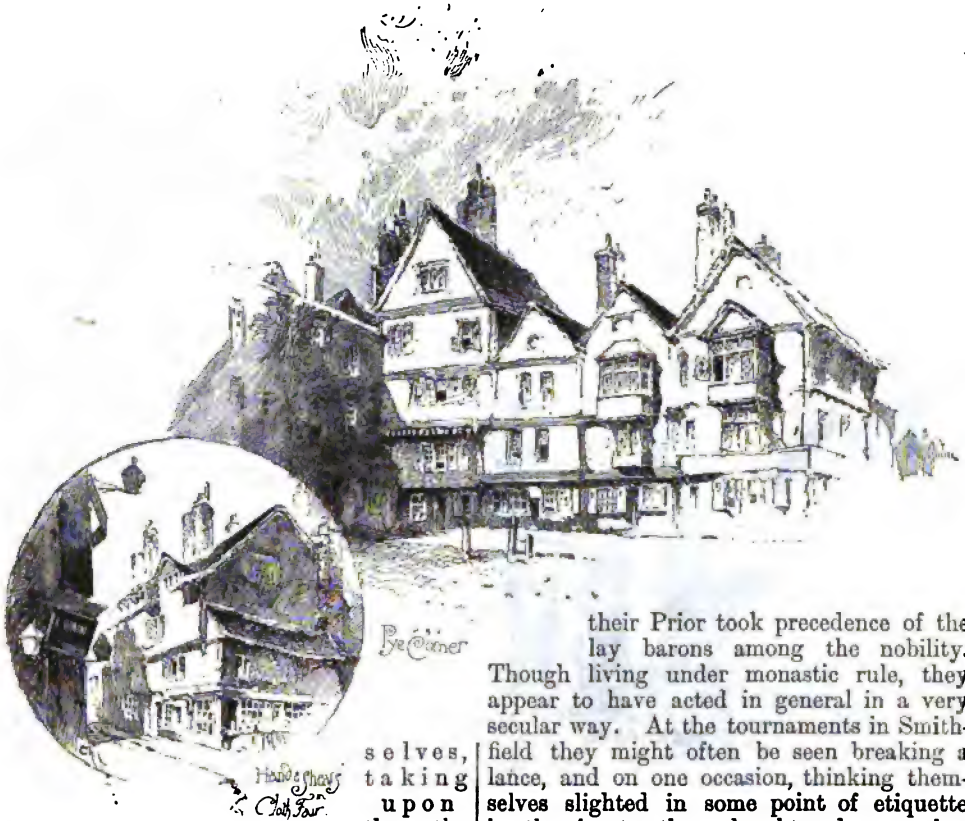
of the Franciscan Order of the followers of St. Francis of Assisi. The confraternity was in due time established on the principle of absolute poverty, according to the precept, "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor," and became known as the Order of Friars Minor or Minorites, from the excessive humility of their professions, and yet again as Grey Friars from the colour of their habit. Founded in 1209, this order increased so greatly that branches were speedily established in the chief cities of Europe, under the command in each district of a Minister

Provincial. In 1224 nine of the brethren, four clerical and five lay, came to England with letters commendatory from Pope Honorius III. At first they found shelter in the Benedictine Convent of the Holy Trinity at Canterbury, while two of the number came up to London to set on foot the mission here. They were introduced to a convent of Dominicans in Holborn, where they were kindly received. Shortly afterwards they were taken in at the house of John Trevors, in Cornhill, where they speedily induced large numbers to join them. When they were in a position to build a house a citizen named John Ewyns made over to them an estate in the ward of Farringdon Within, in the parish of St. Nicholas of the Shambles. The site thus being acquired, the Londoners generously vied with each other in lavishing upon the friars the means of building their house. Edward I. and his queen, earls, barons, and commoners came forward with large sums of money to rear and furnish the conventual church, which was twenty years in building, and measured three hundred feet in length. A century later, in 1421, Richard Whittington founded here a library of vast dimensions, which he caused to be furnished with every convenience for study possible in that age. Of the cost, which amounted to £556, he contributed nearly four-fifths. So great did the fame of this house become that to be buried in the habit of a Grey Friar was accounted likely to benefit the departed soul, and the greatest persons in Church and State sought a last resting-place within the precinct of the monastery. It is impossible to speak with calmness of the ruthless desecration and destruction of this illustrious house. Every tomb, every fragment of marble, iron, or brass was greedily torn away and sold, and the church was converted into a storehouse for the prizes taken in war. Not a vestige remains of all this past grandeur, save only a few poor arches of what was once the cloister. But, unlike so many places of the kind, its purposes are still served in some way by the splendid institution of Christ's Hospital, which occupies its site. As part of a scheme, framed by Bishop Ridley and Edward VI., for providing hospitals for various classes of the poor, namely, the Royal hospitals of Bridewell, St. Thomas and Christ, Christ's Hospital exists to-day as a standing reparation for the wanton havoc caused by the young king's father, as it also is a monument of splendid munificence that almost rivals the charity of the Middle Ages.

Hitherto we have been considering the east and south sides of Smithfield. Crossing over to the north we enter at once the district of Clerkenwell, which bears a name long famous among the place-names of London. *Fons Clericorum*, or Clerkenwell, was so called from the following circumstances. In the Middle Ages the parish clerks were very important officials, being, in regard to many duties, the deputies of the priest. The parson and clerk duet, familiar to us in our youth, was the faded relic of this ancient connection. In London the clerks associated themselves together in a guild, which held its annual festivals at one of the many springs in this district, which in time took its name from the spring adopted by the clerks. The reason why the *Fons Clericorum* became the well *par excellence* is that the Guild of Parish Clerks supplied the Londoners with a treat, which they highly appreciated, in the exhibition of Miracle or Mystery Plays, and, in a later age, Moralities. The Miracle Plays were dramatised versions of saintly legends and religious histories; the Mysteries again were dramatic instructions in religious truths, while the Moralities were plays in which Faith, Prudence, Charity, and the like, were impersonated in allegorical characters. Clerkenwell abounded in grassy slopes, which afforded an admirable natural theatre for open-air dramatic performances. From the Moralities, as they were further modified, arose the modern English drama, in the higher development of which Clerkenwell again was associated, as will presently be seen.

Passing into Clerkenwell from Smithfield, we turn into a little dingy street, which is spanned by a noble gateway, strangely out of harmony with its sordid surroundings. It lacks the strength of a city gate, and evidently led into the precinct of some great house. But it is useless to search for any house of the kind. The effigy of a lamb carved in the stonework of the gate, and the shield bearing the cross of the King of Jerusalem, point us to St. John the Baptist and the Knights Hospitallers,* or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who lived here from the beginning of the twelfth century until the Dissolution. These Hospitallers were so-called from a hospital built at Jerusalem for the reception of the countless pilgrims. To this hospital a number of knights joined them-

* Their original patron was St. John of Jerusalem, known as John the Almoner, in the seventh century. They adopted, about the time of the first Crusade, the patronage of St. John the Baptist. St. John's Wood, London, formed part of the Grand Priors' country manor.



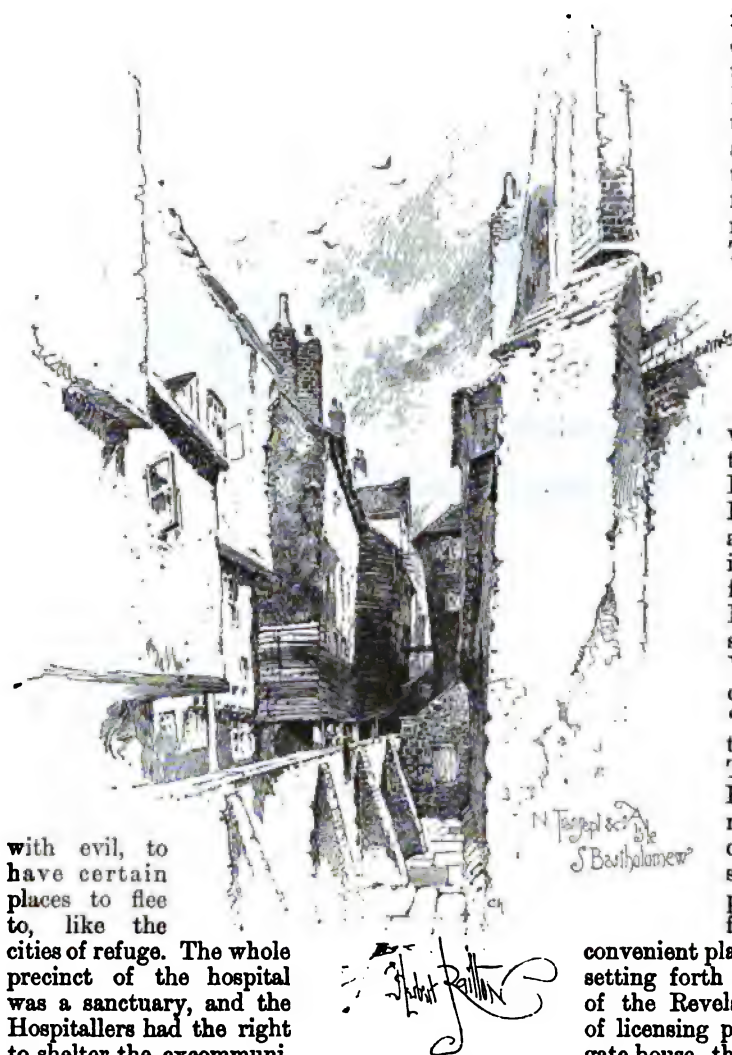
duty of protecting the pilgrims on their way to and from the Holy City. The order was instituted about A.D. 1092. The knights followed chiefly the Augustinian rule, and wore as their habit a long black cloak with a white cross on the left shoulder. Within about ten years from their foundation, one Jordan Briset, as it is said, erected for the use of the English Lang a hospital near West Smithfield. Their buildings here were erected slowly, and it was not until A.D. 1185, on the sixth of the Ides of March, that their church was dedicated to St. John Baptist by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was then preaching a crusade in England, and who also consecrated the Temple Church for their rivals the Templars. When their house and church were thus completed, the Hospitallers made haste to enrich themselves, and to secure for themselves a position of consideration. The suppression of the Templars in the year 1308, whose house was let to the lawyers, and whose lands and possessions were transferred to the Hospitallers, added vastly to the wealth of the latter, and removed out of their way their ancient rival, and in time they became so powerful that

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their Prior took precedence of the lay barons among the nobility. Though living under monastic rule, they appear to have acted in general in a very secular way. At the tournaments in Smithfield they might often be seen breaking a lance, and on one occasion, thinking themselves slighted in some point of etiquette in the jousts, they slaughtered a number of the citizens. On the other hand, they established friendly relations with powerful societies, such as the city companies, for example. The Merchant Taylors, who, like themselves, were a confraternity of St. John the Baptist, appear to have kept the Feast Day of the Decollation of their patron by attending the Hospitallers' Church and inviting the knights to dinner. Thus, "On the xxixth day of August, A.D. 1555, which was the day of the Decolaycion of St. John Baptist, the marchand tayllers kept masse at Saint Johnes beyond Smithfield, and my lord of St. Johnes did offer at masse, and Ser Hare Hubylthorne, Ser Thomas Whyte, and Master Harper, altherman, and all the clothyng. And after the iiij Wardens of the Yeomanry and all the compene of tayllers, 1d. a pesse, and the quyre hong with cloth of arres, and after masse to the tayllers hall to dener."

In one respect the Hospital of St. John was a boon to those outside its walls. It possessed privileges of sanctuary which exceeded those of any other house. In those days of fierce laws and speedy punishment, it was an advantage, though not unmixed



with evil, to have certain places to flee to, like the cities of refuge. The whole precinct of the hospital was a sanctuary, and the Hospitallers had the right to shelter the excommunicate, and during an interdict might even cause mass to be said in any church they might visit; but beyond this, it does not appear that the Priory, magnificent as it was, did much more for London than serve as an architectural adornment. Of their great church there are left us a few remains beneath the present hideous church of St. John, namely, the crypt. This crypt, now subterranean, was formerly above ground, resembling the undercroft of Canterbury Cathedral. It contains four bays, two of transitional Norman, two of Early English. It supported the choir and its aisles, and from its size sufficiently indicates the importance of the church of which it forms the pitiful memorial. Local tradition affirms that it contains the bodies of many

illustrious knights, and certainly the remains are there of the notorious Fanny, the heroine of the Cock Lane ghost story. We have seen that their buildings suffered great injury in the riotous outbreak of Wat Tyler and his companions. These were rebuilt in portions under successive priors, and the last portion erected was the gate of which we have spoken. This is the work of Sir Thomas Docwra, the last Grand Prior but one, in 1504, and consequently served its proper purpose only for thirty-six years, the English order being dissolved in 1540 by Henry VIII., who converted the church into a store for "the king's hunting toyles" and pavilions. The gate was used in Elizabeth's reign as the residence of the Master of the Revels, and a store for theatrical properties, the Great Hall forming, as we are told, a

convenient place for the rehearsals and setting forth of plays. The Master of the Revels enjoyed the privilege of licensing plays, and it was in this gate-house that a large number of

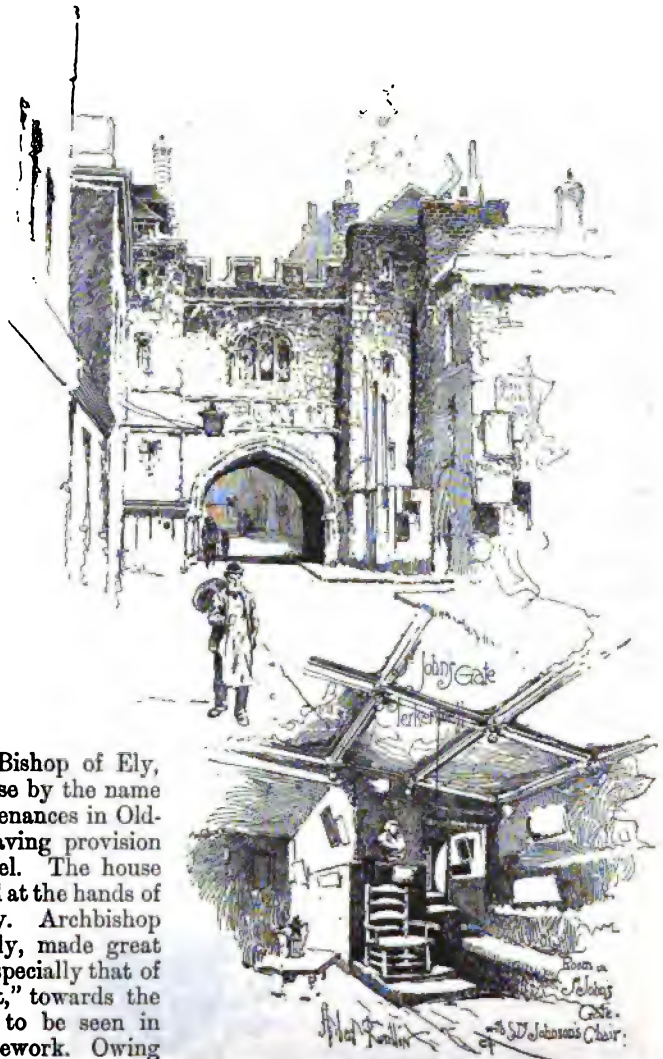
Shakspeare's dramas were licensed. After passing through many vicissitudes it was hired by Edward Cave, the printer, who, in 1731, established here his printing office for the publication of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which appropriately bore a woodcut of St. John's Gate as its frontispiece. In the large room over the gate Dr. Johnson, who helped to carry on the magazine, spent many hours a day writing his articles. The doctor, some years before, had recognised great dramatic talent in David Garrick, then a young man. He accordingly made him known to Cave, at whose bidding Garrick agreed to give some proof of his ability. A room in the gate-house was cleared, and Fielding's play, *The Mock Doctor*, was performed, Garrick giving great satisfaction with his rendering of the

part of Gregory. Thus the gate was once more brought into close connection with the history of the English stage.

In the present century an English Lang, or Division of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, was revived, and only some few years back the gate was purchased for the Order, for whom it now forms the centre of their work, and the symbol of their unity. From this spot they have organized the benevolent work of an Ambulance Society, and the education of such as desire it in the treatment of the wounded. And so, nearly eight centuries after its foundation, we see the Order returning to its first principle of a noble and active beneficence.

Retracing our steps from Clerkenwell, we turn westward, in the direction of Holborn, and just as we reach the summit of the hill we observe on our right a quiet-looking little street, guarded by gates at the near end, and closed in at the other. The name, Ely Place, seems suggestive, but to all appearances the street contains nothing but respectable offices. If we pass, however, into the Place we soon discover a break in the line of buildings on the left, and on reaching the gap we are suddenly struck with admiration at the sight of a beautiful chapel of fourteenth-century design. This, one of the oldest and choicest architectural relics in London, is all that remains of the famous "Inn," or residence, of the Bishops of Ely. According to Stow, "William de Luda, Bishop of Ely, deceased 1297, gave this house by the name of his manor, with the appurtenances in Oldborne, to his successors," leaving provision for the building of this chapel. The house William de Luda had received at the hands of his predecessor, John Kirkby. Archbishop Arundel, when Bishop of Ely, made great additions to the house, and especially that of a "large gate-house, or front," towards the street. His arms were still to be seen in Stow's day carved in the stonework. Owing to its great size, for the house must have

been almost the largest private house in London, Ely Place was frequently let out by the bishops for the purpose of holding feasts, notably to the serjeants-at-law. John of Gaunt, when his palace of the Savoy was destroyed by Wat Tyler's rebels, took refuge here with his kinsman, Arundel the Bishop, and spent the remaining years of his life in the episcopal residence, the bishops probably occupying a portion of it at the same time. The gardens were from early times famous. Thus Holinshed relates that Bishop Morton was noted for his fine strawberries, and that the Duke of Gloucester (afterwards Richard III.), when holding a council in the



Tower on the morning of Hastings' execution, begged the Bishop to give him some of them. Shakspeare, following this story, in his *Richard III.* (Act iii. sc. 4) makes Gloucester say :

"My lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there;
I do beseech you send for some of them."

To whom the Bishop replies :—

"Marry, I will, my Lord, with all my heart."

The practice of letting out portions of the palace led to its final separation from the see. Sir Christopher Hatton, Elizabeth's Lord Chancellor, conceiving that it was too spacious for a bishop, and lordly enough for himself, succeeded, during a long vacancy of the see, to establish himself in firm possession there. Bishop Heton, when appointed, failed to eject him. Bishop Andrewes and three of his successors were equally unsuccessful in their attempts to recover their house from the Hatton family. Bishop Wren, uncle of Sir Christopher Wren, at last found the money to compensate them for quitting, and the then occupier, Lady Elizabeth Hatton, set to work to destroy the house and pull down the trees. The Bishop obtained an injunction and she was arrested. But Wren was not to enjoy his victory. He offended the Puritans in 1641, and was committed to the Tower by them ; from whence when he was released long years afterwards, he found Ely Place almost a complete ruin. After the Restoration Lord Hatton went on with Lady Elizabeth's work of demolition, and leaving only the chapel and some apartments for the Bishop, pulled down the rest of the house and laid out the gardens in streets. Crowded and busy as this part of London is, there is in the names of the streets a fragrant memory of the celebrated gardens, in which the famous strawberries were cultivated, and Bishop Cox, when he first leased the house to Hatton, reserved to himself the right to walk and gather twenty bushels of roses every year. Hatton Garden, Vine Hill, and Saffron Hill are names which recall the flowery charms of this once famous Ely Place.

Wearied with their protracted struggle, the bishops at the close of the last century,

in 1772, resigned to the Crown all their claims to this estate. The vicissitudes through which the chapel has passed since then are as melancholy as they are strange. At the beginning of this century a Mrs. Faulkner hired it as a proprietary chapel, in which she provided service, making a business speculation out of the seats. In 1815 the National Society rented it. In 1843 some Welsh people hired the chapel for a place of worship, and in 1874 it was purchased by the Roman Catholics. The desecrated crypt, which had been used as a wine vault, they have made into a chapel, restoring the singular woodwork of the roof. The upper chapel, which is of rare beauty, they have put into thorough order ; and, if the glass is hardly worthy of the windows it is meant to adorn, yet they may feel justly proud at having expended so much loving care on Ely Chapel, or, as they prefer to call it, the Church of St. Etheldreda.

From the preceding account of Smithfield and its surroundings it will be seen that in their history there is much that is attractive, and that there are standing even now such remnants of ancient buildings as may suggest some faint image of their former greatness. The gate of St. John's in Clerkenwell ; the battered priory of St. Bartholomew's, with its beautiful gate embedded in mean houses ; the quiet picturesque courts of the Charterhouse ; the exquisite chapel in Ely Place, are precious relics of antiquity, which all Londoners should see and prize. If they only knew what a wealth of interest and charm is still left in older London, they might with much pleasure and advantage spend many a day in rambling among the city churches and the narrow streets which lie behind the great thoroughfares. And above all, though the fire wrought such widespread ruin, the names of streets and districts still remaining for the most part unchanged, the curious may for themselves rebuild the old waste places, and see again the multitude of churches and great religious houses, the palaces of soldiers, statesmen, and churchmen, with old St. Paul's, the greatest church in Christendom, on its steep and stately hill, forming the centre and crown of this famous city.



THE RAVEN'S NEST.

By "NETHER LOCHABER."

"**A**IR latha de na laithean." On a day of the days—as the Highlanders so frequently begin their old-world stories—it somehow occurred to me that I particularly wanted a raven; preferably a bird still in the down, and direct from the nest; for I wanted him to be reared as a pet about the house, and so to be made as tame as possible. I could easily get a full-grown, mature bird, glossy-plumaged, and black; such a bird any of the shepherds or assistant-keepers on the adjoining moorlands could cunningly snare for me, without any hurt at all to the captive, or the ruffling of a feather in wing or tail, if I wanted it; but what I desired to have was something less easily got—a young raven from the nest, still tenderly juvenile, and in the down, to be reared under my own eye; a bird that under carefullest tuition and training, if only I could get him, I had determined to make an amusing companion, the most accomplished of ravens.

It was in mid-February, somewhere about St. Valentine's Day, that my thoughts thus ran upon ravens; and as they are amongst the earliest to pair and earliest to breed of birds, I knew full well that it was about time I was making preparations, if I was by any chance to get hold of a juvenile raven of the season such as I longed to possess. In these circumstances I had recourse to a smart young fellow, an assistant-keeper in a neighbouring forest, a favourite of mine from his boyhood, and the best singer of the martial songs of the old Jacobite times I ever listened to. He was a Macdonald of the Glencoe tribe, but was better known in the district as Callum Donn, Brown-haired Malcolm; and when I sent for him and told him what I wanted, he readily undertook the business, and promised to let me know when his arrangements were completed; for I wished to be of the party myself in order to prevent as much as possible any unnecessary rashness or foolhardiness in an adventure that I knew pretty well was never otherwise than difficult and very often dangerous.

It was some time in early March that my friend Callum came to tell me that of several ravens' nests in the district, one in particular had been pointed out by the shepherd of the bounds as of comparatively easy access, so far as could be judged, and in which besides the young birds had for some time been hatched; a conclusion arrived at from the

fact that both the parent birds were now seen constantly on the wing; frequently returning to the nest with food for their young, whose rough gurglings and croakings as they were being fed, the shepherd declared he had once and again heard distinctly while hidden in a cleft at the foot of the precipitous cliff, high up in the face of which was their eyrie. Callum's story was thus perfectly satisfactory, and it was arranged that we should carry out the adventure on the following Monday.

Our party was to be four in number, Callum and myself, the shepherd already referred to, and one of the *gillies* from Callum's forest, Donald Cameron by name, as smart a young fellow as Callum himself, and as bold a cragman as was in all the West. Two finer men than those Callum had selected to join with himself in the contemplated raid could not possibly be found; for if the shepherd was less active than the others, he was a man of much heavier build; big and broad-shouldered, with immense development of hardest whipcord muscle all over him, and hands whose grip of one end of a rope, whatever the weight at the other, could be entirely depended upon.

On Monday morning at ten o'clock we were all met as arranged by the side of a pretty little tarn among the mountains called Loch-nan-Easgan (The Loch of Eels), our appointed rendezvous. It is but a small loch, some five hundred yards in length by a hundred yards across; but such another place for eels there is not perhaps in the three kingdoms.

The shepherd was eloquent on the eels of Loch-nan-Easgan; making no secret of his belief that such a multitude of them in one place was to be held as betokening something uncanny and preternatural; for in the still midsummer night, he went on, were not strange sounds heard about the tarn? and had he not himself seen balls of fire and shafts of livid light chasing each other over its inky waters from margin to margin? I had to put a stop to all this for the present by reminding the shepherd that our business for the day was not with mountain-tarn stories, nor with eels at all, but with ravens; and so we proceeded on our journey; the shepherd carrying over his shoulder a huge coil of rope, and Callum and Donald each a stout iron crowbar. The shepherd, as

best acquainted with the ground, was guide ; and he led us first across a wide stretch of rough, hummocky moorland, and then by a *bealach*, or pass of easy ascent, over a mountain ridge of considerable altitude into a broad glen beyond. The day was delightfully bright and clear ; not a wisp of cloud in all the overarching blue ; and our walk up the broad, meadowy glen was the pleasantest possible, the blended aroma of bog myrtle, and budding birch, and catkinned hazel, borne on the wings of healthful March-day breezes, filling the lungs with strength and gladness, and exhilarating like wine.

The shepherd was accompanied by one of his dogs, a wiry, long-legged nondescript, half greyhound, half collie, only "a fairly good sheep dog," his master confessed ; but from coal-black muzzle to tip of tail as game a bit of stuff with vermin as ever tackled fox or badger. I, too, had my dog "Yarrow," a thoroughbred collie, at heel, my constant companion in all my mountain wanderings ; and these two dogs having met and made friends with each other during our brief halt at Loch-nan-Easgan, had evidently, like the old couple in the humorous song, "The barring o' the Door," "made a paction 'tween them twa" that they must have a bit of fun on their own account, if only Saint Hubert should prove kind and something turned up in the course of the day's excursion. That there was some such paction is certain. Here were a couple of dogs that had never met before ; and after a little confabulation while seated on a grassy knoll by the tarn, they had communicated their ideas to each other in a measure sufficient to bring about the heartiest co-operation in getting out of the day's excursion all the canine enjoyment possible. My "Yarrow," although the better bred, and, so to speak, the more aristocratic dog of the two, had evidently consented to play second fiddle for the day, agreeing, as was very soon evident, that the shepherd's nondescript—whose name by the way was "Torm"—should act as leader in getting all the fun and excitement possible out of the day's ramble ; for no other reason I could think of than that "Torm" was well acquainted with the ground, and knew better, perhaps, than any other dog in the country what amount of fun was likely to be got out of such an excursion, and how best to find it. Very amicably, as we could see, and side by side, the dogs trotted on a little ahead of us, until from the rugged uplands we descended into the glen beyond, with its broad grassy

meadows and clumps of budding birch and alders. Here, with a look from Torm that seemed meant to remind his companion of their preconcerted understanding by the tarn, they commenced to hunt about with great keenness, quartering the ground very prettily, and determined to have it out, if there was anything worth the chasing in under-wood brake, or tuft of bent, or clump of rushes for half a mile around. A hare was soon started which, in a fair chase, they coursed and lost ; but when by-and-by another hare was rushed from her form by Yarrow, Torm was already in the *pass* by which a hare startled in the meadows was pretty sure to attempt an escape into the higher ground beyond ; and there he crouched until the hare, having easily distanced Yarrow, was close at hand, when, with half-a-dozen big bounds, he was upon her with a snap that laid her dead at his feet. When Yarrow came up, it was amusing to see how good-naturedly Torm encouraged him to give the hare a supererogatory shake by way of making sure that she was dead, and then allowed him the honour of carrying and laying her at our feet, as we rested a little and matured our plans, sitting on a heathery knoll by the stream.

Half-an-hour more brought us to the head of the glen, which here narrowed into a boulder-strewn and rugged gorge, overhanging one side of which was a huge precipice ; and high up on a deeply-recessed shelf in the face of this precipice was the Raven's Nest ! How to get at it was the question. The height of the precipice was, as nearly as we could guess, about eighty feet, and as impossible to climb as a castle wall. The shelf on which the nest was placed was about twenty feet from the top, and some fifty or sixty feet from where we were standing on a grassy plateau at the base below. If the nest was to be reached at all, it was clear enough that it must be by means of the rope from above ; and the fact that the shelf on which it was built was so deeply recessed added very largely, it was manifest, to the difficulty of the undertaking. My good friend Callum instantly volunteered to be "the man in the rope," as the Gaelic phrase is ; but Donald pleaded so earnestly to be allowed the adventure, that Callum, at my solicitation, good-naturedly yielded the post of honour ; all the more readily, indeed, that Donald was, as we knew, considerably the lighter weight of the two, as active as a cat, and with a head and nerves that had never once failed him in the course of many a daring adventure amongst

the pinnacled rocks and giddy precipices of Sgùr-nam-Fiannd and Glenceoe.

The Highlanders have a shrewd saying that "what you cannot well go *through*, you had better go *round*;" and so it was that, the matter thus arranged, we made a slight detour, and scrambling with some difficulty up the face of a steep *sgridan*, we managed, so to speak, to turn the precipice, and once on the top we commenced our preparations for "hanging" Donald, "not by the neck," as Callum laughingly put it, "which would disgrace the clan, but in such a way as would redound to the courage and credit of the tribe in all time coming!" The rope, when uncoiled and fully stretched, was fortunately found to be long enough to be used in double form, with sufficient slack and to spare; and this made it all the easier for us to put Donald in the safest possible position for the descent. First, arranging the rope and tying it around Donald in such a way that when his weight came to bear upon it he should be seated in its bight, we then secured it firmly with a couple of turns under his arms. Callum then, with a large piece of granite for mallet, drove the crowbars, stroke upon stroke, into the ground at a spot where the soil was deep enough to give them a stiffly erect and firm hold. To the crowbars the double ends of the rope were tied in a sort of triple bowline hitch that when a strain was brought to bear upon it would only tighten the more firmly, so that whilst the crowbar stood erect and the rope held good, it was simply impossible for it to get loose or to slip a single inch. When all this was satisfactorily arranged the shepherd took hold of one of the ropes and Callum of the other, allowing Donald just slack enough to let him creep on hands and knees to the brink of the precipice and quietly drop over and out of sight. There he was left to hang for a minute or two in mid-air, until I had time to slide down the *sgridan* again and reach the base of the precipice, whence I could look up, and help him in getting at the nest by such directions as I should judge it necessary to shout up to him. When, with a shrill whistle on my finger-tips (an accomplishment of which every Highlander is master), Callum and the shepherd had warning that I was at my post, they slowly paid out the ropes, until a second whistle intimated that they were to hold on and belay, for that Donald was right opposite the nest and quite as low as was necessary.

Meanwhile Donald is swinging about pendulum-wise in his rope, jerking himself from

side to side in order to increase the oscillation, and for a purpose that is soon apparent. In a few minutes a bigger swing than any that went before brings him close to the face of the ledge which it is his aim to reach, and a smart push with one of his feet against the nearest projection of rock sends him out again several feet into space, only to return in a still bigger oscillation, of which he cleverly takes advantage, grasping now the projection at which he had a moment before kicked, and swinging himself on to the ledge—an acrobatic feat so cleverly done that I shouted "Bravo!" in a voice so loud that Callum and the shepherd evidently heard it, and interpreted it aright, for they answered with a cheer, to which the echoes of rock and steep made instant and gay response.

Donald was now on his knees beside the nest, and, calling my attention by a whistle, he held up three fingers of one hand, an intimation, as I took it, that there were three birds in the eyrie. "Take one; leave the other two," was my loud-voiced reply; and in a moment I saw him with the selected bird in one hand, swinging himself away from the ledge into mid-air as before. His weight on the rope was the signal for his friends above to haul him up steadily to the precipice brink, over which he quickly scrambled, and though lost to my sight, a whistle, so loud and shrill that it might have been heard a mile, was a sufficient intimation that he was safely back again to *terra firma*, and being congratulated by his friends on the success of his perilous adventure.

In a few minutes my friends, with their coil of rope and crowbars, had slid down the *sgridan*, and were sitting beside me at the foot of the precipice, smoking a quiet pipe, preparatory to a return over the hills to Loch-nan-Easgan. Our captive raven proved a less juvenile bird than we expected, being almost full-fledged; so that if we had only delayed our visit to the rock for a day or two longer the eyrie would very likely have been found deserted. As we sat chatting, the shepherd, with a skyward and westward nod, suddenly exclaimed, "There they come! I wonder what they will say when they find only two birds in the nest, instead of their morning's family of three?" And the lynx-eyed shepherd was right. There, indeed, they were—the parent ravens—at an altitude, however, as yet so great and at such a distance that they seemed no bigger than blackbirds. Swiftly they approached, increasing in size with every beat of their powerful wings, and talking to each other in

a hoarse, gurgling croak, that, although to be recognised as a mere conversational utterance on their part, *sotto voce* so to speak, could be very distinctly heard by us while they were at the distance of a league, and as yet no bigger than blackbirds against the blue. For a time their line of flight was straight upon the eyrie; but when they were within half a mile of the rock they seemed to become aware of our presence on the scene, for they suddenly rose to a great height, and, separating, began to beat about in slowly described epicycloidal curves, that finally took them to a point right over our heads, whence, after circling round for a little, as if thoroughly reconnoitring the ground, they descended by an easy glide, and alighted on an ancient birch-tree, with curiously gnarled and twisted stem, that grew out of a fissure high up in the face of a precipice on the opposite side of the gorge. Here they sat and croaked and scolded in their deepest bass, swaying their bodies as

they scolded in the way peculiar to the order, and saying as plainly as plain could be that they were exceedingly angry with us for intruding into their "ancient solitary reign." They were probably still unaware that we had reached their nest and taken one of their young.

But it was already afternoon; our time was up, and leaving the ravens still croaking their dismallest and angriest, we descended the glen for a mile or more, and then set our faces to the hills in the straightest bee-line we could draw for Loch-nan-Easgan. The shepherd, as before, carried the coil of rope; Callum carried the crowbars, whilst our gallant cragsman, Donald, took tenderest charge of Master *Corvus Corax*, junior, the juvenile raven. How that raven grew to the fullest stature of lusty ravenhood, and distinguished himself in a thousand interesting and funny ways as a domestic pet, I may perhaps find time to tell my readers on some future occasion.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAP. XXXII.—"THE LORD GAVE, AND——"

"**B**OAT ahoy! Whoever you are—this way—boat!"

"Ahoy!" came back from three quarters—from two different points in the harbour, and from out to sea.

Then came another whistle from far back on the other side of the harbour, and in a shrill voice from between his hands Uncle Luke yelled: "Leslie, another boat, man, for the love of heaven!"

"Here! you there, sir! the nearest boat—quick, pull!" roared the detective in stentorian tones. "Have you no light?"

"Ay, ay," came back; and a lantern that had been hidden under a tarpaulin coat shone out, dimly showing the boat's whereabouts.

"That's right; pull, my lads, off here. Man overboard off the rocks. This way."

An order was given in the boat, and her course was altered.

"No, no," cried the officer; "this way, my lads, this way."

"We know what we're about," came back.

"Yes, yes; they know," said Uncle Luke, hoarsely. "Let them be; the current sets the way they've taken. He's right out there by now."

The old man's arm was dimly seen pointing seawards, but the detective was not convinced.

"It's a trick to throw me on the wrong scent," he said excitedly. "Here, you"—to one of the local police—"why don't you speak?"

"Mr. Luke Vine's right, sir; he knows the set o' the tide. The poor lad's swept right out yonder long ago, and Lord ha' mercy upon him, poor chap. They'll never pick him up."

"Can you see him?" roared the officer, using his hands as a speaking trumpet.

There was no reply; but the lantern could be seen rising and falling now, as the little craft began to reach the swell at the harbour bar. Then there was a hail out of the harbour, as the second boat came along, and five minutes after the rapid beat of oars told of the coming of another boat.

"Ahoy, lad! this way," rose from the boat with the lantern.

"Whose boat's that?" said the detective, quickly.

"Dunno," replied the nearest policeman.

"They'll pick him up, and he'll escape after all. Confound it! Here, hoi! you in that boat. In the Queen's name, stop and take me aboard."

"They won't pick him up," said the nearest policeman solemnly. "You don't know this coast."

There was a low groan from a figure crouching upon its knees, and supporting a woman's head, happily insensible to what was passing around.

"George, lad," whispered Uncle Luke, "for the poor girl's sake, let's get her home. George! don't you hear me. George! It is I—Luke."

There was no reply, and the excitement increased as a swift boat now neared the end of the point.

"Where is he? Is he swimming for the boat?" cried a voice, hardly recognisable in its hoarse excitement for that of Duncan Leslie.

"He jumped off, Mr. Leslie, sir," shouted one of the policemen.

"Row, my lads. Pull!" shouted Leslie; "right out."

"No, no," roared the detective; "take me aboard. In the Queen's name, stop!"

"Pull," cried Leslie to the men; and then turning to the detective, "while we stopped to take you the man would drown, and you couldn't get aboard at this time of the tide."

"He's quite right," said the policeman who had last spoken. "It's risky at any time; it would be madness now."

The detective stamped, as in a weird, strange way the voices kept coming from out of the darkness, where two dim stars could be seen, as the lanterns were visible from time to time; and now Leslie's voice followed the others, as he shouted:

"This way, Vine, this way. Hail, man! Why don't you hail?"

"Is this part of the trick to get him away?" whispered the detective to one of his men. The man made no reply, and his silence was more pregnant than any words he could have spoken.

"But they'll pick him up," he whispered, now impressed by the other's manner.

"Look out yonder," said the policeman, a native of the place; "is it likely they'll find him there?"

"Hah!" ejaculated the detective.

"And there's no such current anywhere for miles along the coast as runs off here."

"Hah!" ejaculated the man again, as he stood now watching the lights, one of which kept growing more distant, while the hails somehow seemed to be more faint and wild, and at last to resemble the despairing cries of drowning men.

"Listen," whispered the detective in an

awe-stricken tone, as he strove to pierce the darkness out to sea.

"It was Master Leslie, that," said the second policeman; "I know his hail."

Just then there was a wild hysterical fit of sobbing, and George Vine rose slowly from his knees, and staggered towards the group.

"Luke!" he cried, in a half stunned, helpless way, "Luke, you know— Where are you? Luke!"

"Here, George," said Uncle Luke sadly, for he had knelt down in the place his brother had occupied the moment before.

"You know the currents. Will they— will he—"

He faltered and paused, waiting his brother's reply, and the three officers of the law shuddered as, after a few minutes' silence, broken only by a groan from the kneeling man, George Vine cried in a piteous voice that sounded wild and thrilling in the solemn darkness of the night:

"God help me! Oh, my son, my son!"

"Quick, mind! Good heavens, sir! Another step and—"

The detective had caught the stricken father as he tottered and would have fallen headlong into the tide, while, as he and another of the men helped him back to where Louise still lay, he was insensible to what passed around.

But still the dim lights could be seen growing more and more distant, and each hail sounded more faint, as the occupants of the boats called to each other, and then to him they sought, while, after each shout, it seemed to those who stood straining their eyes at the end of the pier, that there was an answering cry away to their left; but it was only the faint echo repeating the call from the face of the stupendous cliffs behind the town.

"Why don't they come back here and search?" cried the officer angrily.

"What for?" said a voice at his elbow; and he turned to see dimly the shrunk, haggard face of Uncle Luke.

"What for?" retorted the officer. "He may have swum in the other direction."

"So might the world have rolled in the other direction, and the sun rise to-morrow in the west," said the old man angrily. "No swimmer could stem that current."

"But why have they gone so far?"

"They have gone where the current took them," said Uncle Luke, coldly. "Want the help of your men to get these poor creatures home."

The detective made no reply, but stood gazing out to sea and listening intently. Then turning to his men—

"One of you keep watch here in case they try to land with him. You come with me."

The two policemen followed his instructions, one taking his place at the extreme end of the point, the other following just as voices were heard, and a group of fishermen, who had been awakened to the fact that there was something wrong, came down the rocky breakwater.

"Here, some of you, I want a boat—a swift boat, and four men to pull. Ah, you!"

This to a couple of the coastguard who had put in an appearance, and after a few hurried words one party went toward the head of the breakwater, while another, full of sympathy for the Vines, went on to the end of the point.

There was plenty of willing help, but George Vine had now recovered from his swoon, and rose up to refuse all offers of assistance.

"No, Luke," he said more firmly now; "I must stay."

"But our child, Louise?"

"She must stay with me."

Louise had risen to her feet as he spoke, and clung to his arm in mute acquiescence; and once more they stood watching the star-spangled sea.

Ten minutes later a well-manned boat passed out of the harbour, with the detective officer in her bows and a couple of the strongest lights they could obtain.

Just as this boat came abreast of the point the rowing ceased, and a brilliant glare suddenly flashed out as the officer held aloft a blue signal light; and while the boat was forced slowly along he carefully scanned the rocks in the expectation of seeing his quarry clinging somewhere to their face.

The vivid light illuminated the group upon the point, and the water flashed and sparkled as it ran eddying by, while from time to time a gleaming drop of golden fire dropped with a sharp hissing explosion into the water, and a silvery grey cloud of smoke gathered overhead.

The officer stayed till the blue light had burned out, and then tossing the wooden handle into the water, he gave his orders to the men to row on out toward the other boats. The transition from brilliant light to utter darkness was startling as it was sudden; and as the watchers followed the dim-looking lanterns, they saw that about a mile out they had paused.

George Vine uttered a gasping sigh, and his child clung to him as if both realised the meaning of that halt. But they were wrong, for when the men in the detective's boat had ceased rowing, it was because they were close abreast of the lugger, whose crew had hailed them.

"Got him?"

"No. Is he aboard your boat?"

Without waiting for an answer, the detective and his men boarded the lugger, and, to the disgust of her crew, searched from end to end.

"Lucky for you, my lads, that he is not here," said the officer.

"Unlucky for him he arn't," said one of the men. "If he had been we shouldn't have had you aboard to-night."

"What do you mean?"

"Only that we should have been miles away by now."

"Do you think either of the other boats has picked him up?"

"Go and ask 'em," said another of the men sulkily.

"No, sir," said one of the coastguard, "they haven't picked him up."

"Back!" said the detective shortly; and, as soon as they were in the boat, he gave orders for them to row towards the faint light they could see right away cast. They were not long in coming abreast, for the boat was returning.

"Got him?" was shouted.

"No."

"Then why did you make the signal?"

The detective officer was a clever man, but it had not occurred to him that the blue light he had obtained from the coastguard station and burned would act as a recall. But so it was, and before long the second boat was reached, and that which contained Duncan Leslie came up, the latter uttering an angry expostulation at being brought back from his search.

"It's no good, Mr. Leslie, sir," said the fisherman who had made the bargain with Vine.

"No good?" cried Leslie angrily. "You mean you're tired, and have not the manhood to continue the search."

"No, sir, I don't," said the man quietly. "I mean I know this coast as well as most men. I'll go on searching everywhere you like; but I don't think the poor lad can be alive."

"Ay, ay, that's right, mate," growled two others of his fellows.

"He was a great swimmer," continued the

man sadly ; "but it's my belief he never come up again."

"Why do you say that?" cried the detective from his boat, as the four hung clustered together, a singular-looking meeting out there on the dark sea by lantern light.

"Why do I say that? Why 'cause he never hailed any on us who knew him, and was ready to take him aboard. Don't matter how good a swimmer a man is, he'd be glad of a hand out on a dark night, and with the tide running so gashly strong."

"You may be right," said Leslie, "but I can't go back like this. Now, my lads, who's for going on?"

"All on us," said the fisherman who had first spoken, and the boats separated to continue their hopeless task.

All at once there was a faint streak out in the east, a streak of dull grey, and a strange wild, faint cry came off the sea.

"There!" cried the detective; "pull, my lads, pull! he is swimming still. No, no, more towards the right."

"Swimming?—all this time, and in his clothes!" said one of the coastguard quietly. "That was only a gull."

The detective struck his fist into his open left hand, and stood gazing round over the glistening water; as the stars paled, the light in the east increased till the surface of the sea seemed steely grey, and by degrees it grew so light that near the harbour a black speck could be seen, toward which the officer pointed.

"Buoy," said the nearest rower laconically, and the officer swept the surface again. Then there was a faint shade of orange nearly in the zenith, a flock of gulls flew past, and here and there there were flecks and splashes of the pale silvery water, which erelong showed the reflection of the orange sky, and grew golden. The rocks that lay at the foot of the huge wall of cliff were fringed with foam, and wherever there was a break in the shore and some tiny river gurgled down, a wreathing cloud of mist hung in the hollow.

Moment by moment the various objects grew more distinct; black masses of rock fringed with green or brown sea-wrack, about which the tide eddied and played, now hiding, now revealing for some crested wave to pounce upon as a sea monster might upon its prey. The dark slaty rocks displayed their wreaths of ivy, and the masses of granite stood up piled in courses of huge cubes, as if by titanic hands, grey with parched moss, dull and dead-looking; and then all at once, as the sun slowly rose above the sea, glorious

in God's light, sparkling as if set with myriads of gems, the grey became gold, and all around there was a scene of beauty such as no painter could do more than suggest. Everything was glorified by the rising sun; sea, sky, the distant houses, and shipping, all gleamed as if of burnished gold—all was of supreme beauty in the birth of that new day. No, not all: here and there slowly using their oars as they scanned sea and rock, sat a crew of haggard men, while back on the golden point clustered a crowd watching their efforts, and hanging back with natural kindly delicacy from the group of three at the extreme edge of the granite point—two pale-faced, grey, wild-eyed men, and the girl who sat crouching on a fragment of rock, her hair loose, her hands clasped round her knees, and a look of agonised sorrow in the piteous drawn face, ever directed towards the east.

"They're all coming back," said some one close at hand.

The man was right; slowly one by one the boats crept over the glorious sea towards the harbour, Duncan Leslie's last.

"Nothing?" said Uncle Luke in a low whisper as the coastguard boat was backed toward the point, and the detective sprang ashore.

"Nothing, sir. Poor foolish, misguided lad! Might have been my boy, sir. I've only done my duty; but this is a dark night's work I shall never forget. I feel as if I were answerable for his death."

Ten minutes later Duncan Leslie landed in the same way, and laid his hand upon Uncle Luke's arm.

"I was obliged to come back," he said; "my men are fagged out."

"No signs of him!"

Leslie shook his head and spoke in a whisper.

"I'll be off again as soon as I can get a fresh crew, and search till I do find him. For Heaven's sake, sir, take them home!"

It was a kindly whisper, but Louise heard every word, and shuddered as she turned and hid her face in her father's breast. For she knew what it meant; it was to spare her the agonising sight, when the sea, according to its wont, threw something up yonder among the rugged stones, where, to use the fishermen's words, the current bit hardest on the shore. She fought hard to keep back the wild cry that struggled in her breast; but it was in vain, and many a rough fellow turned aside as he heard the poor girl's piteous wail out there in the sunshine of that glorious morn.

"Harry! brother! what shall I do?"

George Vine's lips parted as he bent down over his child. "The Lord gave, and——"

His voice failed, but his lips completed poor old stricken Job's words, and there was a pause. Then he seemed to draw himself up, and held out his hand for a moment to Duncan Leslie.

"Luke!" he said then calmly and gravely. "Your arm too. Let us go home."

The little crowd parted left and right, and every hat was doffed in the midst of a great silence, as the two old men walked slowly up the rough pier, supporting the stricken girl.

Duncan Leslie followed, and as they passed on through the narrow lane of humble, sympathising people of the port, these turned in and slowly followed, two and two, bare-headed, as if it were a funeral procession.

Just then, high above the top of the grand cliff, a lark soared up, sprinkling the air as from a censer of sound, with his silvery notes joyous, loud, and thrilling; and one patriarchal fisherman, who had seen many a scene of sorrow in his time, whispered to the mate walking at his side—

"Ay, lad, and so it is; midst of life we are in death."

"Ah," sighed his companion; "but on such a morn as this!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.—AT THE GRANITE HOUSE.

THE Vines had hardly reached their home when quietly and in a furtive way boat after boat put off down the harbour, from the little punt belonging to some lugger, right up to the heavy fishing-craft, rowed by six or eight men. There was no communication one with the other; no general order had been issued, but, with one consent, all were bent upon the same mission, and hour after hour, every mass of weedy rock, chasm, hollow, and zorn was scanned, where it was known that the current was likely to throw up that which it had engulfed; but, though every inch of shore was searched, the task proved to be without avail, and the brothers, seated together in the quaint, old-fashioned dining-room, waiting to be summoned for the reception of their dead, sat waiting, and without receiving the call.

Louise had refused to leave them, and had clung to her father, asking to be allowed to stay; but no sooner was the consent obtained than it proved to be useless, for the poor girl was completely prostrated by the excitement and horror of the past night, and had to be helped up to her couch.

And there the brothers sat in silence, George Vine calm, stern, and with every nerve on the strain; Uncle Luke watching him furtively without attempting to speak.

When any words had passed between the brothers, the old cynic's voice sounded less harsh, and its tones were sympathetic, as he strove to be consolatory to the suffering man. They had been seated some time together in silence, when Uncle Luke rose, and laid his hand upon his brother's shoulder.

"I don't know what to say to you, George," he whispered softly. "For all these years past I've been, what you know, a childless, selfish man; but I feel for you, my lad—I feel for you, and I'd bear half your agony, if I could."

George Vine turned upon him with a piteous smile, and took the hand resting on his shoulder.

"You need not speak, Luke," he said sadly. "Do you think we have lived all these years without my understanding my brother, and knowing what he is at heart?"

Luke shook his head, gripped the hand which held his firmly, but could not speak.

"I am going to bear it like a man, please God; but it is hard, Luke, hard; and but for poor Louise's sake I could wish that my journey was done."

"No, no. No, no, George," said the brother huskily. "There is, lad, much to do here yet—for you, my boy—for Louise—that poor, half-crazy woman upstairs, and Uncle Luke, who is not much better, so they say. No, my boy, you must fight—you must bear, and bear it bravely, as you will, as soon as this first shock is over, and there's always hope—always hope. The poor boy may have escaped."

"Ay, to where? Luke, brother, for Heaven's sake let me be in peace. I cannot bear to speak now. I feel as if the strain is too great for my poor brain."

Luke pressed his hand, and walked slowly to the window, from whence he could gaze down at the boats going and coming into the harbour; and he shuddered as he thought what any one of them might bring.

"Better it should, and at once," he said to himself. "He'll know no rest until that is past."

He turned and looked in wonder at the door, which opened then, and Aunt Marguerite, dressed in one of her stiffest brocades, pale, but with her eyes stern and fierce, entered the room, to sweep slowly across, till she was opposite to George Vine, when she crossed her arms over her breast,

and began to beat her shoulder with her large ivory fan, the thin leaves making a peculiar pattering noise against her whale-bone stiffened bodice.

"Don't talk to him, Margaret," said Uncle Luke, coming forward. "He is not fit. Say what you have to say another time."

"Silence! you poor weak imbecile!" she cried, as her eyes flashed at him. What do you do here at a time like this? Now," she continued, darting a vindictive look at her broken-hearted brother, "what have you to say?"

"To say, Margaret?" he replied piteously. "God help me, what can I say?"

"Nothing, miserable that you are. The judgment has come upon you at last. Have I not striven to save that poor murdered boy from you—to raise him from the slough into which you plunged him in your wretched degradation? Time after time I have raised my voice, but it has been unheard. I have been treated as your wretched dependant, who could not even say her soul was her own, and with my heart bleeding, I have seen——"

"Margaret, you were always crazy," cried Uncle Luke fiercely; "are you raving mad?"

"Yes," she cried. "Worm, pitiful crawling worm. You are my brother by birth, but what have I seen of you but your wretched selfish life—of you who sold your birthright to sink into the degraded creature you are, so degraded that you side with this man against me, now that he is worthily punished for his crime against his son."

"I cannot listen to this," cried Uncle Luke furiously.

"Let her speak," said George Vine sadly; "she thinks she is right."

"And so do you," cried Aunt Marguerite. "If you had kept the poor boy a gentleman all this would not have happened. See to what extent you have driven the poor, brave-hearted, noble boy, the only true Des Vignes. You, degenerate creature that you are, maddened him by the life you forced him to lead, till in sheer recklessness he took this money, struck down the tyrant to whom you made him slave, and at last caused him to be hunted down till, with the daring of a Des Vignes, he turned, and died like one of his chivalrous ancestors, his face to his foes, his——"

"Bah!" cried Uncle Luke, with a fierce snarl, "his chivalrous ancestors!"

"Luke!"

"I tell you, George, I'm sick of the miserable cant. Died like a hero! Woman, it

was your miserable teaching made him the discontented wretch he was."

"For pity's sake, Luke."

"I must speak, now," cried the old man furiously; "it's time she knew the truth; but for you who, in return for the shelter of your brother's roof, filled the boy's head with your vain folly, he would have been a respectable member of society, an honest Englishman, instead of a would-be murderer and thief."

"It is false!" cried Aunt Marguerite.

"It is true!" thundered the old man, in spite of his brother's imploring looks; "true, and you know it's true. Died like a hero, with his face to the foe! He died, if he be dead, like a coward, afraid to face the officer of the law he had outraged—a disgrace to the name of Vine."

Aunt Marguerite stood gazing at him, as if trying to stay him with the lightning of her eyes, but his burst of passion was at an end, and he did not even realise that her vindictive looks had faded out, and that she had grown ghastly as a sheet, and tottered half palsied from the room.

For, horrified by the agony he read in his brother's face, Luke Vine had seized his hands, and was gazing imploringly at him.

"Forgive me, George," he whispered. "I knew not what I said."

"Let me be alone—for a while," faltered his brother. "I am weak. I cannot bear it now."

But the strain was not yet at an end, for at that moment there was a tap at the door, and Liza entered, looking red-eyed and strange; and a sob escaped her as she saw her master's face.

"A gentleman to see you, sir. He must see you at once," she stammered.

"If you please, Mr. Vine," said a short, stern voice, and, without further ceremony, the detective officer entered the room.

George Vine rose painfully, and tried to cross where the man stood inside the door, looking sharply from one to the other.

"No," he said, inaudibly, as his eyes seemed to grasp everything; "they're honest. Don't know where he is."

George Vine did not cross to the officer; his strength seemed to fail him.

"You have come," he said slowly, as he tried to master a piteous sigh. "Luke, you will come with me?"

"Yes, lad, I'll come," said Uncle Luke. Then turning towards the officer, he whispered, "Where did you find the poor lad?"

"You are labouring under a mistake, sir,"

said the man. "We have not found him—yet. My people are searching still, and half the fishermen are out in their boats, but they say it is not likely that they will find him till after a tide or two, when he will be cast ashore."

The words sounded hard and brutal, and Luke gave the speaker a furious look as he saw his brother wince.

"Why have you come here, then?" said Uncle Luke, harshly. "Do you think he has not suffered enough?"

The officer made no reply, but stood, notebook in hand, thinking. Then sharply:

"A person named Pradelle has been staying here."

"Yes," said Uncle Luke, with a snap of his teeth; "and if you had taken him instead of hunting down our poor boy you would have done some good."

"All in good time, sir. I expect he was at the bottom of it all. Have you any information you can give me as to where he is likely to have gone?"

"Where do all scoundrels and thieves go to hide? London, I suppose."

"I expected that," said the officer, talking to Uncle Luke, but watching George Vine's drawn, grief-stricken face the while. "I daresay we shall be able to put a finger upon him before long. He does not seem to have a very good record, and yet you gentlemen appear to have given him a welcome here."

George Vine made a deprecating movement with his hands, the detective watching him keenly the while, and evidently hesitating over something he had to say.

"And now, sir," said Uncle Luke, "you'll excuse me if I ask you to go. This is not a time for cross-examination."

"Eh? perhaps not," said the officer sharply, as he gave the old man a resentful glance. Then to himself, "Well—it's duty. He had no business to. I've no time for fine feelings."

"At another time," continued Uncle Luke, "if you will come to me, I daresay I can give you whatever information you require."

"Oh, you may rest easy about that, sir," said the officer, half laughingly, "don't you be afraid. But I want a few words now with this other gentleman."

"And I say no; you shall not torture him now," cried Uncle Luke, angrily. "He has suffered enough."

"Don't you interfere, sir, till you are called upon," said the officer roughly. "Now, Mr. George Vine, if you please."

"I will not have it," cried Uncle Luke; "it is an outrage."

"Let him speak, brother," said George Vine, with calm dignity; "now sir, go on."

"I will, sir. It's a painful duty, but it is a duty. Now, sir, I came here with a properly signed warrant for the arrest of Henry Vine, for robbery and attempted murder."

"Ah!" sighed Vine, with his brow wrinkling.

"The young man would have resigned himself quietly, but you incited him to resist the law and escape."

"It is quite true. I have sinned, sir," said Vine, in a low pained voice, "and I am ready to answer for what I have done."

"But that is not all," continued the officer. "Not content with aiding my prisoner to escape, you attacked me, sir, and twice over you struck me in the execution of my duty."

"Is this true, George?" cried Uncle Luke, excitedly.

"Yes," said his brother, calmly bending to this new storm; "yes, it is quite true."

"Well, sir, what have you to say?"

"Nothing."

"You know, I suppose, that it is the duty of every citizen to help the officers of the law?"

"Yes."

"And yet you not only fought against me, but struck me heavily. I have the marks."

"Yes; I own to it all."

"And you know that it is a very serious offence?"

"Yes," said the wretched man; and he sank into the nearest chair, looking straight before him into vacancy.

"Well, sir," said the officer sharply, "I'm glad you know the consequences." Then turning sharply on Uncle Luke, who stood biting his lips in an excited manner, "Perhaps you'll come into the next room with me, sir. I should like a few words with you."

Uncle Luke scowled at him, as he led the way into the drawing-room, and shut the door angrily.

"Now, sir," he began fiercely, "let me—"

"Hold hard, old gentleman!" said the officer; "don't be so excitable. I want a few words, and then, for goodness' sake, give me a glass of wine and a biscuit. I've touched nothing since I came here last night."

"Ah!" ejaculated Uncle Luke, furiously; but the man went on,

"Of course it's a serious thing striking an officer; let alone the pain, there's the degradation, for people know of it. I'm sore at

losing my prisoner, and if he had not held me I should have had the young fellow safe, and that horrible accident wouldn't have happened."

"And now what are you going to do?" snarled Uncle Luke; "drag him off to gaol?"

"Going to act like a man, sir. Think I'm such a brute? Poor old fellow, I felt quite cut, hard as I am, and I'd have asked him to shake hands over it, only he couldn't have taken it kindly from me. You seem a man of the world, sir. He's one of those dreamy sort of naturalist fellows. Tell him from me I'd have given anything sooner than all this should have happened. It was my duty to see him about his resistance to the law. But, poor old fellow, he was doing his natural duty in defence of his boy, just as I felt that I was doing mine."

Uncle Luke did not speak but stood holding out his hand. The officer gripped it eagerly, and they two stood gazing in each other's faces for a few moments.

"Thank you," said Uncle Luke gently; and after a time the officer rose to go.

"Yes, sir," he said, at parting, "I shall stay down here till the poor boy is found. Some one in town will be on the look out for our friend Pradelle, for, unless I'm very much mistaken, he's the monkey who handled the cat's paws. Good morning."

Uncle Luke stood at the door watching the officer till he was out of sight, and then returned to the old dining-room, to find his brother still gazing into vacancy, just as he had been left.

"News, Luke?" he said, as he looked eagerly. "No, you need not speak. Perhaps it is better so. Better death than this terrible dishonour."

CHAP. XXXIV. GEORGE VINE ASKS FOR HELP.

"SHE shall go. I always knew she was a thief," said Aunt Marguerite, as she stood by her open window, listening to a whispered communication going on. "Wait till Louise can act like a woman, and see to her housekeeping again, and that girl shall go."

She listened again, and could hear a rough woman's voice urging something, while the more familiar voice of Liza was raised again and again in a whispered protest.

Then followed more talking, and at last there was a pause, followed by a hasty whisper, and the heavy step of old Poll Perrow, with her basket on her back, supported by the strap across her brow. Aunt Marguerite had been to her niece's door again and again, and tried it to find it fastened;

and she could get no response to her taps and calls. She seemed to feel no sorrow, only rage against all by whom she was surrounded; and, isolated as it were, she spent the afternoon going to and fro between her own room and one which gave her a good view of the harbour mouth with boats going and returning; for the search for the body of Harry Vine was kept up without cessation, the fishermen lending themselves willingly to the task, and submitting, but with an ill grace, to the presence of the police.

Aunt Marguerite, however, in spite of her vindictive feeling, suffered intense grief; and her sorrow seemed to deepen the lines in her handsome old face.

"They've murdered him, they've murdered him!" she kept on muttering as she watched the passing boats. "No one understood him but me."

She drew back sharply from the window, for just then a closely veiled figure came hurriedly into view, her goal being evidently the old granite house.

Aunt Marguerite's eyes sparkled with vindictive malice.

"Yes," she said, half aloud; "and you too, madam—you had your share in the poor boy's death. Oh! how I do hate your wretched Dutch race."

She crossed to the door, and opened it slightly, to stand listening, to hear voices a few minutes later, and then steps on the stairs, which stopped, after a good deal of whispering, at her niece's door, after which there was a low tapping, and Liza's voice arose:

"Miss Louise! Miss Louise!"

"Yes, knock again. She will not answer. One of them has some pride left."

"Miss Louise, Miss Louise, you're wanted, please."

There was no reply, nor yet to repeated knocks. There was a smile of satisfaction on Aunt Marguerite's face as she drew herself up, and opened her fan as if at some presentation, or about to dismiss an intruder; but her countenance changed directly, and, forgetting her dignity, she craned forward, for all at once a pleading voice arose.

"Louise, Louise, for pity's sake let me in."

There was a short pause, and then the sharp sound of the shooting back of a bolt and the creaking of a door. Then it was closed again, and as the listener threw her own open there came the faint sound of a passionate cry and a low sobbing.

Aunt Marguerite stepped out into the pas-

sage, her head erect, and her stiff silk trailing noisily behind her, to go to her own room, but the way was barred by the presence of Liza, who was down on the floor crouched in a heap, sobbing passionately, with her apron up to her eyes.

"Get up!" said Aunt Marguerite imperiously, as she struck at the girl's hand with her fan.

Liza leaped to her feet, looked aghast at the figure before her, and fled, while Aunt Marguerite strode into her room, and loudly closed the door. As she passed her niece's chamber, Louise was clasped tightly in Madelaine's arms, and it was long before the two girls were seated, hand in hand, gazing wonderingly at the inroads made so soon by grief.

"It is so horrible—all so horrible," whispered Madelaine at last, for the silence was for long unbroken, save by an occasional sob. Louise looked at her wildly, and then burst into a passion of tears.

"Maddy!" she cried at last, "is it all true?"

They could say no more, but sat gathering comfort from the sympathetic grasp of each other's hands.

At last, in a dull heavy way, the words came, each sounding as if the speaker were in despair, but willing to suffer so that her companion might be spared, and by degrees Louise learned that Van Helder still lay in the same insensible state, the awaking from which Madelaine shrank from with horror, lest it should mean the return for a brief time of sense before the great final change.

"I could not come to you," said Louise, after a long silence, as she gazed wistfully in her friend's face, "and thought we should never meet again as friends."

"You should have known me better," replied Madelaine. "It is very terrible, such a—such a—oh Louy, dearest, there must have been some mistake. Harry—Harry could not have been so base."

Louise was silent for a time. At last she spoke.

"There must be times," she said gently, "when even the best of us are not answerable for our actions. He must have been mad. It was when, too—he had—promised—he had told me—that in the future—oh," she cried, shuddering, as she covered her face with her hands, "it can't be true—it cannot be true."

Again there was a long silence in the room, whose drawn-down blind turned the light of a sickly yellow hue. But the window was

open, and from time to time the soft sea breeze wafted the blind inward, and a bright ray of sunny light streamed in like hope across the two bent forms.

"I must not stay long," said Madelaine. "I shiver whenever I am away, lest——"

"No, no," cried Louise, passionately, as she strained her friend to her breast, "we will not despond yet. All this comes across our lives like a dense black cloud, and there must be a great change in the future. Your father will recover."

"I pray that he may," said Madelaine.

"And I will not believe that Harry is—dead."

"I pray that he may be alive, Louy, to come some time in the future to ask forgiveness of my father. For I did love him, Louy; at first as a sister might the brother with whom she had played from childhood, and of late in sorrow and anguish, as the woman whom he had always said he loved. I fought with it, oh, so hard, but the love was there, and even when I was most hard and cold——"

"And he believed you cared for Mr. Leslie."

The words slipped from Louise Vine's lips like an escaped thought, and the moment they were spoken, she shrank away with her pale cheeks crimsoning, and she gazed guiltily at her companion.

"It was a foolish fancy on his part," said Madelaine gravely. "I cannot blame myself for anything I ever said or did to your brother. If I had been wrong, my lapse would have come upon me now like the lash of a whip; but in the long hours of my watches by my poor father's bed, I have gone over it again and again, and I cannot feel that I have been wrong."

Louise drew her more closely to her breast.

"Maddy," she whispered, "years will have to pass, and we must separate. The pleasant old days must end, but some day, when all these horrors have been softened by time, we may call each other sister again, and in the long dark interval you will not forget."

"Forget!" said Madelaine, with a smile full of sadness. "You know that we shall always be unchanged."

"Going—so soon?" exclaimed Louise, for her friend had risen.

"He is lying yonder," said Madelaine. "I must go back. I could not stay away long from you, though, without a word."

They stood for a few moments clasped in

each other's arms, and then in a slow, sad way went hand in hand towards the door. As she opened it for her friend to pass through, Louise shrank back from the burst of sunshine that flooded the passage, and placed her hand across her eyes. It was a momentary act, and then she drew a long breath and followed her friend, as if her example had given the needed strength, and acted as an impetus to raise her from the lethargic state into which she had fallen.

In this spirit she went down with her to the door, when, as their steps sounded on the hall floor, the dining-room door was thrown open quickly, and Vine stood in the darkened opening, gazing wildly at the veiled figure of Madelaine.

"Van Heldre?" he said, in an excited whisper; "not—not——" He could not finish his speech, but stood with his hand pressed to his throat.

"My father's state is still unchanged," said Madelaine gently.

"Then there may yet be hope, there may yet be hope," said Vine hoarsely as he shrank once more into the darkened room.

"Mr. Vine," said Madelaine piteously, as she stood with extended hands asking sympathy in her grievous trouble.

"My child!" he cried, as he caught her to his breast, and she clung there sobbing bitterly. Then he softly disengaged her hands from his neck. "No, no," he said dreamily, "I am guilty too; I must never take you to my heart again."

"What have I done?" sobbed Madelaine, as she clung to him still.

"You?" he said fondly. "Ah! it was once my dream that you would be more and more my child. Little Madelaine!"

He drew her to his breast again, kissed her with spasmodic eagerness, and then held out a hand to Louise, who flew to his breast as with an angry, malicious look, Aunt Marguerite advanced to the end of the landing and looked down at the sobbing group.

"Good-bye!" whispered the stricken man hoarsely, "good-bye, my child. I am weak and helpless. I hardly know what I say; but you must come here no more. Good-bye."

He turned from them hastily, and glided back into the darkened room, where Louise followed him, as Madelaine went slowly down toward the town.

Vine was seated before the empty grate, his head resting on his hand, as Louise went to his side, and he started as if from a dream when she touched his shoulder.

"You, my child?" he said, sinking back.

"Ah! stay with me—pray with me. It is so hard to bear alone."

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE OLD WATCHDOG.

THE silence as if of death reigned for days and days at Van Heldre's house, which, unasked, old Crampton had made his residence. In a quiet furtive way he had taken possession of the inner office, to which he had brought from his own house a sofa-cushion and pillow, carrying them there one dark night unseen, and at times, no doubt, he must have lain down and slept; but to all there it was a mystery when he did take his rest.

If Mrs. Van Heldre called him to partake of a meal he came. If he was forgotten he ate one of a store of captain's biscuits which he kept in his desk along with his very strong tobacco, which flavoured the said biscuits in a way that, being a regular smoker, he did not notice, while at ten o'clock he regularly went out into the yard to have his pipe. He was always ready to sit up and watch, but, to his great annoyance, he had few opportunities, the task being shared between Madelaine and her mother.

As to the business of the office, that went on as usual as far as the regular routine was concerned, everything fresh being put back till the principal resumed his place at his desk. Bills of lading, the smelting-house accounts, bank deposits, and the rest, all were attended to, just as if Van Heldre had been there instead of lying above between life and death. From time to time Mrs. Van Heldre came down to him to beg that he would ask for everything he wanted.

"I cannot help neglecting you, Mr. Crampton," she said, with her hands playing about the buttons of her dress.

"Never you mind about me, ma'am," he said, admonishing her with a penholder. "I'm all right, and waiting to take my turn."

"Yes, yes, you're very good, Mr. Crampton, and you will see that everything goes on right, so that when he comes down he may find that we have not neglected any single thing."

Crampton frowned, but his face grew smooth again as he looked at the little anxious countenance before him.

"Don't you be afraid, ma'am. If Mr. Van Heldre came down to-day everything is ready for him—everything."

"Yes, of course, Mr. Crampton. I might have known it. But I can't help feeling anxious and worried about things."

"Naturally, ma'am, naturally; and I've

been trying to take all worry away from you about the business. Everything is quite right. Ah!" he said as the little woman hurried away from the office, "if Miss Maddy would only talk to me like that. But she won't forgive me, and I suppose she never will." He made an entry and screwed up his lips, as he dipped a pen in red ink and ruled a couple of lines, using the ebony ruler which had laid his master low. "Poor girl! I never understood these things; but they say love makes people blind and contrary, and so it is that she seems to hate me, a man who wouldn't rob her father of a penny, and in her quiet hiding sort of way worships the man who robbed him of five hundred pounds, and nearly killed him as well. Ah! it's a curious world."

"I've—I've brought you a glass of wine and a few biscuits, Mr. Crampton," said Mrs. Van Heldre, entering and speaking in her pleasant prattling way. Then she set down a tray, and hurried out before he could utter his thanks.

"Good little woman," said Crampton. "Some people would have brought a glass of wine and not the decanter. Well, yes, ma'am, I will have a glass of wine, for I feel beat out."

He poured out a glass of good old sherry, held it up to the light, and closed one eye.

"Your health, Mr. Van Heldre," he said solemnly. "Best thing I can wish you. Yours, Mrs. Van Heldre, and may you never be a widow. Miss Madelaine, your health, my dear, and may your eyes be opened. I'm not such a bad man as you think."

He drank the glass of wine, and then made a grimace.

"Sweet biscuits," he said, "only fit for children. Hah, well! Eh? What's the matter?"

He had heard a cry, and hurrying across the office, he locked the door, and ran down the glass corridor to the house.

"Worse, ma'am, worse!" he cried, as Mrs. Van Heldre came running down the stairs and into the dining-room, where she plumped herself on the floor, and held her hands to her lips to keep back the hysterical sobs which struggled for vent.

"Shall I run for the doctor, ma'am?"

"No, no!" cried Mrs. Van Heldre, in a stifled voice, with her mouth still covered. "Better."

"Better?"

She nodded violently.

"Then it was very cruel of you, ma'am,"

said the old man, plaintively. "I thought—I thought——"

Crampton said no more, but he walked to the window with his face buried in his great yellow silk handkerchief, blowing his nose with a continuity and force which became at last so unbearable that Mrs. Van Heldre went out into the hall.

She went back soon into the dining-room where Crampton was waiting anxiously.

"He looked at me when I was in the room with my darling child, Mr. Crampton, and his lips parted, and he spoke to me, and I was obliged to come away, for fear I should do him harm."

"Come away, ma'am! and at a time like that!" said Crampton, angrily.

Mrs. Van Heldre drew herself up with dignity.

"My child signed to me to go," she said quietly; and then with her eyes brimming over with tears, "Do you think I would not have given the world to stay?"

At that moment Madelaine came quickly and softly into the room.

"He is sleeping," she whispered excitedly; "he looked at me and smiled, and then his eyes closed and he seemed to go into a calm sleep, not that terrible stupor, but sleep. Mother, come and see—it must be sleep."

Old Crampton was left alone to begin pacing the room excitedly for a few minutes, when Madelaine came down once more.

"Pray go for Dr. Knatchbull!" she cried piteously.

"But isn't he——"

"We do not know—we are afraid to hope—pray, pray go."

"She hasn't spoken so gently since that night," muttered Crampton, as he hurried down the street. "Poor girl! it is very hard; and this may be only the change before—No, I won't think that," cried the old clerk, and he broke into a run.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—CRAMPTON REPORTS PROGRESS.

"Yes," said Dr. Knatchbull, confidently; "he will get over it, now. Can't say," he said, rubbing his hands in his satisfaction, "whether it's the doctor's physioc, or the patient's physique, but one of them has worked wonders. What do you say, Miss Van Heldre?"

"That we can never be sufficiently grateful to you."

"Never," cried Mrs. Van Heldre, wringing his hand.

"Bah!" exclaimed the doctor, "that's

what you people say now that you have got to the turn ; but by-and-by when I send in my bill—and I mean to make this a pretty stiff one, Mrs. Van Heldre—you will all be as grumpy as possible, and think it a terrible overcharge."

"Well, really, Dr. Knatchbull," began Mrs. Van Heldre, ruffling up like an aggravated hen, "I am quite sure my dear husband will pay any—"

"Mamma, mamma, dear!" cried Madelaine, smiling through her tears ; "can you not see that Dr. Knatchbull is laughing at us?"

"No, my dear," said the little lady angrily ; "but if he is, I must say that it is too serious a matter for a joke."

"So it is, my dear madam," said the doctor, taking her hand, "far too serious ; but I felt in such high spirits to find that we have won the fight, that I was ready to talk any nonsense. All the same though, with some people it's as true as true."

"Yes, but we are not some people," said Mrs. Van Heldre. "But now tell us what we are to do."

"Nothing, my dear madam, but let him have rest and peace."

"But he has been asking for Mr. Crampton this morning, and that means business."

"Well, let him see him to-morrow, if he asks. If he is not allowed, he will fidget, and that will do him more harm than seeing him, only I would not let him dwell on the attack. Divert his attention all you can, and keep from him all you possibly can about the Vines."

John Van Heldre did not ask for his confidential clerk for two days more, the greater part of which time he spent in sleep ; but in the intervals he talked in a low voice to his wife or Madelaine, not even alluding once, to their great surprise, to the cause of his illness.

"He must know it, mamma," said Madelaine, sadly ; "and he is silent, so as to spare me."

At last the demand for Crampton was made, and the old clerk heard it looking eager and pleased.

"At last, ma'am," said Crampton, rubbing his hands.

"You'll go up very quietly, Mr. Crampton," said Mrs. Van Heldre. "If you would not mind."

She pointed to a pair of slippers she had laid ready. The old clerk looked grim, muttered something about the points of his toes, and ended by untying his shoes, and putting on the slippers.

Madelaine was quite right, for no sooner had Van Heldre motioned the clerk to a chair by the bed's head, learned that all was right in his office, and assured the old man that he was amending fast, than he opened upon him regarding the attack that night.

"Was that money taken?" he said, quickly.

"Is it right for you to begin talking about that so soon?" replied Crampton.

"Unless you want me to go backwards, yes," said his employer, sharply. "There, answer my questions. I have nothing the matter now ; only weak, and I cannot ask any one else."

"I'm your servant, Mr. Van Heldre," said Crampton, stiffly. "Go on, sir."

"That money, then?"

"Gone, sir, every note. Five hundred pounds."

"Dead loss," said Van Heldre ; "but it must be repaid."

"Humph! pretty opinion you seem to have of me, sir, as a confidential clerk."

"What do you mean, Crampton?"

"Mean, sir? Why, that I did my duty, and stopped every note at the Bank of England of course."

"You did that, Crampton?"

"Yes, sir ; and those notes are of no use to anybody."

"Capital. Hah! that's better. Five hundred just coming on the other misfortune worried me. Why, Crampton, that's a white paper plaster for my sore head."

"Glad you're satisfied, sir."

"More than satisfied. Now tell me : have the police any notion who committed the robbery?"

Crampton nodded.

"Do you know?"

Crampton looked at his employer curiously, and nodded again.

"Have they taken any one?"

"No, sir," said the old man sadly.

"Hah! That's bad. Who was it?"

"Well, sir, you know of course?"

"I? No!"

"You don't know, sir?"

"I have no idea, Crampton. I heard a noise, and went in and surprised the scoundrel, but it was quite dark, and as I tried to seize him I was struck down."

"And you mean to assure me, sir, that you don't know who it was?"

"I have not the most remote idea."

"Well then, sir, I must tell you it was him who had been robbing you ever since the first day he came to us."

"Robbing me?"

"Well, not exactly of money in hard cash, but of your time, which is just the same. Time's money. Always an hour late."

Van Heldre turned upon him fiercely.

"Crampton, can you let your prejudice go so far as to suspect that young man?"

"Yes, sir, I can. . . . Suspect? No, I am sure. I doubted him from the first."

"It is monstrous. You were unjust to him from the first."

"I, sir?"

"Yes. But then how can a man who has never had a child be just to the weaknesses of the young?"

"I can be just, sir, and I have been. You don't know the supercilious way in which that boy treated me from the day he entered our office. Always late, and as soon as he was settled down to his work, in must come that scoundrel with the French name to ask for him, and get him away. Why, Mr. Van Heldre, sir, if I hadn't been a law-abiding subject of her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, I'd have knocked that man down."

"Bah!" said Van Heldre impatiently, as he lay back frowning, and looking very thoughtful. "I am sorry that you should have entertained such a suspicion about the son of my old friend."

"Ah!" sighed Crampton. "Poor Mr. Vine! It's heart-breaking work, sir. It is, indeed."

"Heart-breaking!" said Van Heldre. "It is atrocious. There, I will not speak angrily, Crampton."

"No, sir. You must not; and now I'm going, sir. You've talked twice as much as is good for you."

"Sit down," said Van Heldre sternly.

Crampton, who had moved towards the door, slowly resumed his place.

"I am not too weak to talk about this terrible accusation. I am not going to say much now, only to ask you to throw aside all this prejudice and to look upon the mishap as an unfortunate occurrence. Come, Crampton, be a little broader. Don't be so ready to suspect the first person you dislike, and then to keep obstinately to your opinion."

"Better not talk any more," said Crampton, shortly.

"I must talk," said Van Heldre, more sternly. "Mind this, Crampton, you are wrong."

The care, want of rest, and anxiety had produced a state of acidity in the old clerk's organization which had made him exceptionally irritable.

"Wrong, eh?" he said sharply.

"Yes; and I must call upon you to be careful to keep these fancies to yourself."

"Fancies, sir?"

"Yes, fancies, man. I would not on any consideration have Mr. Vine know that such a suspicion had existed in my office, and—"

He paused for a few moments, and then held out his hand to the old clerk, who took it, and felt his own gripped warmly.

"Come, Crampton," continued Van Heldre, smiling; "after all these years together, I trust we are something more than master and man. You have always proved yourself a friend in the way in which you have looked after my interests."

"I've always tried to do my duty, Mr. Van Heldre."

"And you always have done your duty—more than your duty. Now just go quietly down, and ask Henry Vine to step upstairs with you. I must have this put straight at once. Crampton, you and my old friend's son must make a fresh start."

Crampton's fresh countenance grew dingy-looking, and Van Heldre felt his hand twitch.

"Come, I tell you that your suspicions are absurd, and I must have you two work well together. The young man only wants a little humouring to make him all that we could wish. Go and fetch him up."

"He—he is not here this morning, sir," gasped Crampton, at last.

"Not here?"

"No, sir," said the old man hastily; and he passed the hand at liberty across his face.

"I am sorry. I should have liked to settle this now it is on my mind."

Crampton looked wildly towards the door, in the hope that the coming of wife or daughter would bring about a diversion.

"Of course," said Van Heldre suddenly, "you have not shown the young man that you have had this idea in your head?"

Crampton was silent, and as Van Heldre looked at him he saw that the great beads of perspiration were standing upon his face.

"Why, good heavens, Crampton," he cried, "you have not breathed a word of all this to a soul?"

The old clerk looked at him wildly.

"Ah! you are keeping something back," said Van Heldre.

"Hush, sir, hush!" cried the old clerk in alarm; "for goodness' sake don't be excited. Think of how weak you are."

"Then answer," said Van Heldre, in a

low whisper. "Tell me what you have done."

"I—I did everything for the best, sir."

"Henry Vine! You did not accuse him of this terrible affair?"

Crampton's face grew gradually hard and stern. His tremulous state passed off, and he turned as if at bay.

"Crampton! Good heavens, man! What have you done?"

"I had to think of you sir, lying here. Of Mrs. Van Heldre, sir, and of Miss Madeleine."

"Yes, yes; but speak, man. What have you done?"

"My duty, sir."

"And accused him of this—this crime?"

Crampton was silent.

"Are you mad? Oh, man, man, you must have been mad."

Crampton drew a long breath.

"Do my wife and daughter know?"

"Yes, sir," said Crampton slowly.

"And—and they have spoken as I speak? They told you it was prejudice."

Crampton drew a long breath once more.

"Don't, pray don't say any more, sir—not now," he said at last pleadingly.

"They—surely they don't—there, quick! Ring that bell."

"Mr. Van Heldre, sir. Pray—pray don't take it like that; I only did my duty by you all."

"Duty! In a fit of madness to make such a charge as this and prejudice others!" cried Van Heldre angrily. "Ring that bell, man. I cannot rest till this is set right."

"Think, sir, how I was situated," pleaded the old clerk. "You were robbed; I saw you lying, as I thought, dying, and I saw the scoundrel who had done all this escape. What could I do but call in the police?"

"The police! Then it is known by every one in the place?"

Crampton looked pityingly down at the anguished countenance before him.

"And Henry Vine? He refuted your charge? Speak, man, or you will drive me mad."

"Henry Vine did not deny the charge, sir. He was manly enough for that."

"Crampton, is this all true?"

"It was my duty, sir."

"He does not deny it? Oh! it seems monstrous. But you said the police; you gave information. Crampton—his father—his sister—my poor child!"

"Is saved from a villain, Mr. Van Heldre!" cried the old clerk fiercely. "Better she

should have died than have married such a man as he."

"And I—I lying here helpless as a child," said the sick man feebly. "But this must all be stopped. Crampton, you should not have done all this. Now go at once, fetch George Vine here, and—Henry—the young man. Where is he?"

"Gone, sir, to answer for his crime," said the old man solemnly. "Henry Vine is dead."

CHAPTER XXXVII.—A TITLE OF HONOUR.

DUNCAN LESLIE sought patiently and well, but he was as unsuccessful as the rest, and after searching from a boat and being pulled close in along the shore, he rose at daybreak one morning, and crossing the harbour, went up along the cliff away to the east, and wherever he could find a place possible for a descent, he lowered himself from among the rocks, and searched there.

The work was toilsome, but it was an outlet for his pent-up energy, and he went on and on, reaching places where the boat could not land him; but even here he found that he had been forestalled, for hunting along among the broken rocks, he could see a figure stepping cautiously from crag to crag, where the waves washed in, and the slimy sea-wrack made the task perilous, the more so that it was the figure of a woman whom he recognised as the old fish-dealer by the maund hanging on her back from the band across her forehead.

As he toiled after her she looked round, and waited till he came up, and addressed him in a singing tone.

"Not found him, have you, sir?"

Leslie shook his head, and continued his search, seeing the old woman on two alternate days still peering about among the rocks, like many more, for the young master, and more stubborn in her search than any of the rest.

By slow degrees the search was given up. It had been kept up long after what would have been customary under the circumstances, some of the searchers working from sheer respect for the Vines, others toiling on in the hope of reward.

But there was no result, and the last of the boats, that containing Duncan Leslie, returned to the harbour, after days of seeking to and fro along the coast.

"I felt it were no good all along, Mr. Leslie sir," said the old fisherman who had been chartered for the escape. "Sea's a mystery, sir, and when she gets hold of a

body she hides it where mortal man can't find it, and keeps it till she's tired, and then she throws it ashore. I've watched it well these thirty years, and one gets to know by degrees."

Leslie bowed his head dejectedly.

"Course I wasn't going to say so before, sir, because it's a man's dooty like to go on seeking for what's lost; but, mark my words, sir, one o' these days that poor fellow will be throwed up pretty close to where he jumped in. You mark my words, he will, and Poll Perrow will be the first to see."

Leslie thought but little of the man's words then; in fact he hardly heard them, for in those hours his mind was full of Louise's sufferings, and the terrible misfortune which had come upon the homes of those two families so linked together, and now so torn apart. Unsuccessful in his search, he was now terribly exercised in mind as to what he should do to help or show some sympathy for the poor girl who, in the sorrow which had befallen her home, seemed nearer and dearer to him than ever.

It was a hard problem to solve. He wished to show his willingness to help, but he felt that his presence at the Vines' could only be looked upon now as an intrusion, and must inflict pain.

On the other hand, he was in dread lest he should be considered indifferent, and in this state of perplexity he betook himself to Uncle Luke.

"Nonsense, my good fellow," said the old man, quickly; "what more could you have done?"

"I don't know," he said desolately. "Tell me; I want to help—to serve you all if I can, and yet I seem to do nothing."

"There is nothing that we can do," said the old man solemnly. "Time must be the only cure for their trouble. Look at me, Duncan Leslie; I came to live up here with the fewest of necessities—alone, without wife or child, to be away from trouble, and you see I have failed. I cannot even help myself, so how can you expect to help them? There, leave it all to time."

"And your brother, how is he?"

Leslie felt that he had been speaking for the sake of saying something, and he bit his lip, as the old man gave him a peculiar look.

"How is a man likely to be who has lost a son as he has lost his?"

Leslie was silent.

"And now you would ask after my niece, young man, but you feel as if you dare not."

Leslie gave him an imploring look.

"Broken-hearted as her poor father, Leslie, seeing nothing in the future but one black cloud of misery. There, let's go out and sit in the sunshine and think."

Leslie followed the old man without a word. He longed to ask his advice about that future, and to question him about the friend in France, for in spite of himself he could not help feeling a thrill of satisfaction at the thought that for a certainty there must be an end to that engagement. No scion of a great house could enter into an alliance with the sister of a man whose career had ended as had ended Harry Vine's.

But he could not lay bare his heart to that cynical old man, who read him as easily as the proverbial book, and on whose lip there was always lurking the germ of a sneering smile.

He accompanied him then to his favourite seat among the rocks, just in front of his cottage, and they sat in silence for a time, Leslie hardly caring to start a topic lest it should evoke a sneer.

"Let's go down into the town," said Uncle Luke, jumping up suddenly.

Leslie rose without a word, and looked wonderingly at the old man, who, with his eyes shaded by his hands, was gazing along the rugged coast towards where, looking like dolls, a couple of fishermen were standing by something lying on a pebbly patch of sand.

Leslie looked at Uncle Luke, but the old man avoided his gaze, as if unwilling to lay bare his thoughts, and together they walked pretty quickly down the steep slope.

"Yes," said Uncle Luke; "the doctor says he will pull him through."

"Mr. Van Heldre?"

"Yes. Why don't you go and see him?"

"I have sent to ask again and again, but I felt that any call on my part in the midst of such trouble would be out of place."

"Walk faster," said the old man excitedly, "if you can. No. Let me go on alone. Look at them—running. Look!"

Leslie had already noted the fact, and out of respect for the old man he stopped short at once, with the result that Uncle Luke stopped too.

"Why don't you come on?" he cried. "Good heavens, man, what can I do alone? There, there, Leslie, it's of no use, I can play the cynic no longer. Man is not independent of his fellows. I never felt more in need of help than I do now."

Leslie took the old man's arm, and could feel that he was trembling, as they hurried on down towards the harbour, which they would

have to cross by the ferry before they could reach the little crowd gathering round the first two men on the patch of sand.

"Keep a good heart, sir," said Leslie, gently. "It may not be after all."

"Yes, it is—it is," groaned Uncle Luke. "I've hung on so to the belief that being a clever swimmer he had managed to get away; but I might have known better, Leslie, I might have known better."

"Let's wait first and be sure, sir."

"There is no need. I don't think I cared for the boy, Leslie; there were times when he made me mad with him for his puppyism; but he was my brother's son, and I always hoped that after a few years he would change and become another man."

"Well, sir, let's cling to that hope yet."

"No, no," said the old man gloomily. "There is the end. He was no thief, Leslie. Believe that of him. It was his wretched scoundrel of a friend, and if Harry struck down poor Van Heldre, it was in his horror of being taken. He was no thief."

As they reached the lowest turn of the cliff path, the old man gripped Leslie's arm with spasmodic violence and stopped short, for the far side of the harbour lay before them, and they could see clearly all that was going on amid the rocks behind.

"We should be too late," he said huskily. "Your eyes are younger than mine. That's the police sergeant yonder in that boat, isn't it?"

"Yess."

Uncle Luke stood motionless, watching, and they could see that a boat rowed out from the harbour had gone on, and put in just opposite to the patch of the sand where that remote something had been cast up by the sea. To have carried it would have meant the use of a boat at the little ferry, and it was evident that the sergeant had decided to bring the sad flotsam and jetsam round to the harbour steps.

Leslie felt the old man's arm tremble, and his efforts to be firm, as they stood and watched the boat put off again, after a few minutes' delay. Then the little crowd which had collected came slowly back over the rugged shore till they reached the eastern arm of the harbour just as the boat was coming in, and a piece of sail spread in the stern sheets told but too plainly the nature of her load.

"Mr. Luke Vine," said Leslie.

"Yes," cried the old man, starting and speaking in a harsh way, as if suddenly brought back to the present.

"Will you let me make a suggestion?"

The old man only stared hard at him.

"Let me spare you this painful scene. It may not be as you think, and if it is not, it will be a shock; but if—there, let me go, and if it prove to be according to your fears, let me send you word by a trusty messenger, and you can then go up to your brother's house and break the terrible news as gently as you can."

Uncle Luke shook his head and began to descend the slope, timing his speed so as to reach the harbour steps at the same time as the boat.

There was a crowd waiting, but the people parted respectfully to allow the old man and his companion to pass, and the next minute Uncle Luke was questioning the sergeant with his eyes.

The man stepped ashore, and gave an order or two which sent a constable off at a trot, and another policeman took his post at the head of the steps, to keep the way down to the boat.

"Am I to speak plainly, sir?" said the detective in a low voice.

"Yes; let me know the worst."

"I'm afraid it is, sir. We have made no examination yet."

He did not finish all he had to say aloud, but whispered in the old man's ear. Uncle Luke made an effort to be firm, but he shuddered and turned to Leslie.

"Up to the King's Arms," he said huskily; and taking Leslie's arm, the old man walked slowly towards the waterside inn; but they had not gone half-way before they encountered George Vine coming hastily down.

Uncle Luke's whole manner changed.

"Where are you going?" he cried, half angrily.

His brother merely pointed to the boat.

"How did you know? Who told you?" he said harshly.

"No one," was the calm reply. "Luke, do you suppose I could rest without watching for what I knew must come?"

His piteous, reproachful voice went to the heart of his hearers.

"Tell me," he continued earnestly, "Mr. Leslie, the truth."

"There is nothing to tell, sir," said Leslie gravely, "so far it is only surmise. Come with us and wait."

Their suspense was not of long duration. In a very short time they were summoned from where they were waiting to another room, where Dr. Knatchbull came forward with a face so full of the gravity of the situa-

tion that any hope which flickered in Duncan Leslie's breast died out on the instant; and he heard George Vine utter a low moan, as, arm in arm, the two brothers advanced for the identification, and then Luke led his brother away.

Leslie followed to lend his aid, but Uncle Luke signed to him to go back.

He stood watching them till they disappeared up the narrow path leading to the old granite house, and a sense of misery such as he had never before felt swelled in the young man's breast, for, as he watched the bent forms of the two brothers, he saw in imagination what must follow, and his brow grew heavy as he seemed to see Louise sobbing on her father's neck, heart-broken at her loss.

"And yet I could not help clinging to the hope that he had swum ashore," muttered Leslie, as he walked back to the inn, where he found Dr. Kratchbull in conversation with the officer.

"I wish I had never seen Cornwall, sir," said the latter warmly, "poor lad! poor lad!"

"Then there is no doubt whatever?" said Leslie hurriedly.

"Identification after all these days in the water is impossible," said the doctor; "I mean personal identification."

"Then it may not be after all," said Leslie excitedly.

The detective shrugged his shoulders, and took a packet from a little black bag. This he opened carefully, and placed before Leslie a morocco pocket-book and a card-case, both stamped with a gold coronet and the motto, *Roy et Foy*, while, when the card-case was drawn open and its water-soaked contents were taken out, the cards separated easily, and there, plainly enough, was the inscription, the result of Aunt Marguerite's inciting—

"Henri Comte des Vignes."

CHRIST THE HEALER OF THE BROKEN-HEARTED.

Short Sunday Readings for July.

By NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

"I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE."

Read Isa. lxi. 1-3; Luke iv. 14-21.

FROM the sacred Jordan and the wilderness of temptation Jesus had returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. "As His custom was"—a phrase worth pondering—"He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and stood up for to read." Turning to the Book of Isaiah He read aloud those gracious words which are familiar to every Christian ear. He read how it was foretold that One was to be a preacher of good tidings to the sorrowful, a healer of the broken-hearted, giving sight to the blind, loosing prisoners out of bondage, comforting all, sympathising with all, drawing all that were in any sort of trouble to Himself, not more by the consciousness of their great need than by the attraction of His own compassion and love. "This day," He cried in that humble village synagogue, "is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Assuredly it was a magnificent prerogative which Christ claimed when He uttered these memorable words; but rightfully, as was proved by word and deed in the days

that followed. Who has not felt the amazing power and vivid picturing of that scene which is related in the same chapter which records this visit to Nazareth? "As the sun was setting all they that had any sick with divers disease brought them unto Him, and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them." As a sequel to the teaching in the synagogue, nothing could have been more impressive. The setting sun never shed his departing beams on a spectacle of more surpassing glory. From that moment Jesus stood forth in the sight of all as the "Healer of the broken-hearted!"

"The broken-hearted." It is a touching expression. No need to understand it too literally. There was indeed one, Himself the prince of sufferers, who could say in an awful sense, some have even thought in a physical sense, "Reproach hath broken my heart." But there is a more modified and general sense, in which the phrase may be used to signify what must be more or less the effect of all suffering—an effect ranging from the gentlest pang which grief can inflict on a human soul to that extremest woe which seems actually to rend the heart in twain.

How many will read this page who are "broken-hearted" one way or another! It can never be out of place to speak a "word in season" to the sorrowful. To some it may be as "a song in the night," to be reminded once again of the familiar yet glorious fact that there is a Living One, who has carried with Him to the right hand of God human memories, human sympathies, and a human heart, at whose sainted feet the poor, the sick, the disappointed, the bereaved, may lay down their burdens as really as others in a like case laid down theirs "at even," when the last rays of the setting sun made the waters of the Galilean lake like a shining pathway from earth to heaven.

The hardest task to which any man can be called is to comfort a real mourner. It is easy to repeat the commonplaces which are usual on such occasions. But truly to lift one sorrowful soul into the light and peace of a divine consolation is not easy. None but Christ, in whom the tenderness of the Son of Mary is linked to the mighty power of God, can do it effectually. "The Lord healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds; He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them by their names." His tenderness as a consoler is based on the infinitude of His power. Only an Almighty Redeemer who "tellethe the number of the stars" can be the comforter man needs.

Supposing we were sent to comfort one in great sorrow, and that it was laid upon us as a solemn injunction that we were not to make the remotest allusion to a truth of Christianity, not to mention the name of Jesus, or anything He ever did, taught, or suffered, who will not acknowledge that in such a case the difficulty of imparting consolation would be increased a thousandfold! From what other source could we draw the healing balm? Has the world with all its manifold joys a Gospel for the sorrowful? Or modern science with its splendid achievements? Or philosophic speculation with its subtle questionings? Or art with its priceless treasures? Or even Nature herself, as she sweeps past in her ineffaceable glory and beauty? Patience, endurance, fortitude, submission, these they may teach us. But Christian consolation is more than these. It is to be sheltered in the peace of God; to be assured that behind all events there is a personal and loving will, to be illumined by the radiance of an immortal hope, and that no sorrowful child of man has ever found save in Him who said, "The

Father hath appointed me to heal the broken-hearted."

But perhaps we are disposed to say, "The promise is no doubt a beautiful one, but is it fulfilled? I see many around me, crushed by sorrows of all sorts, some, of whom it may be said, without exaggeration, that they are well-nigh broken-hearted, and yet they are not healed, as *this* promise might lead us to expect!"

Now it might be enough to say that many are not healed, simply because they look for comfort in every direction rather than to Him who alone can give it. Some shut their hearts against Christ's comfort, and then blame Him for not giving it. Others fail to connect the comfort that is actually realised by them, with Him who is the real source of it. St. Paul was comforted by the coming of Titus, and this comfort he loved to trace to its fountain-head in God. How prone we are to forget that the comfort that comes to us in the ordinary course of events is of God! The book, the sermon, the friend—we can appreciate the comfort that has flowed into our hearts from any or all these sources, but not enough do we consider what empty cisterns they are until God fills them with His grace.

More, however, may be said. When Christ cried to a sorrow-stricken world, "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted," He was no doubt contemplating the final issue of His redeeming love. To us as to His disciples He says, "Now ye have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy no man taketh from you." When "the ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads," then, but not till then, sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and the tears shall be wiped from off all faces.

If, then, it is objected that it is only a partial fulfilment of this promise, that we now see, we would reply that no more is to be expected for the present. We must wait in the patience of hope for that time when the Lord, when He comes again amid the splendours of the Second Advent, shall heal the broken-hearted perfectly and for ever.

But it is true, notwithstanding, that there is a *present* fulfilment of Christ's word whereby the sorrowful are soothed and helped in a way most real to themselves, whether they can describe it or not. There is not a ray of comfort by which any dark and troubled soul is visited in days of loneliness, of bereavement, of sadness un-

utterable, that does not come as directly from Christ upon His throne, as the light of morning comes from the sun in the heavens. "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you," is evermore the promise of the Risen One. Through His own Word and Sacraments, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, "the Comforter," He is ever accomplishing in the Church, which is His body, His divine ministration of comfort and healing.

How He does this will be considered more fully afterwards. Meanwhile suffice it to say the very first step towards receiving a true consolation is to know Christ as our risen and living Lord. "Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in *Me*," is the word by which now, as of old, He is seeking to arrest our attention and to fix our thoughts upon Himself. If we refuse His claim to be the Revealer of the Father, the Way the Truth and the Life, then there is nothing more that need be said of His office as a Healer of the broken-hearted. But, on the other hand, when He says to us, as to Mary at the sepulchre, "Why weepest thou?" we can joyfully cry, "Rabboni, Master!" we are, at all events, placing ourselves in that attitude of soul which can wait for light in darkness, and for joy in sorrow. Henceforth, come what may, we can never be altogether comfortless. Nay, we have the surest pledge of a consolation which the world can neither give nor take away.

SECOND SUNDAY.

THE HEALING POWER OF FAITH.

Read Ps. 138; Matt. x. 26, 33; Mark iv. 35-41.

We wonder at the faithlessness of the disciples when they cried, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Were these, we ask, the words of true disciples? Was it from *their* lips that this language of despair proceeded? We think, perhaps, that if we had been in their situation it would never have occurred to us that the boat which carried the Redeemer of the world could have perished, least of all, that in that sudden rush of danger, any doubt or suspicion of His ever-present and sleepless care would have taken possession of our trembling hearts. No! we say that had been impossible. We could not have behaved as they did. The tumult of warring elements might indeed have appalled us. We might have shaken like a leaf for fear as we listened to the shrieking winds, or gazed in awe-

struck silence on the crested wave as it threatened to engulf us. But, the thought that Jesus Himself was with us would soon have scattered our uprising doubts and fears. The remembrance of unnumbered tokens of Divine protection, granted in former emergencies, would assuredly have nerved us at that supreme moment.

But have we never manifested in our times of sorrow and difficulty a like spirit of faithlessness? Have we never given way to doubt, to despondency, to over-anxious fears, as if we thought that God's gracious providence had ceased to watch over us? Too often has this been the sad history of us all. These disciples are our representatives. "Why art Thou so indifferent, so thoughtless about us?" was virtually what they said. "Why hast Thou suffered us to be brought to this extremity? Why dost Thou not exert Thyself in our behalf?" If their need had been the same as on former occasions, they could have trusted Christ, but because it was different, and they now found themselves in new circumstances, exposed to a new trial, called to go in a new path, their faith failed them. And how often has it been thus with ourselves! Times without number we have sought the Lord in our trouble and He has hearkened to our cry. Then full of gratitude and love we have felt ashamed of our unbelief. "Oh, never again, as long as we live, will we doubt Him any more," we have said. But by-and-by, when some new trouble arose, and we found ourselves in circumstances quite different from those which formerly occurred, where then was our faith? Have we not said, "If my trouble was the same as before, if this sorrow through which I am now passing was the same as I then experienced, I could trust God and banish fear. The finger of memory would guide the eye of faith, and I could say, 'What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee.'" We need the faith which gathers strength from the experience of the past, as well as from the promises of God, so that when new trials emerge, we can say in perfect calmness and peace, "No; I have not passed this way heretofore, but I know Him who has been my guide, guardian, and friend in the past, and He will not forsake me; though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

It really looked as if Christ had ceased to care for His disciples. He was asleep! Was

there not something bordering on callousness or indifference in the sleep of the Master at such a time? Hurriedly, almost rudely, they awoke Him with their cry, "Master, carest thou not that we perish? Is it all the same to Thee, O Jesus, what happens to us?"

How often has that scene been repeated in the history of this sorrowful world! Even true disciples have said, "Why standest Thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thy face in time of trouble? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Is His mercy clean gone for ever?" The temptation to yield to such thoughts is the most terrible trial by which a sensitive Christian soul can be visited. Let us but feel in our darkest moments, when the heart is breaking, that God is with us; let us but know assuredly that behind the drifting clouds His love shines gloriously, and what sorrow can overwhelm us? But let His presence be withdrawn; let the heavens become as brass so that the prayers which ascend from our poor stricken hearts seem to obtain no entrance into the ear of our Father in heaven; let the cruel thought take possession of our minds, that He who rules in the courts of bliss is indifferent to our woe, and what is there between us and despair? If under any circumstances whatever, we are inclined to say, like the disciples in the storm, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?"; if in our time of trouble, when the sky is overcast, and there rests upon our hearts the great black cloud of sorrow, and it seems as if Christ had withdrawn Himself into the darkness where He heeds not the anguish of suffering and listens not to the cry of the desolate; if in our struggles with temptation, and doubt and fear, it seems to us that we are alone, that it matters not to God, in the calm repose of His eternal rest, what becomes of us; then may He in the greatness of His mercy save us from such a dire calamity as the eclipse of faith in Himself! May that mighty arm which bringeth salvation deliver us as it has delivered thousands, from this "miry clay," that our feet may be set upon that "rock" which they have touched who believe heart and soul in the love unchanged and unchangeable of the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Christ heals the broken-hearted in many ways, but chiefly by revealing the Fatherhood which embraces all, controls all, and makes all things to work together for good. Who does not know that the surest path to real consolation is just to be able to say, "It

is the Lord. I am not the sport of chance or accident. These things are not the result of laws which are mercilessly disregarding of the tears and cries of human agony. It is God's will?" He who can say this calmly and intelligently has indeed been lifted up upon a rock. He sees in Christ such a revelation of God as enables him to lay his head, as it were, on the very bosom of the infinite and eternal love.

When Jesus comes to heal the broken-hearted, His first question is the same which He addressed to Philip: "Have I been so long time with thee and yet hast thou not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." This is to be led to the rock that is higher than we! It does not follow that all mystery will be instantaneously removed or that God's dealings with us will be made quite luminous and plain. But seeing God in Christ, and crying "Abba, Father," in a true filial spirit, we have, at all events, been set in the way towards the perfect healing of all our sorrows. Then we can say, albeit the heart is breaking, "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight." I am in my Father's hands. He who sends the sorrow sends also the consolation. What I call Providence is nothing more nor less than a Father's will regarding me expressing itself in all the events of my inward and outward life. Father, Thy will be done! Behind all darkness of sorrow and death, thy love shineth undimmed and undiminished, and by-and-by, when the day breaks and the shadows flee away, I shall see where now I can but trust, and hope, and pray.

If Christ by His life and by His cross revealed the Father; if, through the faith of His most precious blood and intercession we have obtained such access to the Father's presence that we can cast on Him all our care, because He careth for us, then who will say that Christ has not won for Himself the indefeasible right to be called "the Healer of the broken-hearted?" There is no sorrow for which there is not a healing balm in our Heavenly Father's love, as we see it shining down upon us in the person and the work of His well-beloved Son.

THIRD SUNDAY.

MIRACLES OF HEALING.

Read Exodus xv. 24—29; Matt. iv. 23—25; Rev. xxi. 1—7.

Our Lord was the healer of the broken-hearted by word and deed. As by His teach-

ing He fulfilled the great prophetic picture, revealing the Father and bringing life and immortality to light, so too did He fulfil it by such works of mercy as the world had never seen. "He went about preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing all manner of diseases among the people." The one fact explains and illustrates the other. Sicknesses of all sorts were healed for the express purpose of showing forth more clearly than could otherwise have been done the nature of that kingdom which he announced.

Speaking generally, the "Gospel of the Kingdom" as Christ preached it may be said to embrace three fundamental thoughts.

It was a revelation of *Himself* as the personal Lord and Head of the kingdom, the Messiah promised to the fathers, the Reconciler who was to bear the iniquities of the people, the Herald of the better age. "What think ye of Christ? Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" were the questions with which He inaugurated His kingdom. Then, as now, men's relations to the kingdom turned on their relation to the King. His eternal Sonship, His sacrifice for the sins of the world, His victory as the Resurrection and the Life, these are the foundation-stones upon which the throne of His kingdom was to be erected.

Further, it was the announcement of the *laws and principles* of the kingdom itself. It was not to be a kingdom of this world that could be won or retained by the power of the sword; it was not to be such a kingdom of visible and material glory as would strike the eye of sense or command the allegiance of unwilling multitudes. Poverty of spirit, meekness, mercy, purity of heart, righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, were to be its characteristics. It was to extend itself from within outwards. Slowly and imperceptibly, like the process of leavening, or like the growth of a mustard-seed, was it to win its way to the empire of the conscience and intelligence of mankind.

But its present form of manifestation was not to be the highest or final one. The kingdom of the Resurrection is not a mere sentiment, but an actual and substantial reality, even the setting up of such a central authority and rule of the righteous King as shall make the existence of evil, suffering, and death within the borders of His kingdom an impossibility. When we say "Thy kingdom come," we are expressing more than a vague expectation that by some process of human amelioration the world is gradually to be delivered from the burden of its

inconceivable woes. We ask for something far more definite; even the bringing in of that kingdom for which the whole Church, visible and invisible, now waits, for which patriarchs and prophets looked when they "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow," of which psalmists sang in their sweetest and loftiest strains, and in the final establishment of which the Redeemer "shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

From this point of sight there is obviously a profound connection between Christ's preaching of the "Gospel of the kingdom" and the "healing of all manner of sickness."

To the question, Why was so much of our Lord's time taken up by the cure of bodily disease? no doubt many answers might be given any of which would be true. It might be said that He was prompted to relieve distress wherever He saw it by a feeling of compassion for the suffering. Or, again, that the miracles of healing were wrought as signs of the near presence and power of God. Not, indeed, that He sought by these mighty works to convince the unbelieving world. They were intended rather to reward and encourage faith. It is not on miracles viewed as evidences of Christianity that our spiritual life ultimately reposes. At the same time we cannot afford to dispense with their evidential value. They are seals of the revelation of God manifest in the flesh, the footprints of His glorious marching. Another lesson, too, which the miracles of healing may teach us, is the dignity and importance of the *body* in the great purpose of redemption. We are reminded thereby that the whole man is finally to participate in the glory of the incorruptible and immortal life.

But all such answers are liable to this objection, that they do not go far enough. They fail to give sufficient prominence to the fact that our Lord's miracles by which He healed the broken in heart, were more than an expression of His sympathy, more than a witness to the value of the body, more even than a proof of Divine power. All this they were, but something greater—a *promise*, a *prophecy* of what Christ's kingdom is to be hereafter. As it now exists upon the earth it is ever waging an incessant warfare with all forms of human sorrow, sometimes successfully, but in a much larger number of instances unsuccessfully. Here and there the foe is beaten back, but upon the whole suffering runs its awful course, and none can stay it.

What, then, is our hope? Is this to be for ever? Is the vision of bliss which has floated for so many weary ages before the eyes of God's Church only a dream of sad hearts never to be realised? Were the miracles by which Jesus healed the afflicted in body and in soul nothing but a sudden flash of light which illumined the world's darkness for a brief space, only to leave it darker than it was before? Oh, no! When the kingdom which He announced has come, *then* "shall the tears be wiped from off all faces, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things shall have passed away." Then shall it be made manifest how much was wrapt up in that ancient word that was spoken at the Wells of Marah, when the bitter was turned into sweet, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Each successive step in the accomplishment of God's eternal purpose has been a filling up of that name which is "His name for ever, and His memorial unto all generations." When Jesus cried in the synagogue, "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted," He spoke with a clear prevision of that glorious consummation to which all things bear us on if we are His. In the crowds which flocked around Him there were types of every form of human misery—lunatics, demoniacs, paralytics,—all manner of sickness and all manner of disease were represented there, and as he healed them all, virtually He said, "See, in these healed ones, the promise and the prophecy of my kingdom; a sure pledge of what it is to be in that day when sorrow is turned into joy, and the days of your mourning shall be ended."

Thus are we saved by *Hope*. Thankfully receiving the present comfort which God gives, we are sustained yet more abundantly by the anticipation of "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," in the day of "the manifestation of the children of God," when death shall be swallowed up in life.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

"THE TEARS SHALL BE WIPED FROM OFF ALL FACES."

Read Isaiah xxv. 6—8; John xiv. 1—7; 1 Thess. iv. 13—18.

When Jesus sought to comfort His broken-hearted disciples, the first thing he did was to fix their thoughts upon Himself. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." He

asked them simply to trust Him when He spoke to them of the place to which He was going, and of the necessity of His leaving them for a season. "If you can but do this," was virtually what He said, "if you can believe in me, that I am not deceiving you, that my love for you is unchangeable, that I too am God, and have all power to fulfil every promise which I make, then, though for the present you are in darkness, and though everything seems confused, mysterious, and sad, yet will your faith in Me vanquish all your doubts and fears, and your hearts shall not be troubled any more."

The "trouble" which our Lord so gently rebuked in the disciples is a state of mind which necessarily implies the vanquishing of faith. It is not grief or pain or anguish of spirit. These are emotions which are in no sense sinful. But there is "trouble" of another sort, which is essentially unbelief. It is trouble like that which agitated the hearts of the disciples when they cried out in the storm, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" From all such tumultuous and overwhelming anxiety Jesus seeks to deliver us. "Be still and know that I am God," we hear Him saying in all those dark moments of existence, when we stand face to face with the mystery of life, death, and immortality. "Canst thou trust in my faithfulness? in my knowledge of all the secrets of futurity? In my ability as God thy Saviour to perform all my word to the very uttermost?" Those who can answer, "Yea, Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief," have learned the secret of deepest inward peace in Jesus. They know one who can say and mean it and prove it true, "Let not your heart be troubled."

But there is a further step in the healing of the broken-hearted.

After our Lord had rallied the faith of the disciples and fixed it anew upon Himself, He added these gracious words, than which no brighter gleam of light has ever fallen on this sorrowful earth: "In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also." The question is often asked, Why have we been told so little of the life to come? Why did not Christ give us clearer and fuller information than he has done on a subject which so infinitely concerns us all? But may not our supposed ignorance be in some measure attributable to

our want of faith in the revelation that has been given? If we could thoroughly and realisingly appreciate the significance of such words as those just quoted—if we heard them falling in mingled tones of omnipotence and love from Christ's own lips, would they not go far to answer more than half our questions, and to illumine the future beyond death and the grave in a manner we could hardly have imagined possible? We cannot fill up all the details of the picture, but in broad outline it is set before us—its colouring undimmed by the lapse of time, its witness unshaken by the storms of centuries, a revelation as fresh and living to-day as it ever was of that heavenly home to which the eyes of the sorrowing in all ages have been lifted up; and as we now gaze upon it we seem ever to see a new and deeper meaning in Christ's words when He claimed to be the healer of the broken-hearted.

When we are touched by the hand of sorrow, we crave with an unappeasable longing for some answer to the solemn questionings which then confront us. We look our last on our beloved dead, and where are they? Do they continue to exist? Do they live on in God's safe keeping waiting somewhere for the Resurrection unto life? or, have they passed for ever out of sight, sinking like a stone in the mid-Atlantic never to be seen again, or whirled away like a withered leaf before the chill autumn blast? With the Bible shut what answer can we give? Ask the pure scientist, what hope there is, and he will tell you there is none that he can discover. Do not blame him, or only blame him if he presumes to think that his science, however complete its inductions or accurate its processes, has given the last answer to the question, Is there a life to come, or does death end all? This is a matter which does not lie within the range of his analysis. "No sparks of immortal presage rise from its ashes." It can neither answer the question itself nor, thank God, prove the answer of faith to be a false one. The unaided light of reason, though it may suggest a hope, can never touch us with the thrill of a glorious certainty. If believed at all, it must be simply on the basis of a Divine revelation and in the spirit of child-like trust in a power that is Almighty and all-loving.

If we believe heart and soul that "Jesus died and rose again," we cannot sorrow even as others who have "no hope." Nor is it the bare fact of immortality which then

sustains us. That of itself would be insufficient to give an abiding comfort to any stricken heart. We cry out for reunion with the loved and lost.

"Gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet as heretofore
Some summer morning!"

If we feel that to be shorn of this hope in relation to the sainted spirit of husband or wife or child would be an agony we could not endure, let us not forget to whom we owe it. It is Christ who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, who made an end of sin which is the sting of death, who finally emerged from death and Hades, and is not *He* who hath done all this the healer of the broken-hearted? In His risen life we have the pattern as well as the pledge of social life restored in heaven. The grave did not separate His life, or break it up into two parts wholly different in kind from each other, the one belonging to a world which we as men can understand and sympathise with, the other belonging to a life beyond the grave altogether mystical and strange. In His intercourse with His disciples after His resurrection we see the same Jesus who was with them from the beginning, changed no doubt, but not so changed that they did not know Him and eat and drink with Him as of yore. And though our future life must differ in many respects from the present, and while there are relationships here which cannot exist there, on the other hand we must be on our guard lest we sublimate and refine away our conception of the resurrection state till nothing is left but a vague impalpable aerial existence which can hardly be deemed desirable by any human being. The relationships of time may be exalted in eternity but they can never be effaced. There no faculty is destroyed but only quickened into nobler use. There no affection is uprooted, but only purified, enriched, and glorified. There the broken heart shall be healed at last, when all who are one in Christ shall be re-united to be severed no more for ever.

"There was an old belief,
That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief,
Dear friends shall meet once more,
Beyond the sphere of time
And sin, and fate's control;
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul,
That faith I fain would keep,
That hope I'll not forego,
Eternal be the sleep,
If not to waken so!"



CULROSS FROM THE FORTH.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT seemed to Sigrid that she had hardly gone to bed before it was time to get up again; she sleepily wished that Londoners would give dances at more reasonable hours, then, remembering all that had happened, she forgot her own weariness and turned with an eager question to Swanhild. It was the little sister's daily duty to go in and wake Frithiof up, a task of some difficulty, for either his bad habit of working at night during his lonely year in town, or else his illness, had left him with a tendency to be wide awake between twelve and two and sound asleep between six and seven.

"You haven't called him yet, have you?" asked Sigrid, rubbing her eyes.

"No, but it is quite time," said Swanhild, shutting up her atlas and rearing up in the bed where she had been luxuriously learning geography.

"Oh, leave him a little longer," said Sigrid. "We were so late last night, and his head was so bad, that I don't suppose he has had much sleep. And, Swanhild, whatever you do, don't speak of the dance to him or ask him any questions. As ill luck would have it Lady Romiaux was there."

Now Swanhild was a very imaginative child, and she was just at the age when girls form extravagant adorations for women. At Balholm she had worshipped Blanche; even when told afterwards how badly Frithiof had been treated her love had not faltered, she had invented every possible excuse for her idol, and though never able to speak of her, still cherished a little hoard of souvenirs of Balholm. There is something laughable and yet touching in these girlish adorations, and as safeguards against premature thoughts of real love they are certainly worthy of all encouragement. Men were at present nothing at all to her but a set of big brothers, who did well enough as playfellows. All the romance of her nature was spent on an ideal Blanche—how unlike the real Lady Romiaux innocent Swanhild never guessed. While the world talked hard things, this little Norwegian girl was secretly kissing a fir-cone, which Blanche had once picked up on their way to the priest's *sæter*, or furtively unwrapping a withered rose which had been fastened in Blanche's hair at the merry dance

on that Saturday night. Her heart beat so fast that she felt almost choked when Sigrid suddenly mentioned Lady Romiaux's name.

"How was she looking?" she asked, turning away her blushing face with the most comical parody of a woman's innate tendency to hide her love.

"Oh, she was looking just as usual, as pretty, and as siren-like as ever, wretched woman!" Then, remembering that Swanhild was too young to hear all the truth, she suddenly drew up. "But there, don't speak of her any more. I never wish to hear her name again."

Poor Swanhild sighed; she thought Sigrid very hard and unforgiving, and this made her cling all the more to her beloved ideal; it was true she had been faithless to Frithiof, but no doubt she was very sorry by this time, and as the child knelt down to say her morning prayers she paused long over the petition for "Blanche," which for all this time had never been omitted once.

Frithiof came to breakfast only a few minutes before the time when he had to start for business. His eyes looked very heavy, and his face had the pale, set look which Sigrid had learnt to interpret only too well. She knew that while they had been sleeping he had been awake, struggling with those old memories which at times would return to him; he had conquered, but the conquest had left him weary, and exhausted and depressed.

"If only she had been true to him!" thought Swanhild. "Poor Blanche! if he looked at all like this last night how terribly sorry she must have felt."

After all, the child with her warm-hearted forgiveness, and her scanty knowledge of facts, was perhaps a good deal nearer the truth than Sigrid. Certainly Blanche was not the ideal of her dreams, but she was very far from being the hopelessly depraved character that Sigrid deemed her; she was a woman who had sinned very deeply, but she was not utterly devoid of heart, and there were gleams of good in her to which the Norwegian girl, in her hot indignation, was altogether blind. Sigrid was not faultless, and as with Frithiof, so there lingered too with her a touch of the fierce, unforgiving spirit which had governed their Viking ancestors.

More than once that morning as she

moved about her household tasks she said under her breath—"I wish that woman were dead!—I wish she were dead!"

"You don't look well this morning, Mr. Falck," said the foreman, a cheerful, bright-eyed, good-hearted old man, who had managed to bring up a large family on his salary, and to whom Frithiof had often applied for advice on the subject of domestic economy. The two liked each other now, cordially, and worked well together, Foster having altogether lost the slight prejudice he had at first felt against the foreigner.

"We were up late last night," said Frithiof, by way of explanation. But the old man was shrewd and quicksighted, and happening later on to be in Mr. Boniface's private room, he seized the opportunity to remark—

"We shall have Mr. Falck knocking up again, sir, if I'm not mistaken: he is looking very ill to-day."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Mr. Boniface. "You were quite right to tell me, Foster. We will see what can be done."

And the foreman knew that there was no favouritism in this speech, for Mr. Boniface considered the health of his employes as a matter of the very highest importance, and being a Christian first and a tradesman afterwards, did not consider money-making to be the great object of life. Many a time good old Foster himself had been sent down for a few days at the seaside with his family, and it was perhaps a vivid remembrance of the delights of West Codrington that made him add as he left the room—

"He looks to me, sir, as if he needed bracing up."

Mr. Boniface was much of the same opinion when he noticed Frithiof later on in the day. A thoroughly good salesman the Norwegian had always been—clear-headed, courteous, and accurate; but now the look of effort which he had borne for some time before his illness was clearly visible, and Mr. Boniface seized the first chance he could get of speaking to him alone. About five o'clock there came a lull in the tide of customers; Darnell, the man at the opposite counter, had gone to tea, and Frithiof had gone back to his desk to enter some songs in the order-list.

"Frithiof," said Mr. Boniface, coming over to him and dropping the somewhat more formal style of address which he generally used towards him during business hours, "you have got one of your bad headaches."

"Yea," replied the Norwegian candidly,

"but it is not a disabling one. I shall get through all right."

"What plans have you made for your Whitsuntide holiday?"

"I don't think we had made any plan at all."

"Then I want you all to come away with us for a few days," said the shopowner. "You look to me as if you wanted rest. Come to us for a week, I will arrange for your absence."

"You are very good," said Frithiof warmly.

"But indeed I would rather only take the general holiday of Saturday to Tuesday. I am not in the least ill, and would rather not take extra days when there is no need."

"Independent as ever!" said Mr. Boniface, with a smile. "Well, it must be as you like. We will see what the three days will do for you."

Where and how this holiday was to be spent only Mr. and Mrs. Boniface knew, and Cecil and Roy were as much astonished as anyone when, at two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, a coach and four stopped at the gate of Rowan Tree House.

"What! are we to drive there?" asked Cecil. "Oh, father, how delightful! Will it be very far?"

"Yes, a long drive; so keep out plenty of wraps, in case the evening is chilly. We can tuck away the children inside if they get tired. Now, are we all ready? Then we will drive to the model lodgings."

So off they started, a very merry party, but still merrier when the three Norwegians had joined them, the girls, as usual, dressed in black, for economy's sake, but wearing very dainty little white sailor's hats, which Sigrid had sat up on the previous night to trim. She enjoyed her new hat amazingly; she enjoyed locking up the lodgings and handing the key to the caretaker; she enjoyed the delicious prospect of three days' immunity from cooking and cleaning, and anxious planning of food and money; and she enjoyed Roy's presence, with the frank, free happiness of a girl who is as yet quite heart-whole.

"I feel like the 'linendraper bold,' in the ballad," said Mr. Boniface, with his hearty laugh. "But I have taken precautions you see against a similar catastrophe. We have had more than the 'twice ten tedious years' together, have we not, Loveday?"

"Yes," she said, with her sweet, expressive smile, "we are just beginning the twenty-seventh, Robin, and have had many holidays unlike Mr. and Mrs. Gilpin."

They were still like lovers, this husband and wife of twenty-six years' standing; and it was with a sort of consciousness that they would be happier if left to themselves, that Frithiof, who sat between Mrs. Boniface and Cecil, turned towards the latter, and began to talk to her.

Cecil was looking her very best that day. The sun lighted up her fair hair, the fresh wind brought a glow of healthy colour to her cheeks, her honest grey eyes had lost the grave look which they usually wore, and were bright and happy-looking; for she was not at all the sort of girl who because she could not get her own wish refused to enjoy life. She took all that came to her brightly enough, and, with a presentiment that such a treat as this drive with Frithiof would not often fall to her lot, she gave herself up to present happiness, and put far from her all anxieties and fears for the future. From the back seat, peals of laughter from Lance and Gwen, and Swanhild, reached them. In front, by the side of the driver, they could see Roy and Sigrid absorbed in their own talk; and with such surroundings, it would have been hard indeed if these two, the Norwegian, with his sad story, and Cecil, with her life overshadowed by his trouble, had not been able for a time to throw off everything that weighed them down, and enjoy themselves like the rest.

"This is a thousand times better than a carriage or a *stolkjærre*," said Frithiof. "What a splendid pace we are going at, and how well you see the country! It is the perfection of travelling."

"So I think," said Cecil. "At any rate, on such a day as this. In rain, or snow, or burning heat, it might be rather trying. And then, of course, in the old days we should not have had it all snugly to ourselves like this; which makes such a difference."

He thought over those last words for a minute, and reflected how among "ourselves," Cecil included the little children of a criminal, and the foreigners who had scarcely been known to them for two years. Her warm, generous heart had for him a very genuine attraction. Possibly, if it had not been for that chance meeting with Blanche, which had caused an old wound to break out anew, some thought of love might have stirred in his breast. As it was, he was merely grateful to her for chasing away the gloom that for the last few days had hung about him like a fog. She was to him a cheering ray of sunshine; a healthy breeze

that dispersed the mist; a friend—but nothing more.

On they drove, free of houses at last, or passing only isolated farms, little villages, and sleepy country towns. The trees were in all the exquisite beauty of early June, and the Norwegians, accustomed to less varied foliage, were enthusiastic in their admiration. They had never known before what it was to drive along a road bordered by picturesque hedges, with stately elms here and there, and with oaks and beeches, sycamores and birches, poplars and chestnuts scattered in such lavish profusion throughout the landscape.

"If we can beat you in mountains, you can certainly beat us in trees!" cried Sigrid, her blue eyes bright with happiness.

She was enjoying it all as only those who have been toiling in a great town can enjoy the sights and sounds of the country. The most humdrum things had an attraction for her, and when they stopped by-and-by for tea, at a little road-side inn, she almost wished their drive at an end, such a longing came over her to run out into the fields and just gather flowers to her heart's content.

At last, after a great deal of tea and bread and butter had been consumed, they mounted the coach again, leaving a sort of reflection of their happiness in the hearts of the people of the inn.

"There's merry-makers and merry-makers," remarked the landlord, glancing after them; "yon's the right sort, and no mistake."

And now Mr. Boniface began to enjoy to the full his surprise. How he laughed when they implored him to say where they were going! How triumphant he was when the driver, who was as deaf as a post, utterly declined to answer leading questions put to him by Roy!

"I believe we are going to Helmstone, or some great watering-place, where we shall have to be proper and wear gloves," said Cecil.

This was received with groans.

"But to get a sight of the sea one would put up with glove-wearing," said Sigrid. "And we could, at any rate, walk out into the country, I suppose, for flowers."

Mr. Boniface only smiled, however, and looked inscrutable. And finding that they could not guess their destination in the least, they took to singing rounds, which made the time pass by very quickly. At length Frithiof started to his feet with an eager exclamation.

"The sea!" he cried.

And sure enough, there, in the distance, was the first glimpse of a long blue line, which made the hearts of the Norwegians throb with eager delight.

"It seems like being at home again," said Swanhild, while Frithiof seemed to drink in new life as the fresh salt wind blew once more upon him, bringing back to his mind the memory of many a perilous adventure in his free, careless boyhood.

"A big watering-place," groaned Roy. "I told you so. Houses, churches, a parade, and a pier; I can see them all."

"Where? where?" cried every one, while Mr. Boniface laughed quietly and rubbed his hands.

"Over there, to the left," said Roy.

"You prophet of evil!" cried Cecil merrily; "we are turning quite away to the right."

And on they went between the green downs, till they came to a tiny village, far removed from railways, and leaving even that behind them, paused at length before a solitary farmhouse, standing a little back from the road, with downs on either side of it, and barely a quarter of a mile from the sea.

"How did you hear of this delightful place, father?" cried Cecil; "it is just perfect."

"Well, I saw it when you and Roy were in Norway two summers ago," said Mr. Boniface. "Mother and I drove out here from Southbourne, and took such a fancy to this farm that, like Captain Cuttle, we made a note of it, and kept it for a surprise party."

Mr. Horner, in his suburban villa, was at that very moment lamenting his cousin's absurd extravagance.

"He was always wanting in common sense, poor fellow," observed Mrs. Horner. "But to hire a coach-and-four just to take into the country his own family and that criminal's children, and those precious Norwegians, who apparently think themselves on a level with the highest in the land—that beats everything! I suppose he'll be wanting to hire a palace for them next bank holiday!"

As a matter of fact, the farmhouse accommodation was rather limited, but no one cared about that. Though the rooms were small they had a most delicious smell of the country about them, and everyone, moreover, was in a humour to be as much out of doors as possible.

The time seemed to all of them a little

like that summer holiday at Balholm in its freedom and brightness and good-fellowship. The delightful rambles over the breezy downs, the visit to the lighthouse, the friendly chats with the coast-guardsmen, the boating excursions, and the quiet country Sunday—all remained in their memories for long after.

To Roy those days were idyllic; and Sigrid, too, began to understand for the first time that he was something more to her than Frithiof's friend. The two were much together, and on the Monday afternoon, when the rest of the party had gone off again to the lighthouse for Lance's special benefit, they wandered away along the shore, nominally searching among the rocks for anemones, but far too much absorbed in each other to prove good collectors.

It took a long time really to know Roy, for he was silent and reserved; but by this time Sigrid had begun to realise how much there was in him that was well worth knowing, and her bright, easy manner had always been able to thaw his taciturn moods. He had, she perceived, his father's large-mindedness; he studied the various problems of the day in the same spirit; to money he was comparatively indifferent; and he was wholly without that spirit of calculation, that sordid ambition which is very unjustly supposed to animate most of those engaged in retail trade. Sigrid had liked him ever since their first meeting in Norway, but only within the last two days had any thought of love occurred to her. Even now that thought was scarcely formed; she was only conscious of being unusually happy, and of feeling a sort of additional happiness, and a funny sense of relief when the rest of the party climbed the hill to the lighthouse, leaving her alone with Roy. Of what they talked she scarcely knew, but as they wandered on over low rocks and pools and shingle, hand in hand, because the way was slippery and treacherous, it seemed to her that she was walking in some new paradise. The fresh air and beauty after the smoke and the wilderness of streets; the sense of protection, after the anxieties of being manager-in-chief to a very poor household; above all, the joyous brightness after a sad past, made her heart dance within her; and in her happiness she looked so lovely that all thought of obstacles and difficulties left Roy's mind.

They sat down to rest in a little sheltered nook under the high chalk cliffs, and it was there that he poured out to her the confession of his love, being so completely carried

away that for once words came readily to his lips, so that Sigrid was almost frightened by his eagerness. How different was this from Torvald Lundgren's proposal! How utterly changed was her whole life since that wintry day when she had walked back from the Bergen cemetery!

What was it that had made everything so bright to her since then? Was it not the goodness of the man beside her—the man who had saved her brother's life—who had brought them together once more—who now loved her and asked for her love?

When at last he paused, waiting for her reply, she was for a minute or two quite silent; still her face reassured Roy, and he was not without hope, so that the waiting-time was not intolerable to him.

"If it were only myself to be thought about," she said at length, "I might perhaps give you an answer more readily. But, you see, there are other people to be considered."

The admission she had made sent a throb of delight to Roy's heart. Once sure of her love he dreaded no obstacles.

"You are thinking of Frithiof," he said. "And of course I would never ask you to leave him; but there would be no need. If you could love me—if you will be my wife—you would be much freer than you now are to help him."

The thought of his wealth suddenly flashed into Sigrid's mind, giving her a momentary pang; yet, since she really loved him, it was impossible that this should be a lasting barrier between them. She looked out over the sea, and the thought of her old home, and of the debts, and the slow struggle to pay them, came to her; yet all the time she knew that these could not separate her from Roy. She loved him, and the world's praise or blame were just nothing to her. She could not care in the least about the way in which such a marriage would be regarded by outsiders. She loved him; and when once sure that her marriage would be right—that it would not be selfish, or in any way bad in its effects on either Frithiof or Swanhild—it was impossible that she should hesitate any longer.

But of this she was not yet quite sure. All had come upon her so suddenly that she felt as if she must have time to think it out quietly before making a definite promise.

"Give me a fortnight," she said, "and then I will let you have my answer. It would not be fair to either of us if I spoke hastily when so much is at stake."

Roy could not complain of this sugges-

tion; it was much that he was able at last to plead his own cause with Sigrid, and in her frank, blue eyes there lurked something which told him that he need fear no more.

Meanwhile time sped on, and, unheeded by these two, the tide was coming in. They were so absorbed in their own affairs that it was not until a wave swept right into the little bay, leaving a foam-wreath almost at their feet, that they realised their danger. With a quick exclamation Roy started up.

"What have I been thinking of?" he cried in dismay. "Why, we are cut off!"

Sigrid sprang forward and glanced towards Britling Gap. It was too true. Return was absolutely impossible.

"We could never swim such a distance," she said. And turning, she glanced towards the steep white cliff above.

"And that too is utterly impossible," said Roy. "Our only hope is in some pleasure-boat passing. Stay, I have an idea."

Hastily opening his knife he began to scoop out footholds in the chalk. He saw that their sole chance lay in making a standing-place out of reach of the water, and he worked with all his might, first securing a place for the feet, then, higher up, scooping holes for the hands to cling to; he spoke little, his mind was too full of a torturing sense of blame, a bitter indignation with himself for allowing his very love to blind him to such a danger.

As for Sigrid, she picked up a pointed stone and began to work too with desperate energy. She was naturally brave, and as long as she could do anything her heart scarcely beat faster than usual. It was the waiting time that tried her, the clinging to that uncompromising white cliff, while below the waves surged to and fro with the noise that only that morning she had thought musical, but which now seemed to her almost intolerable. If it had not been that Roy's arm was round her, holding her closely, she could never have borne up so long, she would have turned giddy and fallen back into the water. But his strength seemed to her equal to anything, and her perfect confidence in him filled her with a wonderful energy of endurance.

In their terrible position all sense of time left them, they could not tell whether it was for minutes or for hours that they had clung to their frail refuge, when at length a shout from above reached their ears.

"Courage!" cried a voice. "A boat is coming to your help. Hold on!"

Hope renewed their strength in a wonder-

ful way, they were indeed less to be pitied than those who had the fearful anxiety of rescuing them, or watching the rescue.

It was Frithiof who had first discovered them; the rest of the party, after seeing over the lighthouse, had wandered along the cliffs talking to an old sailor, and, Lance being seized with a desire to see over the edge, Frithiof had set Cecil's mind at rest by lying down with the little fellow and holding him securely while he glanced down the sheer descent to the sea. A little farther on, to the left, he suddenly perceived to his horror the two clinging figures, and at once recognised them. Dragging the child back, he sprang up and seized the old sailor's arm, interrupting a long-winded story to which Mr. Boniface was listening.

"There are two people down there, cut off by the tide," he said. "What is the quickest way to reach them?"

"Good Lord!" cried the old man; "why there'll be nought quicker than a boat at Britling Gap, or ropes brought from there and let down."

"Tell them help is coming," said Frithiof. "I will row round."

And without another word he set off running like the wind towards the coast-guard station. On and on he rushed over the green downs, past the little white chalk heaps that marked the coast-guard's nightly walk, past the lighthouse and down the hill to the little sheltered cove. Though a good runner, he was sadly out of training, his breath came now in gasps, his throat felt as though it were on fire, and all the time a terrible dread filled his heart. Supposing he were too late!

At Britling Gap not a soul was in sight, and he dared not waste time in seeking help. The boat was in its usual place on the beach. He shoved it out to sea, sprang into it, paused only to fling off his coat, then with desperate energy pulled towards the place where Roy and Sigrid awaited their rescuer with fast-failing strength.

And yet in all Frithiof's anxiety there came to him a strange sense of satisfaction, an excitement which banished from his mind all the spectres of the past, a consciousness of power that in itself was invigorating. Danger seemed to be his native element, daring his strongest characteristic, and while straining every nerve and making the little boat bound through the water, he was more at rest than he had been for months, just because everything personal had faded into entire insignificance before the absorbing need of those whom he loved.

How his pulses throbbed when at length he caught sight of Sigrid's figure! and with what skill he guided his boat towards the cliff, shouting out encouragement and warning! The two were both so stiff and exhausted that it was no easy task to get them down into the boat, but he managed it somehow, and a glad cheer from above showed that the watchers were following their every movement with eager sympathy.

"Let us walk back quickly," said Mr. Boniface, "that we may be ready to meet them," and with an intensity of relief they hurried back to Britling Gap, arriving just in time to greet the three as they walked up the beach. Sigrid, though rather pale and exhausted, seemed little the worse for the adventure, and a glad colour flooded her cheeks when Mr. Boniface turned to Frithiof and grasping his hand, thanked him warmly for what he had done. Cecil said scarcely anything, she could hardly trust herself to speak, but her heart beat fast as, glancing at Frithiof, she saw on his face the bright look which made him once more like the Frithiof she had met long ago at Bergen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MR. BONIFACE insisted on keeping them all till the following day, when once more they enjoyed the delights of coaching, getting back to London in the cool of the evening, laden with wild roses, hawthorn, and field flowers, which gladdened more than one of their neighbours' rooms in the model lodgings.

It was not till Wednesday in Whitsun week that Frithiof found himself in his old place behind the counter, and it took several days before they all got into working order again, for though the holiday had done them good, yet it was not very easy to get back into the routine of business. But by Monday everything was in clockwork order again, and even Mr. Horner, though ready enough at all times to grumble, could find nothing to make a fuss about. It happened that day that Mr. Horner was more in the shop than usual, for Roy had unexpectedly been obliged to go to Paris on business, and it chanced, much to his satisfaction, that, while Mr. Boniface was dining, Sardoni the tenor called to speak about a song. There was nothing that he enjoyed so much as interviewing any well-known singer; he seemed to gain a sort of reflected glory in the process, and Frithiof could hardly help smiling when at the close of the interview they passed through the shop, so comical was the obsequious manner of the little man towards the tall, jolly-look-

ing singer, and so curious the contrast between the excessive politeness of his tone to the visitor, and his curt command, "Open the door, Falck."

Frithiof opened the door promptly, but the tenor, whose mischievous eyes evidently took in everything that savoured of fun, saw plainly enough that the Norseman, with his dignity of manner and nobility of bearing, deemed Mr. Horner as a man beneath contempt.

"Oh, by the way, Mr. Horner," he exclaimed, suddenly turning back just as he had left the shop; "I quite forgot to ask if you could oblige me with change for a five-pound note. I have tried to get it twice this morning, but change seems to be short."

"With the greatest pleasure," said Mr. Horner, deferentially.

And, pushing past Frithiof, he himself deposited the note in the till and counted out five sovereigns, which he handed with a bow to Sardon.

Then, with a friendly "good day," the singer went out, and Mr. Horner, rubbing his hands with an air of great satisfaction, retired to Mr. Boniface's room.

The afternoon passed on just as hundreds of afternoons had passed before it, with the usual succession of customers, the usual round of monotonous work; there was nothing to mark it in any way, and no sense of coming evil made itself felt. In the most prosaic manner possible, Frithiof went out for the few minutes' stroll in the streets, which he called tea-time. He was in good spirits, and as he walked along he thought of the days by the sea, and of the boating which he had so much enjoyed, living it all over again in this hot, dusty London, where June was far from delightful. Still, it was something to be out in the open air, to get a few moments of leisure and to stretch one's legs. He walked along pretty briskly, managing to get some little enjoyment out of his short respite, and this was well; for it was long before he could enjoy anything again in that unconcerned, free-hearted way. Yet nothing warned him of this; quite carelessly he pushed open the double swing-doors and re-entered the shop, glancing with surprise but with no special concern at the little group behind the counter. Mr. Horner was finding fault about something, but that was a very ordinary occurrence. A thin, grave-looking man stood listening attentively, and Mr. Boniface listened too with an expression of great trouble on his face. Looking up, he perceived

Frithiof, and with an exclamation of relief came towards him.

"Here is Mr. Falck!" he said; "who no doubt will be able to explain everything satisfactorily. A five-pound note has somehow disappeared from your till this afternoon, Frithiof; do you know anything about it?"

"It was certainly in the till when I last opened it," said Frithiof; "and that was only a few minutes before I went out."

"Very possibly," said Mr. Horner. "The question is whether it was there when you shut it again."

The tone even more than the words made Frithiof's blood boil.

"Sir," he said furiously, "do you dare to insinuate that I——"

But Mr. Boniface laid a hand on his arm and interrupted him.

"Frithiof," he said, "you know quite well that I should as soon suspect my own son as you. But this note has disappeared in a very extraordinary way, while only you and Darnell were in the shop, and we must do our best to trace it out. I am sure you will help me in this disagreeable business by going through the ordinary form quietly."

Then, turning to the private detective who had been hastily called in by Mr. Horner, he suggested that they should come to his own room. Mr. Horner shut the door with an air of satisfaction. From the first he had detested the Norwegian, and now was delighted to feel that his dislike was justified. Mr. Boniface, looking utterly miserable, sat down in his arm-chair to await the result of the inquiry, and the two men who lay under suspicion stood before the detective, who with his practised eye glanced now at one, now at the other, willing if possible to spare the innocent man the indignity of being searched.

Darnell was a rather handsome fellow, with a short dark beard and heavy moustache: he looked a trifle paler than usual, but was quite quiet and collected, perhaps a little upset at the unusual disturbance in the shop where for so long he had worked, yet without the faintest sign of personal uneasiness about him. Beside him stood the tall Norwegian, his fair skin showing all too plainly the burning colour that had rushed to his face the instant he knew that he lay actually under suspicion of thieving. Mr. Horner's words still made him tingle from head to foot, and he could gladly have taken the man by the throat and shaken the breath out of him. For the suspicion, hard

enough for any man to bear, was doubly hard to him on account of his nationality. That a Norwegian should be otherwise than strictly honourable was to Frithiof a monstrous idea. He knew well that he and his countrymen in general had plenty of faults, but scrupulous honesty was so ingrained in his Norse nature, that to have the slightest doubt cast upon his honour was to him an intolerable insult. The detective could not, of course, understand this. He was a clever and a conscientious man, but his experience was, after all, limited. He had not travelled in Norway, or studied the character of its people; he did not know that you may leave all your luggage outside an inn in the public highway without the least fear that in the night any one will meddle with it; he did not know that if you give a Norse child a coin equal to sixpence in return for a great bowl of milk, it will refuse with real distress to keep it, because the milk was worth a little less; he had not heard the story of the lost chest of plate, which by good chance was washed up on the Norwegian coast, how the experts examined the crest on the spoons, and after infinite labour and pains succeeded in restoring it to its rightful owner in a far-away southern island. It was, after all, quite natural that he should suspect the man who had coloured so deeply, who protested so indignantly against the mere suspicion of guilt, who clearly shrank from the idea of being searched.

"I will examine you first," said the detective; and Frithiof, seeing that there was no help for it, submitted with haughty composure to the indignity. For an instant even Mr. Horner was shaken in his opinion, there was such an evident consciousness of innocence in the Norwegian's whole manner and bearing now that the ordeal had actually come.

In solemn silence two pockets were turned inside out. The right-hand waistcoat pocket was apparently empty, but the careful detective turned that inside out too. Suddenly Mr. Boniface started forward with an ejaculation of astonishment.

"I told you so," cried Mr. Horner vehemently.

And Frithiof, roused to take notice, which before he had not condescended to do, looked down and saw a sight that made his heart stand still.

Carefully pinned to the inside of the pocket was a clean, fresh, five-pound note. He did not speak a word, but just stared at the thing in blank amazement. There was

a painful silence. Surely it could be nothing but a bad dream!

He looked at the unconcerned detective, and at Mr. Horner's excited face, and at Mr. Boniface's expression of grief and perplexity. It was no dream; it was a most horrible reality—a reality which he was utterly incapable of explaining. With an instinct that there was yet one man present who trusted him, in spite of appearances, he made a step or two towards Mr. Boniface.

"Sir," he said in great agitation, "I swear to you that I knew nothing of this. It has astounded me as much as it has surprised you. How it came there I can't say, but certainly I didn't put it there."

Mr. Boniface was silent, and glancing back Frithiof saw on the thin lips of the detective a very expressive smile. The sight almost maddened him. In the shock of the discovery he had turned very pale, now the violence of his wrath made him flush to the roots of his hair.

"If you didn't put it there, who did?" said Mr. Horner indignantly. "Don't add to your sin, young man, by falsehood."

"I have never spoken a falsehood in my life; it is you who lie when you say that I put the note there," said Frithiof hotly.

"My poor fellow," said Mr. Boniface, "I am heartily sorry for you, but you must own that appearances are against you."

"What! you too, sir!" cried Frithiof, his indignation giving place to heart-broken wonder.

The tone went to Mr. Boniface's heart.

"I think you did it quite unconsciously," he said. "I am sure you never could have taken it had you known what you were about. You did it in absence of mind—in a fit of temporary aberration. It is, perhaps, a mere result of your illness last summer, and no one would hold you responsible for it."

A horrible wave of doubt passed over Frithiof. Could this indeed be the explanation? But it was only for a moment. He could not really believe it; he knew that there was no truth in this suggestion of brain disturbance.

"No one in absence of mind could deliberately have pinned the note in," he said. "Besides my head was perfectly clear, not even aching or tired."

"Quite so; I am glad that so far you own the truth," said Mr. Horner. "Make a free confession at once and we will not press the prosecution. You yielded to a sudden temptation, and, as we all know, have special reasons for needing money. Come, confess!"

"You are not bound to incriminate yourself," said the detective, who, as acting in a private capacity, was not bound to urge the prosecution. "Still, what the gentleman suggests is by far the best course for you to take. There's not a jury in the land that would not give a verdict against you."

"I shall certainly not tell a lie to save open disgrace," said Frithiof. "The jury may say what it likes. God knows I am innocent."

The tone in which he said the last words made Mr. Boniface look at him more closely. Strangely enough it was in that moment of supreme bitterness, when he fully realised the hopelessness of his position, when one of his employers deemed him a madman and the other a thief, then, when disgrace and ruin and utter misery stared him in the face, that the faint glimpses of the Unseen, which, from time to time, had dawned for him, broadened into full sunlight. For the first time in his life he stood in close personal relationship with the Power in whom he had always vaguely believed, the higher Presence became to him much more real than these men surrounding him with their pity, and indignation, and contempt.

But Mr. Horner was not the sort of man to read faces, still less to read hearts; the very emphasis with which Frithiof had spoken made him more angry.

"Now I *know* that you are lying!" he cried; "don't add blasphemy to your crime. You are the most irreligious fellow I ever came across—a man who, to my certain knowledge, never attends any place of public worship, and do you dare to call God to witness for you?"

Nothing but the strong consciousness of this new Presence kept Frithiof from making a sharp retort. But a great calmness had come over him, and his tone might have convinced even Mr. Horner had he not been so full of prejudice. "God knows I am innocent," he repeated; "and only He can tell how the note got here; I can't."

"One word with you, if you please, Mr. Harris," said Robert Boniface, suddenly pushing back his chair and rising to his feet, as though he could no longer tolerate the discussion.

He led the way back to the shop, where, in low tones, he briefly gave the detective his own opinion of the case. He was sure that Frithiof firmly believed that he was telling the truth, but, unable to doubt the evidence of his own senses, he was obliged to take up the plausible theory of temporary

aberration. The detective shrugged his shoulders a little, and said it might possibly be so, but the young man seemed to him remarkably clear-headed. However, he accepted his fee and went off, and Mr. Boniface returned sadly enough to his room.

"You can go back to the shop, Darnell," he said.

The man bowed and withdrew, leaving Frithiof still standing half bewildered where the detective had left him, the cause of all his misery lying on the writing-table before him, just as fresh and crisp-looking as when it had been issued from the Bank of England.

"This has been a sad business, Frithiof," said Mr. Boniface, leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, and looking with his clear, kindly eyes at the young Norwegian. "But I am convinced that you had no idea what you were doing, and I should not dream of prosecuting you, or discharging you."

Poor Frithiof was far too much stunned to be able to feel any gratitude for this. Mr. Horner, however, left him no time to reply.

"I think you have taken leave of your senses, Boniface," he said vehemently. "Save yourself the annoyance of prosecuting, if you like; but it is grossly unfair to the rest of your employes to keep a thief in your house. Not only that, but it is altogether immoral; it is showing special favour to vice, it is admitting a principle which, if allowed, would ruin all business life. If there is one thing noticeable in all successful concerns it is that uncompromising severity is shown to even trifling errors, even to carelessness."

"My business has hitherto been successful," said Mr. Boniface quietly, "and I have never gone on that principle, and never will. Why are we to have a law of mercy and rigidly to exclude it from every-day life? But that is the way of the world. It manages, while calling itself Christian, to shirk most of Christ's commands."

"I tell you," said Mr. Horner, who was now in a towering passion, "that it is utterly against the very rules of religion. The fellow is not repentant; he persists in sticking to a lie, and yet you weakly forgive him."

"If," said Mr. Boniface quietly, "you knew a little more of Frithiof Falck you would know that it is quite impossible that he could consciously have taken the money. When he took it he was not himself. If he had wanted to hide it—to steal it—why did he actually return to the shop with it in his

possession? He might easily have disposed of it while he was out."

"If that is your ground, then I object to having a man on my premises who is afflicted with kleptomania. But it is not so. The fellow is as long-headed and quick-witted as any one I know; he has managed to hood-wink you, but from the first I saw through him, and knew him to be a designing——"

"Sir," broke in Frithiof, turning to Mr. Boniface — his bewildered consternation changing now to passionate earnestness — "this is more than I can endure. For God's sake call back the detective, examine further into this mystery; there *must* be some explanation!"

"How can any man examine further?" said Mr. Boniface sadly. "The note is missed, and is actually found upon you. The only possible explanation is that you were not yourself when you took it."

"Then the least you can do is to dismiss him," resumed Mr. Horner. But Mr. Boniface interrupted him very sharply.

"You will please remember, James, that you are in no way concerned with the engagement or dismissal of those employed in this house. That is entirely my affair, as is set forth in our deed of partnership."

"Which partnership will need renewing in another six months," said Mr. Horner, growing red with anger. "And I give you fair warning that, if this dishonest fellow is kept on, I shall then withdraw my capital and retire from the business."

With this Parthian shot he went out, banging the door behind him.

Frithiof had borne in silence all the taunts and insults showered on him; but when he found himself alone with the man to whom he owed so much, he very nearly broke down altogether. "Sir," he said, trying in vain to govern his voice, "you have been very good to me; but it will be best that I should go."

"I would not have you leave for the world," said Mr. Boniface. "Remember that your sisters are dependent on you. You must think first of them."

"No," said Frithiof firmly; "I must first think of what I owe to you. It would be intolerable to me to feel that I had really brought any loss on you through Mr. Horner's anger. I must go."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Boniface; "I cannot hear of such a thing. Why, how do you think you would get another situation with this mystery still hanging over you? I, who know you so well, am convinced of

your perfect freedom from blame; but strangers could not possibly be convinced of it."

Frithiof was silent; he thought of Sigrid and Swanhild suffering through his trouble, he remembered his terrible search for work when he had first come to London, and he realised that it was chiefly his own pride that prompted him never to return to the shop. After all, what a prospect it was! With one partner deeming him a thief and the other forced to say that he must be subject to a form of insanity; with the men employed in the shop all ready to deem him a dishonest foreigner! How was he to bear such a terrible position? Yet bear it he must; nay, he must be thankful for the chance of being allowed to bear it.

"If you are indeed willing that I should stay," he said at length, "then I will stay. But your theory—the theory that makes you willing still to trust me—is mistaken. I know that there is not a minute in this day when my head has not been perfectly clear."

"My dear fellow, you must allow me to keep what theory I please. There is no other explanation than this, and you would be wisest if you accepted it yourself."

"That is impossible," said Frithiof sadly.

"It is equally impossible that I can doubt the evidence of my own senses. The note was there, and you can't possibly explain its presence. How is it possible that Darnell could have crossed over to your till, taken out the note and pinned it in your pocket? Besides, what motive could he have for doing such a thing?"

"I don't know," said Frithiof; "yet I shall swear to my dying day that I never did it myself."

"Well, there is no use in arguing the point," said Robert Boniface wearily. "It is enough for me that I can account to myself for what must otherwise be an extraordinary mystery. You had better go back to your work now, and do not worry over the affair. Remember that I do not hold you responsible for what has happened."

After this of course nothing more could be said. Frithiof left the room feeling years older than when he had entered it, and with a heavy heart took that first miserable plunge into the outer world—the world where he must now expect to meet with suspicious looks and cold dislike.

CHAPTER XXV.

As he walked down the sort of avenue of pianos and harmoniums in the inner

shop, there came to his mind, why, he could not have told, words spoken to him long before by that customer who had left on his mind so lasting an impression, "Courage! the worst will pass." Though he could not exactly believe the words, yet he clung to them with a sort of desperation. Also he happened to notice the clock, and practically adopted Sydney Smith's wise maxim, "Take short views." There were exactly two hours and a quarter before closing time, he could at any rate endure as long as that, and of the future he would not think. There were no customers in the shop, but he could hear voices in eager discussion, and he knew quite well what was the subject of their talk. Of course the instant he came into sight a dead silence ensued, and the little group, consisting of Foster, Darnell, one of the tuners, and the boy who made himself generally useful, dispersed at once, while in the ominous quiet Frithiof went to his usual place. The first few minutes were terrible; he sat down at his desk, took up his pen, and opened the order-book, making a feint of being actually employed, but conscious only of the dreadful silence and of the eyes that glanced curiously at him; again a burning flush passed over his face, just from the horror and shame of even being suspected of dishonesty. It was a relief to him when a customer entered, a man entirely ignorant of all that had passed, and only bent on securing the best seats to be had for Mr. Boniface's concert on the following day. Carlo Donati, the celebrated baritone, was to sing, and as he had only appeared once before that season, except in opera, there was a great demand for tickets, which kept them pretty busy until at length the longed-for closing came; the other men lingered a little to discuss afresh the great event of the day, but Frithiof, who had been watching the hands of the clock with longing eyes, felt as if he could not have borne the atmosphere of the shop for another minute, and snatching up his hat made for the door. None of them said good-night to him; they were not intentionally unkind, but they were awkward, and they felt that the strange affair of the afternoon had made a great gulf between them and the culprit. However, Frithiof was past caring much for trifles, for after the first moment of intense relief, as he felt the cool evening air blowing on him, the sense of another trouble to be met had overpowered all else. He had got somehow to tell Sigrid of his disgrace, to bring the cloud which shadowed him into the peaceful home that had become so

dear to him. Very slowly he walked through the noisy streets, very reluctantly crossed the great courtyard, and mounted flight after flight of stairs. At the threshold he hesitated, wondering whether it would be possible to shield them from the knowledge. He could hear Sigrid singing in the kitchen as she prepared the supper, and something told him that it would be impossible to conceal his trouble from her. With a sigh he opened the door into the sitting-room; it looked very bright and cheerful, Swanhild stood at the open window watering the flowers in the window-box, red and white geraniums and southernwood, grown from cuttings given by Cecil. She gave him her usual merry greeting.

"Come and look at my garden, Frithiof," she said. "Doesn't it look lovely?"

"Why, you are late," said Sigrid, coming in with the cocoa, her face a little flushed with the fire, which was trying on that summer-day. Then, glancing at him, "How tired you look! Come, sit down and eat. I have got a German sausage that even Herr Sivertsen would not grumble at. The heat has tired you, and you will feel better after you have had something."

He ate obediently, though the food almost choked him; Swanhild, fancying that he had one of his bad headaches, grew quiet, and afterwards was not surprised to find that he did not as usual get out his writing materials, but asked Sigrid to go out with him for a turn.

"You are too tired to try the translating?" she asked.

"Yes, I'll try it later," he said; "but let us have half an hour's walk together now."

She consented at once and went to put on her hat, well knowing that Frithiof never shirked his work without good reason; then leaving strict orders with Swanhild not to sit up after nine, they left her absorbed in English history, and went down into the cool, clear twilight. Some children were playing quietly in the courtyard; Sigrid stopped for a minute to speak to one of them.

"Is your father better this evening?" she asked.

"Yes, miss, and he's a-goin' back to work to-morrow," replied the child, lifting a beaming face up to the friendly Norwegian lady, who had become a general favourite among her neighbours.

"That is one of the little Hallifields," explained Sigrid, as they passed on. "The father, you know, is a tram-car conductor, and the work is just killing him by inches; some day

you really must have a talk with him and just hear what terrible hours he has to keep. It makes me sick to think of it. How I wish you were in Parliament, Frithiof, and could do something to put down all the grievances that we are for ever coming across!"

"There was once a time when at home we used to dream that I might even be a king's minister," said Frithiof.

Something in his voice made her sorry for her last speech, she knew that one of his fits of depression had seized him.

"So we did, and perhaps after all you may be. It was always, you know, through something very disagreeable that in the old stories the highest wish was attained. Remember the 'Wild Swans.' And even 'Cinderella' has that thought running through it. We are taught the same thing from our nursery days upwards. And, you know, though there are some drawbacks, I think living like this, right among the people, is a splendid training. One can understand their troubles so much better."

"I should have thought you had troubles enough of your own," he said moodily, "without bothering yourself with other people's."

"But since our own troubles I have somehow cared more about them; I don't feel afraid as I used to do of sick people, and people who have lost those belonging to them. I want always to get nearer to them."

"Sigrid," he said desperately, "can you bear a fresh trouble for yourself? I have bad news for you to-night."

Her heart seemed to stop beating.

"Roy?" she asked breathlessly, her mind instinctively turning first to fears for his safety.

At any other time Frithiof would have guessed the truth through that tremulous, unguarded question, which had escaped her involuntarily. But he was too miserable to notice it then.

"Oh, no, Roy is still at Paris. They heard to-day that he could not be back in time for the concert. It is I who have brought this trouble on you. Though how it came about God only knows. Listen, and I'll tell you exactly how everything happened."

By this time they had reached one of the parks, and they sat down on a bench under the shade of a great elm-tree. Frithiof could not bear to look at Sigrid, could not endure to watch the effect of his words, he fixed his eyes on the smutty sheep that were feeding on the grass opposite him. Then very quietly

and minutely he told exactly what had passed that afternoon.

"I am glad," she exclaimed when he paused, "that Mr. Boniface was so kind. And yet, how can he think that of you?"

"You do not think it, then?" he asked, looking her full in the face.

"What! think that you took it in absence of mind? Think that it would be possible for you deliberately to take it out of the till and pin it in your own pocket! Why, of course not! In actual delirium, I suppose, a man might do anything, but you are as strong and well as any one else. Of course, you had nothing whatever to do with it, either consciously or unconsciously."

"Yet the thing was somehow there, and the logical inference is, that I must have put it there," he said, scanning her face with keen attention.

"I don't care a fig for logical inference," she cried with a little vehement motion of her foot. "All I know is that you had nothing whatever to do with it. If I had to die for maintaining that, I would say it with my last breath."

He caught her hand in his, and held it fast.

"If you still believe in me the worst is over," he said. "With the rest of the world, of course, my character is gone, but there is no help for that."

"But there must be help," said Sigrid. "Some one else must be guilty. The other man in the shop must certainly have put it there."

"For what purpose?" said Frithiof sadly. "Besides, how could he have done it without my knowledge?"

"I don't know," said Sigrid, beginning to perceive the difficulties of the case. "What sort of a man is he?"

"I used to dislike him at first, and he naturally disliked me because I was a foreigner. But latterly we have got on well enough. He is a very decent sort of fellow, and I don't for a moment believe that he would steal."

"One of you must have done it," said Sigrid. "And as I certainly never could believe that you did it, I am forced to think the other man guilty."

Frithiof was silent. If he did not agree with her, was he not bound to accept Mr. Boniface's theory? The horrible mystery of the affair was almost more than he could endure; his past had been miserable enough, but he had never known anything equal to the misery of being innocent yet absolutely unable to prove his innocence. Sigrid, glancing at him

anxiously, could see even in the dim twilight what a heavy look of trouble clouded his face, and resolutely turning from the puzzling question of how the mystery could be explained, she set herself to make as light of the whole affair as was possible.

"Look, Frithiof," she said; "why should we waste time and strength in worrying over this? After all, what difference does it make to us in ourselves? Business hours must, of course, be disagreeable enough to you, but at home you must forget the disagreeables; at home you are my hero, unjustly accused, and bearing the penalty of another's crime."

He smiled a little, touched by her eagerness of tone, and cheered, in spite of himself, by her perfect faith in him. Yet all through the night he tossed to and fro in sleepless misery, trying to find some possible explanation of the afternoon's mystery, racking his brain to think of all that he had done or said since that unlucky hour when Sardoni had asked for change.

The next morning, as a natural consequence, he began the day with a dull, miserable headache; at breakfast he hardly spoke, and he set off for business looking so ill that Sigrid wondered whether he could possibly get through his work. It was certainly strange, she could not help thinking, that fate seemed so utterly against him, and that when at last his life was beginning to look brighter, he should again be the victim of another's fault. And then, with a sort of comfort, there flashed into her mind an idea which almost reconciled her to his lot. What if these obstacles so hard to be surmounted, these difficulties that hemmed him in so persistently, were after all only the equivalent to the physical dangers and difficulties of the life of the old Vikings? Did it not, in truth, need greater courage and endurance for the nineteenth-century Frithiof to curb all his natural desires and instincts and toil at uncongenial work in order to pay off his father's debts, than for the Frithiof of olden times to face all the dangers of the sea, and of foes spiritual and temporal who beset him when he went to win back the lost tribute money? It was, after all, a keen pleasure to the old Frithiof to fight with winds and waves; but it was a hard struggle to the modern Frithiof to stand behind a counter day after day. And then, again, was it not less bitter for the Frithiof of the Saga to be suspected of sacrilege, than for Frithiof Falck to be suspected of the most petty and contemptible act of dishonesty?

She was right. Anything, however pain-

ful and difficult, would have been gladly encountered by poor Frithiof if it could have spared him that miserable return to his old place in Mr. Boniface's shop. And that day's prosaic work needed greater moral courage than any previous day of his life.

About half-past nine there arrived a telegram which did not mend matters. Mr. Boniface was seriously unwell, would not be in town that day, and could not be at St. James's Hall that evening for the concert. Mr. Horner would take his place. Frithiof's heart sank at this news; and when presently the fussy, bumptious, little man entered the shop the climax of his misery was reached. Mr. Horner read the telegram with a disturbed air.

"Dear! dear! seriously ill, I'm afraid, or he would at least make an effort to come to-night. But after all the annoyance of yesterday I am not surprised—no, not at all. Such a thing has never happened in his business before, ay, Mr. Foster?"

"Oh, no, sir," said the foreman in a low voice, sorry in his heart for the young Norwegian, who could not avoid hearing every word.

"It was quite enough to make him ill. Such a disgraceful affair in a house of this class. For his own sake he does well to hush it up, though I intend to see that all proper precautions are taken; upon that, at any rate, I insist. If I had my own way there should have been none of this misplaced leniency. Here, William!" and he beckoned to the boy, who was irreverently flicking the bust of Mozart with a duster.

"Yes, sir," said William, who, being out of the trouble himself, secretly rather enjoyed the commotion it had caused.

"Go at once to Smith, the ironmonger, and order him to send some one round to fix a spring bell on a till. Do you understand?"

"Quite, sir," replied William, unable to resist glancing across the counter.

Frithiof went on arranging some music which had just arrived, but he flushed deeply, and Mr. Horner, glad to have found a vulnerable point of attack, did not scruple to make the most of his opportunity. Never, surely, did ironmonger do his work so slowly! Never, surely, did an employer give so much of his valuable time to directing exactly what was to be done, and superintending an affair about which he knew nothing. But the fixing of that detestable bell gave Mr. Horner a capital excuse for being in the shop at Frithiof's elbow, and every word and look conveyed such insulting suspicion of the Nor-

wegian that honest old Foster began to feel angry.

"Why should I mind this vulgar brute?" thought Frithiof, as he forced himself to go on with his work with the air of quiet determination which Mr. Horner detested. But all the same he did care, and it was the very vulgarity of the attack that made him inwardly wince. His headache grew worse and worse, while in maddening monotony came the sounds of piano-tuning from the inner shop, hammering and bell-ringing at the till close by, and covert insults and inuendoes from the grating voice of James Horner. How much an employer can do for those in his shop, how close and cordial the relation may be, he had learnt from his intercourse with Mr. Boniface. He now learnt the opposite truth, that no position affords such constant opportunities for petty tyranny if the head of the firm happens to be mean or prejudiced. The miserable hours dragged on somehow, and at last, late in the afternoon, Foster came up to him with a message.

"Mr. Horner wishes to speak to you," he said; "I will take your place here." Then, lowering his voice cautiously, "It's my opinion, Mr. Falck, that he is trying to goad you into resigning, or into an impertinent answer which would be sufficient to cause your dismissal."

"Thank you for the warning," said Frithiof gratefully, and a little encouraged by the mere fact that the foreman cared enough for him to speak in such a way, he went to the private room, determined to be on his guard and not to let pride or anger get the better of his dignity.

Mr. Horner replied to his knock, but did not glance round as he entered the room.

"You wished to speak to me, sir?" asked Frithiof.

"Yes, when I have finished this letter. You can wait," said Mr. Horner ungraciously.

He waited quietly, thinking to himself how different was the manner both of Mr. Boniface and of his son, who were always as courteous to their employes as to their customers, and would have thought themselves as little justified in using such a tone to one of the men as of employing the slave whip.

Mr. Horner, flattering himself that he was producing an impression and emphasising the difference between their respective positions, finished his letter, signed his name with a flourish characteristic of his opinion of himself, then swung round his chair and glanced at Frithiof.

"Mr. Boniface left no instructions as to whether you were to attend as usual at St. James's Hall to-night," he began. "But since no one else is used to the work I suppose there is no help for it."

He paused, apparently expecting some rejoinder, but Frithiof merely stood there politely attentive.

"Since you know the work, and are used to it, you had better attend as usual, for I should be vexed if any hitch should occur in the arrangements. But understand, pray, that I strongly disapprove of your remaining in our employ at all, and that it is only out of necessity that I submit to it, for I consider you unfit to mix with respectable people."

Whatever the Norwegian felt, he managed to preserve a perfectly unmoved aspect. Mr. Horner, who wanted to stir him into indignant expostulation, was sorely disappointed that his remarks fell so flat.

"I see you intend to brazen it out," he said crushingly. "But you don't deceive me. You may leave the room, and take good care that all the arrangements to-night are properly carried out."

"Yes, sir," said Frithiof, with the quietness of one who knows that he remains master of the situation. But afterwards, when he was once more in the shop, the insults returned to his mind with full force, and lay rankling there for many a day to come. Owing to the concert, his release came a little sooner than usual, and it was not much after seven when Sigrid heard him at the door. His face frightened her; it looked so worn and harassed.

"You will have time for some supper?" she asked pleadingly.

"No," he said, passing by her quickly, "I am not hungry, and must change my clothes and be off again."

"He might fancy some coffee," said Sigrid to herself. "Quick, Swanhild, run and get it ready while I boil the water. There is nothing like strong *café noir* when one is tired out."

Perhaps it did him some good; and the glimpse of his home certainly cheered him, yet, nevertheless, he was almost ready that night to give up everything in despair.

Physical exhaustion had dulled the glow of inner comfort that had come to him on the previous day. In his miserable depression all his old doubts assailed him once more? Was there any rule of justice after all? Was there anything in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, but cruel lust of power, and an absolute indifference to suffer-

ing? His old hatred against those who succeeded once more filled his heart, and though at one time he had felt curious to see Donati, and had heard all that Cecil had to say in favour of the Italian's courage and unselfishness, yet now, in his bitterness of soul, he began to hate the man merely because of his popularity. "I detest these conceited, set-up idols of the public," he thought to himself. "When all men speak well of a fellow it is time to suspect him. His goodness and all the rest of it is probably all calculation—a sort of advertisement!"

The architects of most English music-halls have scant regard for the comfort of the *artistes*. It often used to strike Frithiof as a strange thing that in the Albert Hall, singers whose health and strength were of priceless value, had to wait about in draughty, sloping passages, on uncomfortable chairs, while at St. James's Hall they had only the option of marching up and down a cold, stone staircase to the cloak-room between every song, or of sitting in the dingy little den opening on to the platform-steps—a den which resembles a family pew in a meeting-house. Here, sitting face to face on hard benches, were ranged to-night many of the first singers of the day. There was Sardoni, the good-natured English tenor and composer. There was Mme. Sardoni-Borelli, with her noble and striking face and manner; besides a host of other celebrities, all the more dear to the audience because for years and years they had been giving their very best to the nation. But Carlo Donati had not yet arrived, and Mr. Horner kept glancing anxiously through the glass doors on to the staircase in hopes of catching sight of the great baritone. Frithiof lived through it all like a man in a dream, watched a young English tenor who was to make his first appearance that night, saw him walking to and fro in a tremendous state of nervousness, heard the poor fellow sing badly enough, and watched him plunge down the steps again, amid the very faint applause of the audience. Next came the turn of Mme. Sardoni-Borelli. Her husband handed her the song she was to sing, she gave some directions to the accompanist as to the key in which she wanted it played, and mounted the platform with a composed dignity that contrasted curiously with the manner of the *débutant* who had preceded her. Mr. Horner turned to Frithiof at that moment.

"Go and see whether Signor Donati has come," he said. "His song is next on the programme."

"Ah," said Sardoni, with a smile, "he is such a tremendous fellow for home, he never comes a moment too soon, and at the theatre often runs it even closer than this. He is the quickest dresser I ever knew, though, and is never behind time."

Frithiof made his way to the cloak-room, and, as he walked through the narrow room leading to it, he could distinctly hear the words of someone within. The voice seemed familiar to him.

"Badly received? Well, you only failed because of nervousness. In your second song you will be more used to things, and you will see, it will go much better."

"But *you* surely can never have had the same difficulty to struggle with?" said the young tenor, who, with a very downcast face, stood talking to the newly-arrived baritone.

"Never!" exclaimed the other, with a laugh which rang through the room, "Ask Sardoni! He'll tell you of my first appearance."

Then, as Frithiof gave his message, the speaker turned round and revealed to the Norwegian that face which had fascinated him so strangely just before his illness—a face not only beautiful in outline and colouring, but full of an undefined charm, which made all theories as to the conceit and objectionableness of successful men fall to the ground.

"Thank you," he said, bowing in reply; "I will come down at once." Then, turning again to the *débutant* with a smile, "You see, through failing to get that *encore* that you ought to have deserved, you have nearly made me behind time. Never mind, you will get a very hearty one in the second part to make up. Come down with me, won't you. It is far better fun in that family pew below than up here. Clinton Cleve is here, isn't he? Have you been introduced to him?"

The young man replied in the negative; Frithiof perceived that the idea had cheered him up wonderfully, and knew that a word from the veteran tenor might be of great use to a beginner.

"I'll introduce you," said Donati as they went down the stairs. Frithiof held open the swing-doors for them and watched with no small curiosity the greeting between Donati and the other *artistes*. His manner was so very simple that it was hard to realise that he was indeed the man about whom all Europe was raving; but nevertheless he had somehow brought a sort of new atmosphere into the place, and even Mr. Horner seemed

conscious of this, for he was less fidgety and fussy than usual, and even seemed willing to keep in the background. There was a hearty greeting to Madame Sardoni as she came down the steps and a brisk little conversation in the interval; then, having wrapped her shawl about her again, talking brightly all the while, Donati picked up his music and stepped on to the platform. It was only then that Frithiof realised how great was his popularity, for he was greeted rapturously, and certainly he well merited the thunder of applause which broke forth again at the close of a song which had been given with unrivalled delicacy of expression and with all the charm of his wonderful voice. For the time Frithiof forgot everything; he was carried far away from all consciousness of disgrace and wretchedness, far away from all recollection of Mr. Horner's presence; he could only look in astonishment and admiration at the singer, who stood laughing and talking with Sardoni, periodically mounting the platform to bow his acknowledgments to the audience, who still kept up their storm of applause. When at length he had convinced them that he did not intend to sing again, he began to talk to Clinton Cleve, and soon had won for the young *débutant* a few minutes' kindly talk with the good-natured old singer who, though he had been the idol of the British public for many years, had

not forgotten the severe ordeal of a first appearance. The young tenor brightened visibly, and when he sang again acquitted himself so well that he won the *encore* which Donati had prophesied.

All went smoothly until, early in the second part, the Italian baritone was to sing a song with violin obligato. By some unlucky accident Frithiof forgot to place the music-stand for the violinist; and perceiving this as soon as they were on the platform, Donati himself brought it forward and put it in position. It was but a trifling occurrence, but quite sufficient to rouse Mr. Horner. When the singer returned he apologised to him profusely, and turned upon Frithiof with a rebuke, the tone of which made Donati's eyes flash.

"Pray do not make so much of it," he said with a touch of dignity in his manner. Then returning again from one of his journeys to the platform, and noticing the expression of Frithiof's face, he paused to speak to him for a moment before returning to give the *encore* that was emphatically demanded. It was not so much what he said as his manner of saying it that caused Frithiof's face to brighten, and brought a frown to James Horner's brow.

"It is merely my duty to enlighten Signor Donati," said the little man to himself—"merely my duty!"

CULROSS.

By S. REID.



Old Cedar in Abbey Garden.

IN the numerous small towns and villages which line the Fifeshire shore of the Firth of Forth, a wide field of interest offers itself to the artist and the antiquary. Protected in a great measure by its peculiar geographical position from the chances of war and pillage, which previous to the union afflicted so continually the more southern portion of Scotland, the kingdom of Fife enjoyed a little-disturbed prosperity, and boasted an advanced civilisation.

For this latter, much is owing to the constant and easy intercourse between its sea-board towns and villages, and their foreign neighbours of France and Holland. Traces of these friendly relations are still very evident in the numerous fine ecclesiastical buildings, charmingly-designed bell-towers, and other erections of the kind, to which the shores of Fife owe so much of their artistic attraction.

There is an old-world coziness and a warmth and richness of colour about most of these small settlements, which does much to compensate for their often very exposed positions, and seems an enduring protest against, and defiance of, their ancient enemy the east wind. In attempting to translate into black and white a few of the most topographically-interesting studies made during an extended sojourn in the



A Culross Street.

quaint little town which forms the subject of this paper, the impossibility of conveying this peculiar charm of rich and varied colour makes itself seriously felt. One misses the sharp yet beautifully harmonious contrast of red roof and blue water, of fresh, deep greenery and white-washed gables, and the ever-changing tints of a breezy, east-coast sky, which blend with while they dominate all.

The "Ancient and Royal Burgh" of Culross is situated in that detached part of Perthshire bordering the Firth of Forth, and separated from the major portion of the county by the parishes of Saline in Fife and of Clackmannan in the county of that name. Sailing up the Firth, after passing the narrow neck of Queensferry, and leaving Charleston, and a little farther on the pier of Crombie Point to the right, we get our first view of the broad sweep of Culross Bay, with the snugly-sheltered little town deeply set in its wooded banks, and crowned by the remains of its ancient abbey. A mile or more from the shore stand the ruins of what looks like an ancient castle or monastery. Whether standing on its slips of rock, or rising sheer from the water itself, according to the state of the tide at the time, these ruins, known by the name of Preston Island, are always striking and picturesque, and it is with a feeling of something akin to regret that, in reply to one's eager inquiry, one receives the

invariable answer, "Oh, it's only an old salt-works!" This is a "come-down," and it takes a little time to recover from a vague sensation of having been imposed upon. But the history of Preston Island is interesting enough in its own way.

From being perpetually *en évidence* as a picturesque factor in the Firth-ward view, it may fairly be included among the attractive features of Culross, so its story may as well be told now.

Previous to Sir Robert Preston's accession to the neighbouring estate of Valleyfield, the island was only a somewhat higher platform at the eastern end of the long reef of rocks which extends across the mouth of Culross Bay and parallel with the shore. Tempted by the promising seams of coal which here crop to the surface, Sir Robert, with much difficulty and at considerable expense, sunk a shaft, erected an engine-house and dwellings for his workmen, and brought fresh water from the shore in submerged pipes. Though the life led by the workers must have been at the best but a dismal one, and their troubles plentiful during stormy weather, operations were begun and persevered in for several years. But a terrible explosion of fire-damp took place, and a number of lives were lost, whereupon the enterprise was finally abandoned, the projector having lost, it is said, about £30,000 over the affair. Subsequently the place was

used for the manufacture of salt by distillation.

The inhabitants of the half-ruined but solidly-built tenements were a wild and untutored people, leading a semi-gipsy life, and varying their legitimate distillations with the more profitable and attractive one of whisky—an operation to which the isolated position of the settlement lent exceptionally tempting facilities; so much so indeed was this the case, that it was shrewdly suspected that of the two the latter formed the more important branch of industry. Many are the stories told of the plots and counter-machinations of the Preston islanders and the officers of Excise, but in the end of course the law proved triumphant, and now the only tenants of what remains of the ruined buildings are the crows and the sea-mews.

Approaching Culross from the water the stranger cannot fail to be impressed by the particularly cozy and well-protected appearance of the little town, nestling as it does in the hollow of its own orchard-clad slopes, topped by the towers of its abbey church and mansion-house, and with the glow of warm red roofs against a background of abundant greenery. So closely do the trees border the water's edge, that the approach by road is for some distance a complete avenue, through which one obtains only now and then a peep of the general features of the place. In the open space called the Sand Haven, and facing what is left of the old pier, stands the town hall, a plain and substantial-looking building, with its entrance-door on the first floor, and approached by a double flight of steps. It is rendered picturesque by reason of its tall and charmingly-proportioned bell-tower, square, and of finely-dressed stone, surmounted by an elegant bell-shaped roof, in which a suggestion of grace and of sturdy strength have been happily combined. The building itself dates from 1626, but the tower was added in 1783. The first floor contains the council chamber, and a room formerly known as the "Debtors' Room," now occupied by the town's officer. The ground story was used as a prison, and known as the "Laigh Tolbooth." Another place of confinement, the "High Tolbooth," is situated in the top story of the building, under the steep-pitched roof, dimly lighted through the slates. In this dreary, fireless loft, close to suffocation in summer, and correspondingly cold in winter, were confined the unfortunate women accused of practising the black art. Possibly the absence of a chimney was con-

sidered advisable, in view of their supposed predilection for that means of exit. In front of the town hall stands one of those stone platforms known as a "Tron," upon which commodities were weighed.

Almost behind the town hall, in a lane known as the "Colonel's Close," at the north-west corner of the Sand Haven, stand two old buildings enclosed within a courtyard. One is certain to be attracted to them by the glimpse of weather-worn carvings crowning the row of dormer windows visible above the high enclosing wall, and is equally certain to be informed that this is the "Palace of Culross." There is no authentic proof, however, that the houses were ever in any way associated with royalty, the name having probably originated in a mistaken interpretation of the words "Palatium, or Great Lodging," employed with reference to these buildings in the ancient title-deeds. But it pleases the natives to speak of the place as the "Palace," and as such it will probably continue to beguile the stranger while the walls hold together.

Of the two houses, one bears the date 1597, and the initials G.B., from its founder, the great George Bruce; the other is dated 1611, and shows the initials S.G.B., having been erected after he had received the honour of knighthood. Both houses are now much dilapidated, the recent patching being as painfully obvious as the proverbial new additions to the Irishman's coat—they threaten to obliterate the original fabric.

But it is the interior of these houses which constitutes their chief interest, the principal apartment of each being adorned with a quaintly painted ceiling. These ceilings are coved, and the material on which the paintings are executed consists of thin boards. The latter are much decayed in places, and here and there time and damp have obliterated the design entirely, but much remains that is wonderfully fresh and vivid. In the older house the designs are of an allegorical description—Ulysses and the Sirens, Fortune and her Wheel, &c., each having attached a moral or explanatory sentence in black letter. The same house contains a small room with a vaulted roof and a heavy iron door, doubtless the muniment-room or safe of the mansion. The painted ceiling in the more recent house is less interesting, consisting merely of somewhat rudely traced geometrical designs.

At the eastern end of the Colonel's Close, and almost behind the town hall, is a narrow street or lane leading upwards to the open

space in which stands the town's "Cross." Of this the basement only is ancient, the upper part having been re-erected in 1819. Facing the "Cross" stands the ancient tenement known as the "Study," having at one end a square tower. In this is a winding staircase which gives access to two good-sized rooms, now used as workshops. The lower of these is lined with oak panelling, beautifully carved, much of it still in excellent preservation. It bears the date 1633, which date, however, probably only applies to the panelling itself. The second room is on the same floor but in the other portion of the house. In the wall which forms the northern boundary of both rooms is a row of arched recesses of hewn stone, supposed to have contained book-shelves. They are more likely, however, to have been constructed as safes or buffets for the storage of plate and other valuables—a "gentleman's complete library," in the days when the house was built, being by no means the bulky affair it has since become, even in the rare instances where it existed at all.

It is more probable that the name of the "Study," by which the building has come to be generally known, has been derived, not from these recesses and their supposed uses, but from a curious little room at the very top of the square corner tower. Externally this forms a prominent and picturesque object, projecting as it does some inches over the line of the lower portion of its walls, and commanding an extensive prospect from its deep-set little windows, from the Forth at Queensferry on one side to the Carse of Falkirk on the other. The room is a small one, about 9 feet square and 7 feet high, but contrives to accommodate a fire-place and three windows.

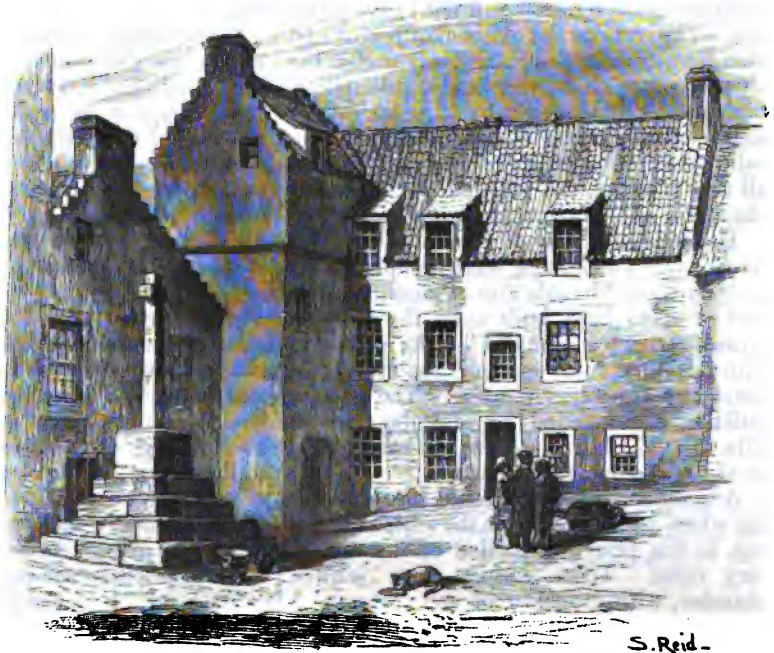
It is entered from the spiral staircase by a smaller and still more acutely spiral one of its own.

One can readily accept this room as the ideal study of an alchemist or astrologer, or even of a more modern philosopher of the Teufelsdröckh school, so admirably retired is it, and yet so excellently adapted for the exercise of a quietly contemplative observation.

With regard to the outside of the building, it is to be regretted that from a "colour" point of view its charm for the artist has been seriously interfered with by a recent *whitewashing*—forgive the bull—containing probably an admixture of soot, the result being an unpleasant bluish tint, utterly out of harmony with its lovely old red tiles, and indeed with everything else about it, which is the way with ugly colour generally.

The adjoining house has a picturesque projecting window on the ground-floor, over which, in sharply-cut letters, runs the following Greek inscription: *Ο ΘΕΟΣ ΙΠΟΝΟΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΙΠΟΝΟΗΣΕΙ* ("God provideth and will provide.")

In the little street leading from the Cross downwards to the Back Causeway, stands the old-fashioned hotel, the Dundonald Arms, into the hands of whose excellent hostess the



The "Study" and the "Cross."

S. Reid.

hungry traveller may with every confidence commit himself. There is an old house nearly opposite in which, it is said, the celebrated Robert Leighton, Bishop of Dunblane, resided on the occasion of his official visitations to this portion of his diocese.

On climbing the steep street leading to the breezy height from which the monastery ruins, and the tower of the abbey church, look down on Firth and town, an occasional pause on the way up may be both natural and expedient, but until the open space in front of the manse is reached, there is little of a view to reward the backward glance, owing to the high garden walls which enclose the path on either side. Having reached the point of vantage just referred to, however, one is rewarded by the sight of the upper portion of a remarkably fine cedar-tree rising above the lofty wall of the abbey garden. This, with its background of sail-flecked water, may, should one be of an imaginative turn, prove vaguely reminiscent of the blue Mediterranean, or of anything in fact that is opposed to one's ideas of what is characteristically Scotch.

Turning towards the monastery ruins, and what is left of the abbey church, they are apt to appear at first sight a somewhat hopeless jumble of old and new, of restoration, addition, misapplication, and demolition, which words indeed may be left to describe what they, like so many other architectural mementoes of the past still left to us, really are. The story is the old one, of rapine and ruin first, then neglect and decay under the slow march of time: the steady, quiet pilfering of stone by stone for building materials; then sudden and wrong-headed zeal for so-called restoration, and the final bursting of all that is left of the poor old bottle under the strain of a too-vigorous rejuvenation.

The present Abbey of Culross must, with its monastery buildings, have occupied in its entirety a considerable area of ground. It is said to have been built upon the site of a former structure, occupied by the primitive Christian missionary St. Serf, but of this, of course, no trace now remains. The present building was founded by Malcolm, Earl of Fife, in 1217, but no account has been left to us of its progress or completion.

Adjoining the present manse, the materials for which were taken from the ancient building, is the principal portion of the monastery ruins. These consist of a vaulted chamber, with groined roof and arches, probably the great hall of the monastery. Behind this is a passage leading through a Nor-

man doorway into the cloister court. At the entrance of the hall a staircase leads to an upper story, now little more than a bare roof open to the sky, but which had formerly contained the dormitories of the monks. These, by the way, belonged to the order of Cistercians or White Friars, first established as a religious order in the year 1098, by Robert, Abbot of Molesme, in the diocese of Langres, in France. They owned over thirteen monasteries in Scotland.

The southern end of the great hall has been entirely demolished. Beneath it, and extending to unknown distances, there were formerly a series of subterranean chambers or vaults, which are now almost completely obliterated, or choked with fallen *débris*. But tradition still keeps alive the familiar tale of the blind piper, who with his dog entered one of these mysterious passages one fine summer day, and was heard playing his pipes beneath the grave-yard of the West Kirk nearly a mile inland. The dog returned weak and famished, but to this day its master has not reappeared. And even yet, if we may further credit the most recent version of the story, the sound of the lost piper's music may be heard on a still summer's evening, by any patient listener who may care to lay his cheek among the deep turf of the old grave-yard, the illusion being presumably heightened by the accidental proximity of an industrious bumble-bee.

Immediately facing the iron gateway stands the abbey tower, with its interesting Norman doorway, giving access to the porch of what is now the parish church of Culross. The roof of the porch is a groined vault with an opening in the centre. On the inner wall, above the entrance doorway, is sculptured a winged figure bearing a shield, on which may be deciphered in old English characters the letters A. M., probably standing for Ave Maria. Above the basement is a bare apartment, used in former days as a place of detention for offenders against ecclesiastical law. Above this is the clock-room and belfry, and above all a roof with a bartizan, from which a superb view may be obtained on clear days from Ben Lomond to the Bass. The belfry contains two bells, a larger and a smaller. Of the former the material is very ancient, but becoming worn out it was in 1659 sent to Rotterdam and recast. The other was put up in 1685.

With regard to the summit of the tower, it had been, previous to 1824, surmounted by one of those picturesque erections, com-

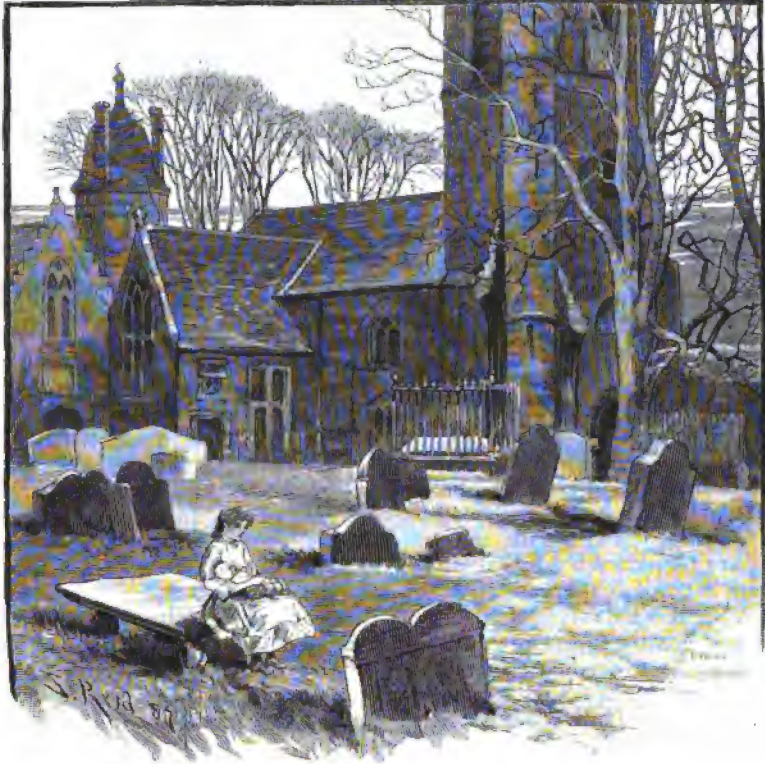
mon in old church towers, popularly known as a "kae-house," from its being a favourite resort of the "kaes" or jackdaws. Now, alas! it is a structure of the well-known "inverted billiard-table order," regarding which it may be best to preserve an eloquent silence.

The interior of the church contains little to interest the artist or antiquary, beyond a couple of Gothic arches and corresponding pillars which form the entrance to

the north and south transepts. A fine Early English window at the eastern end of the church is entirely blocked up by the gallery and staircase.

But the interior of the church, if not beautiful, has the merit of being comfortable, a condition of things which does not seem to have obtained till after its remodelling in 1824. Previous to that time the bare beams and rafters of the roof were visible high above the second of the two tiers of "lafts," which were piled one above the other, and on these rafters perched by right of long use and wont innumerable pigeons. These greatly disturbed the worshippers by their incessant cooing, and by other evidences of their presence still more distracting, so that we find the former on one occasion presenting a petition to the Kirk Session for liberty to erect a canopy for their better protection.

At the end of the southern extremity of the church, on the outside, is a graceful pointed arch and a portion of another, all that remains of what had once been a series bordering the eastern side of the cloister court.



Culross Abbey.

Outside the church, on the north side, is the family vault of the Bruce family, latterly adapted as his own mausoleum by Sir Robert Preston, on his becoming possessed of the Culross estates. Against the wall, opposite the door, is a very interesting monument in alabaster, to the memory of Sir George Bruce. The knight is represented in a reclining position, while in front of him kneel diminutive figures supposed to represent his children. These latter, from the remarkable difference in scale between them and the central figure, are locally known as "the babies." The monument reaches nearly to the summit of the vault, and is, it is said, a close reproduction of that of Edward, Lord Kinloss, Sir George's elder brother, in the Roll's Chapel, Chancery Lane, London.

On the south wall of this vault, over a projection resembling an altar, is inserted a brass plate bearing the following inscription:—

FUIMUS.

"Near this spot is deposited the heart of Edward, Lord Bruce of Kinloss, who was slain in a bloody duel,

The motto of the Bruce family.

fought in 1633, with Sir Edward Sackville, afterwards Earl of Dorset, near Bergen-op-Zoom, in Holland, to which country the combatants repaired, the one from England, the other from Paris, for the determined purpose of deciding their quarrel by the sword. The body of Lord Bruce was interred in the great church of Bergen-op-Zoom, where among the ruins caused by the siege in 1747, are still to be seen the remains of a monument erected to his memory. A tradition, however, existing that his heart had been sent over to his native land, and was buried near this place, a search was made by Sir Robert Preston of Valleyfield in the year 1808, when it was found embalmed in a silver case of foreign workmanship, secured between two flat and excavated stones clasped with iron, and was again carefully replaced and securely deposited in the spot where it was discovered.

"For the particulars of the challenge and fatal duel, in which the Lord Bruce was killed on the spot, declining to accept his life from his antagonist, who was also dangerously wounded, see Lord Clarendon's '*History of the Rebellion*,' B. I. and the narrative published in Nos. 129 and 133 of the '*Guardian*.'"

The mansion which has now succeeded to the title of Culross Abbey closely adjoins the eastern side of the churchyard, and is believed to have been also in great part built out of the materials of the old abbey. It is said to have been designed by Inigo Jones, though there is no positive proof that this was the case. The whole style of architecture, however, is greatly superior to anything likely to have been produced in Scotland at the time it was built. The building was erected by the first Lord Kinloss, King James's favourite counsellor and Master of the Rolls, in 1608. It is a three-story building of the Renaissance or Italian order, flanked by turrets at the east and west extremities of its south front, and commands a fine prospect. The architraves of the windows on the first floor and of those on the upper stories of the turrets bear the initials L.E.B., D.M.B., denoting respectively Lord Edwin Bruce of Kinloss, and his wife Dame Magdalen Bruce, a daughter of Alexander Clerk, of Balbirnie. On the east gable are two superimposed dates 1608 and 1670. The first refers to the original portion of the edifice erected by Lord Kinloss, the second to the third story added by Alexander, second Earl of Kincardine. The entrance is on the north side, but the principal rooms face towards the south. On the first floor is a suite of rooms connected by a stately gallery. One of these rooms was, in Lord Dundonald's time, hung with Gobelins tapestry and known as the "King's room," from a tradition of King James having occupied it on the occasion of his visit to Scotland in 1617.

The gardens of the abbey, though now not of very great extent, are still very beautiful, having all the quaint rich look of a

garden which has been such from time immemorial. Many of the trees, including the fine cedar already referred to, have the appearance of great age, some of them indeed being in all probability as old as the days of the monks. Here, on these well-sheltered slopes, facing the sunshine and fended from every rude wind, blow the earliest primroses and the first wild flowers of the year. Here too, are still found rare plants, the *Osmunda regalis* (royal or flowering fern), the *Botrychium lunare* or moonwort, and the still rarer *Narcissus pseudo-narcissus* or wild daffodil, which has long almost entirely vanished from our fields.

Although sloping steeply almost to the water's edge, the gardens of the abbey, and the long succession of other gardens which rise behind the almost unbroken line of cottages bordering the shore from Culross to Low Valleyfield and Newmills, are little subject to the devastations of sudden floods, from which the dwellers in the neighbouring Devon valley, at the foot of the Ochills, have of late suffered so greatly. Though nearly every garden has its tiny stream, these are mostly little more than springs having their origin in the immediate neighbourhood, and not, as is the case in the Devon valley, high up among the hills; so that destruction from sudden rainfalls is of extremely rare occurrence. Yet the storm of October, 1886, will long be remembered in the district, during one afternoon of which month two and a-half inches of rain fell over a considerable local area, carrying away garden walls and standing corn, and flooding the low-lying cottages. It was on this occasion that one good woman, in describing her experiences, graphically assured me that "the vera pitaties were soomin' in at the back door and oot at the front."

At the southern extremity of the abbey grounds, and closely adjoining the public road, are the ruins of St. Mungo's Kirk or Chapel, founded by Archbishop Blackadder in 1503, on the reputed locality of the discovery of St. Thenew and the newly-born St. Mungo by the venerable St. Serf. Only the merest traces of a building now remain.

Leaving the neighbourhood of the abbey, it may be worth while to make a short pilgrimage of some three-quarters of a mile westward, on the old road leading through the moor to Kincardine, for the purpose of visiting what is now known as the "West Kirk" of Culross, but which, previous to the Reformation, was used as the parish kirk. This is a small building, measuring



The High Terrace.

from east to west 68 feet, and having a breadth of about 18 feet. Little is known of its early history, but it probably dates its origin from the first division of Scotland into parishes in the reign of David I. in the twelfth century. The architecture is a rude description of early Saxon. The only parts remaining entire are the east and south walls; these, with two narrow windows and two large stones bearing traces of sculptured crosses, also a low primitive doorway on the eastern side, are all that is left of the old building. The peaceful grave-yard has a charm of its own, however, and is worth a visit for its own sake. Here the beetle booms and the wild bee hums through the sleepy hours, but there is little else to disturb the quiet tenants of the moss-covered graves, whose very names the elements have rendered indecipherable and the lichen blotted out.

But it is possible to have too much of "skulls and tombs and epitaphs," and of musty antiquities generally; and after all it is not in these, but in its present wealth of living, breezy life, and colour, that the principal charm of Culross lies. Looking down from the high ground behind the town, over the limitless sweep of firth and distant shore to the great hills lying so quietly in the far-off haze, or watching in the last glory of a summer sunset the red roofs glowing to russet and orange against the blue water, one is contented to forget for awhile the dead past, and accept with thankful heart the good things of the living present. Even the companionable cawing of the rooks in the abbey elms has a soothing property in it at the

close of a long day of labour in the open air; these birds, whatever may be their evil qualities, setting us an excellent example in the way of early hours.

And it is at such an hour, on such an evening, and from the high terrace overhanging the sloping gardens behind the town-hall, that we may most fittingly take leave of the place. As yet the hand of modern "improvement" is but little felt to interfere with the quaint old-world feeling of this bird's-eye view of clustering roofs. Here and there a slated roof, or, alas! a red one that has been newly tarred, grates upon the artistic eye by its patch of "bad colour," but the general tone of the place is warm and mellow as an October apple, and the long clouds of blue smoke from firesides where the evening meal is preparing, coil and wreath themselves like a filmy net, to bind and blend into one harmonious whole the town and the blue waters beyond.

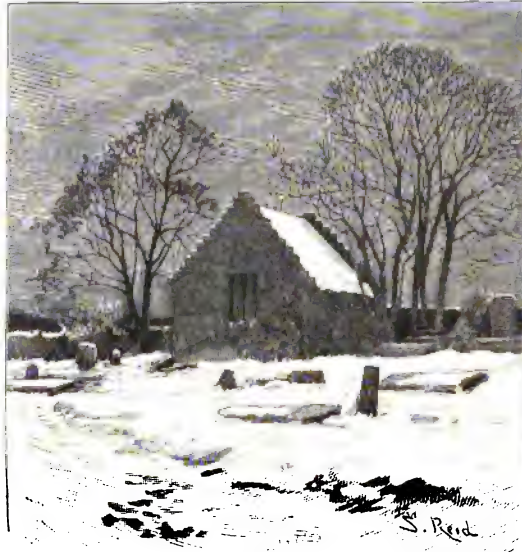
Lingering on the terrace, one is tempted to moralise on the various tides of time and change which, wave after wave, have passed across this out-of-the-way little burgh and left it stranded as it now lies, with little more than memories of its past prosperity to cling to.

But within the space of a brief paper such as this there is no room for more than a few words about one, possibly the most important of its sources of former prosperity—I refer to its ancient guild of Girdle-makers.

At a time when the staple food of the country consisted of oaten cakes it will

readily be understood that the manufacture of the "girdles," or iron plates upon which these were baked, formed a very important industry, and that the monopoly of such manufacture by one small body of craftsmen would be a very valuable privilege indeed. Such a monopoly the girdlesmiths of Culross for many years enjoyed, and so far as the excellent quality of their wares is concerned they seem to have entirely deserved it. In the year 1599 James VI. visited Culross, and there witnessed the process of girdle-making. He was thereupon graciously pleased to confer on the girdlesmiths of the burgh, by letters patent, the sole right of manufacturing such articles, though it is said that in doing so he merely confirmed an older charter already conferring the privilege. In the general prosperity which marked the condition of Culross from the dissolution of the monasteries to the commencement of the great civil war, the girdle-makers' craft seems to have shared largely, in common with the coal, boat-building, and iron trades.

The process of making a "Culross girdle" seems to have been somewhat as follows. The master smith chose a lump of iron, and while he handled the tongs, two sturdy apprentices wielded the hammers, beating the mass into the form desired, hoop and girdle being all in one piece; the test of a perfect article being that when finished it should ring like a bell, or like one of those Eastern gongs with which we are familiar, and which are manufactured in a somewhat similar fashion. Indeed, to this day, to "gar yer lugs ring like a Culross girdle," is a favourite threat of the local mother towards her recalcitrant offspring.



The West Kirk.

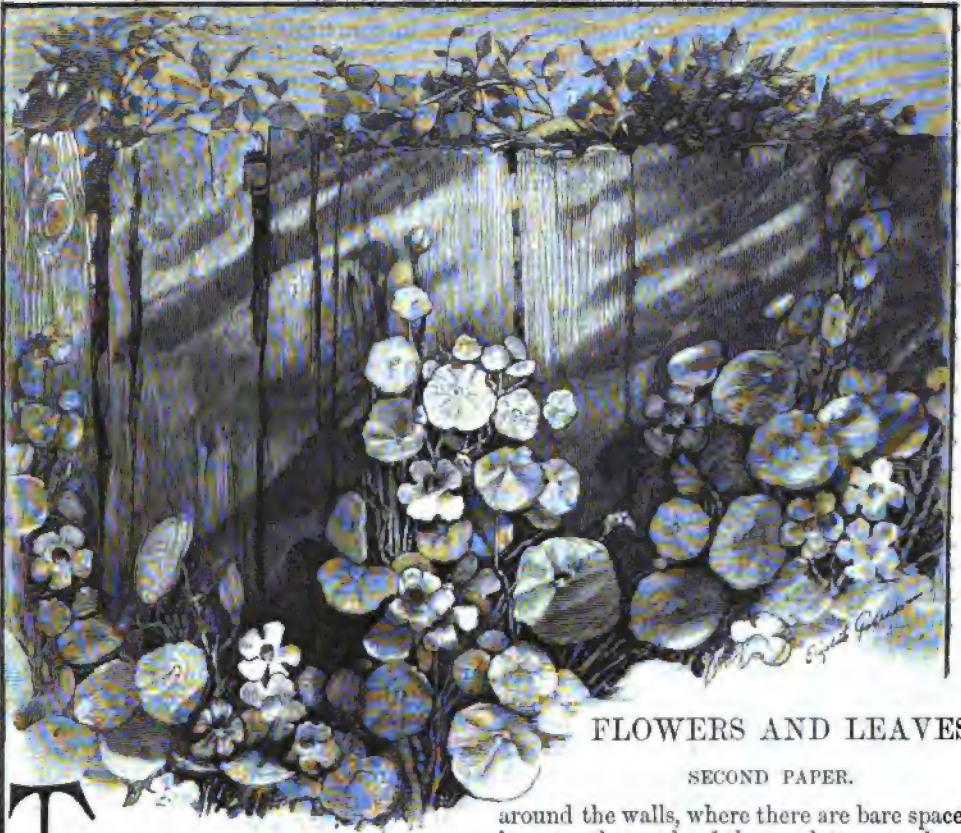
Sir Walter Scott, in his "Heart of Midlothian," makes Madge Wildfire say with reference to this subject:—"The hammermen of Edinburgh are, to my mind, afore the world for making stancheons, ring-bolts, fetter-bolts, bars, and locks, and they arena that bad at girdles for carcakes neither, though the Cu'ross hammermen have the gree for that. My mother had ance a bonny Cu'ross girdle, and I thought to have baked carcakes on it for my puir wean that's dead and gane nae fair way."

For a long and exhaustive account of the rise and progress of the Culross girdle-smiths; their gallant fight for their particular privileges with their neighbours, the "folk

of Valleyfield," who infringed their rights; and the long struggle protracted over more than half a century against the rest of the world in general, and the final extinction of the trade under the cheap and plentiful output of cast-iron plates by the Carron iron-works in 1760, the curious reader is referred to Mr. David Beveridge's excellent work on Culross and its neighbourhood.*

But except from the humble way-side smithy, the sound of the hammer no longer breaks the silence of the summer evening; no smoke save that of the domestic hearth now pollutes the air of the little town; and as one by one even these indications of life cease, and the stars look down upon the clustered roofs, one feels a sense of gratitude that such a quiet backwater of the past has still been spared to us, as is offered by this "Ancient and Royal Burgh" of Culross.

* "Culross and Tulliallan, or Perthshire on Forth, its History and Antiquities." Published by Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. To this interesting work the writer gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness for many of the historical facts recorded in the foregoing paper.



FLOWERS AND LEAVES.

SECOND PAPER.

THE great Indian cress, or nasturtium, is quite an old favourite in gardens, having been introduced from Peru in 1686. As shown in our illustrative head-piece it is of climbing habit; and that it is one of the most usually met with of all cottage garden flowers is not alone due to its beauty, but in a great measure to the ease with which its seeds germinate and the facility with which it attaches itself to fence or pillar, trellis-work, lattice, or bushy growths—indeed, to almost anything affording it support and shelter. A friend of mine in town has what he calls a “wild garden” every year, in which this plant plays a very important part. His method is simply this. Every March he has his garden deeply dug and well manured, and he then sows seeds of common maize or Indian corn, and tall-growing sunflowers of various kinds, and in wider circles among these he sows seeds of *Tropæolum majus*, and also its still prettier relative, the “canary creeper” (*T. aduncum*), sweet-peas and convolvulus, or “morning glory,” while

around the walls, where there are bare spaces, he sows the seeds of the scarlet-runner bean. Thus, at the outlay of a few shillings yearly for labour, manure, and seeds, there results a garden full of luxuriant growth and beauty—a garden in which my friend spends many happy hours during the summer evenings, and which is fresh and gay, and enjoyable to his wife and children at all times.

The “great Indian cress” was at one time a source of great interest to the botanical world, since no less a personage than the daughter, or niece—I forget exactly which it was—of the great Linnæus saw its flowers emitting electric-like flashes or sparks one evening as she was walking in their garden at Upsala. So far as I know the phenomenon still remains unexplained, so that those who grow this flower might amuse themselves by discovering for themselves if the observation is true, and, if so, to what peculiar conditions the light-emitting power is due. Nasturtium seeds make a capital pickle with vinegar, and they are not unfrequently used as an excellent and convenient substitute for capers in homely cookery. Another species of *Tropæolum* (*T. tuberosum*)

was introduced years ago, and recommended as a substitute for the potato; but nothing came of it in that way, although the plant is often grown in gardens.

One of the most gorgeous of all these plants, however, is the so-called "Flame nasturtium" (*T. speciosum*), a plant commonly met with in Scotland in the utmost luxuriance and beauty, growing in gardens, apparently without any care or attention; while in English gardens it is often found to be as capricious and as obstinate as it is beautiful. We have seen it in Scotland and North Ireland covering fences, walls, and palings, with one solid sheet of its vivid scarlet or crimson red flowers, set off here and there by a glimpse of its refreshing green leaves, tender in colour as those of a tropical maiden-hair fern. The flowers are succeeded by little clusters of berries, which change from pea-green, through all shades of lilac purple, until they end by ripening off, and are then of the most exquisite turquoise blue colour imaginable.

Another very homely and popular flower is the so-called "Lion's Mouth" or "Snapdragon" (*Antirrhinum majus*), which is so abundant in some localities as a naturalised escape from gardens, that it is mentioned in nearly all our English floras. It is one of the earliest of all our garden flowers, being mentioned by Gerard (1597), and by John Parkinson in his celebrated folio called "Paradisus Terrestris," published in 1625. "Calf's Snout" is one of its earliest popular names, even if by no means its prettiest one. With our native "Wallflower" it is quite at home on old ruins; nay, even a heap of refuse lime rubbish, or a bank of road scrapings, may be ennobled into a flower garden, if its seeds be scattered thereon, as soon as they ripen in autumn, as the young seedlings withstand the winter's frost and flower profusely the following year.

Our illustration represents a very lovely variety of snowy whiteness, which has within the last two or three years become extremely popular in gardens where the old-fashioned flowers, the flowers of Chaucer, of Spenser, and of Shakespeare, are now appreciated almost more than are the rarest of orchids and other tropical flowers.

The "Snapdragons" are botanically first cousins to the varieties of "Toad Flax" or *Linaria*, several of which are common but beautiful weeds in our English corn-fields and walled ways. The elegant little *Linaria Cymbalaria* is often to be met with draping old walls near London; and

Linaria vulgaris is by no means uncommon in corn-fields and on railway embankments on warm light soils in Surrey and elsewhere. Near Cambridge, on the warm chalk, I have seen the stubble fields in autumn yellow with this elegant little weed, and I may as well ask the question here, Why is this *Linaria vulgaris* so seldom seen in the garden? It may well serve as the type of lots of other plants—common weeds, ah! and beautiful weeds, the weeds you see on the Simplon, in the Grindelwald Valley, or high up on the Bernina Pass; common weeds, as common as the blue Alpine gentian which, as belting a whole mountain-side with ethereal blue, Ruskin has likened to the blue sash on a queen's bosom! Why is it that so many of the most common and most beautiful of all the world's wild flowers are so difficult, so impatient, of garden culture? They are like those delicate birds and animals from the tropics; do whatever you will they die. In both cases climate—the subtleties of local environment of which I spoke in my first paper—have much to do with the problem. There are other considerations, however, so far as our own native wildings are concerned; for the vulgar *linaria* is by no means the only weed that defies cultivation, but rather may serve as a representative of many other plants which invariably do so to a more or less degree. For my own part I have been more successful with the Alpine Toad Flax (*Linaria alpina*) of the glaciers than I have with this denizen of the Cambridge corn-lands and the banks of the railway.

Let us take another example. Just now, and for the past decade or so, the daffodil and its classical representative, the narcissus of Southern and Central Europe, has been the most popular hardy spring flower in English gardens. So popular is it that we have had conferences and flower shows and committees especially dedicated to this simple flower alone, by the Royal Horticultural Society of England; and specially illustrated monographs and catalogues, and reports and proceedings have been issued in connection with the vagaries of this lovely flower of the poets and of the spring. We grow six hundred varieties of narcissi in our gardens to-day, and they come to us from all parts of Europe and Western Asia, nay, even from India and Japan; but will it be believed when I say it, the native daffodil of our English fields and woodlands remains as the one most difficult of permanent cultivation in the garden. Fancy the flower that tosses its head in the meadows of

Kent, Sussex, and Devon—flowers so hardy and fearless that, as Shakespeare says, they come "before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty." Fancy, I say, this hardy wilding, that "tosses its head in sprightly dance" by the shores of Windermere, just as it did when Wordsworth embalmed its beauty in his verse, on meadow or hillside: "beside the lake beneath the trees," it is happy, and yet it pines and dies away in the rich, highly wrought, and richly-manured soil of the garden! So constant is the decadence of the wild collected bulbs of this presumably native flower, that we gardeners think of old Herrick, and sometimes re-echo his lines:

"Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon."

In alluding to daffodils as popular flowers, we may *en passant* remember that Hippocrates alludes to these flowers on account of their medicinal virtues, centuries before the Christian era. Homer is by some supposed to allude to them in his "Hymn to the Earth," and Dioscorides alludes to them as being like leeks in habit, with a lily-like flower. Even to-day in Wales one of the Gaelic names for the daffodil is equivalent to "St. Peter's leek," and the same is true in Ireland, while in Scotland the Gaelic-speaking folk allude to it as the flower with the bent head (*Lus-a-cromchinn*). After this can one wonder at Herrick's less well-known lines entitled "Divination by a Daffodil:"

"When a daffodil I see
Hanging down its head t'wards me,
Guess I may what I shall be.
First, I shall decline my head;
Secondly, I shall be dead;
Thirdly, safely buried."

Flowers are inextricably associated with the tomb, and yet in all their phases teach us to look above and beyond it in many ways. The whole life-work of plants is to transform the dead into the living, the inorganic into living beauty, into things "pleasant to the eye and good for food."

Returning for a moment, I think I may fairly say that we behave too well and too kindly to many of the world's wild flowers when we bring them into the garden, where but too often they are stifled by shelter, and very much over-fed in our deep, highly-manured soils. And this brings me to a point too often overlooked by even the best of gardeners, viz., that a manured soil is not everything; in fact there are some plants, like some people, that luxury absolutely kills, and the only thing good and suitable to their permanent welfare is judicious starva-



Lion's Mouth or Snapdragon.

tion, rather than over-feeding. There are plants that can do battle with wind, and thrive by the wayside, or on a barren, sun-burnt rock; but luxury is death to them. Of all the plants grown in gardens the rose is by general acknowledgment undoubtedly the queen. And yet nobody alive to-day knows the history of the rose; in fact even the best of us really know very little of the

origin of our oldest and most popular garden flowers. All the truly wild roses have "single" blossoms, and when the "double" varieties now so popular in English and French and American gardens first originated nobody now knows. If you peep into that learned book of De Candolle's, called "The Origin of Cultivated Plants," you will be quite surprised to find how little is known as to



Jackmann's Clematis.

the wild state of plants now most useful to us in many ways. The wild types of the onion, the banana, the wheat and rice plants, flax, and last but not least the double roses, prim-roses, pæonies, and daffodils, are absolutely

unknown to-day. Of course the botanist has his opinions, his surmises, his doubts, and his "guesses at truth," but as a matter of fact nothing is really known, because all these things seem to have been produced long, long before our printed literature began, and also before they had become invested with the scientific interest they possess for some of us to-day. No doubt "double" flowers now and then occur in nature, or as "sports" from wild species as

cultivated in the garden. They may be called beautiful "accidents," although of course nothing really is accidental, but must be the result of sure and certain natural laws, if we could only fathom and understand them. The gardeners apply the name "sport" to any aberrations that appear on the plants they cultivate, which of course acknowledges, but does not solve the mystery of their origin. Now and then people who make a speciality of roses, or fruit trees,

or vegetables, or other garden plants are surprised to find something they do not know, or have not in their collections, in quite an ordinary out-of-the-way place. This of course is what gives a zest to the wanderings of collectors generally, their life and expeditions become full of interesting potentialities, for after all the dealers cannot be everywhere, nor can they snap up everything, do as they may.

"In an article on moss-roses, *Land and Water* tells a very curious tale as to the discovery of the variety known as the White Provence, La Blanche, or Unique. Mr. Daniel Grimond, of Little Chelsea, nurseryman, was on a journey of business in the county of Norfolk, exactly a hundred and ten years ago, when, riding very leisurely along the road, he perceived a rose of great whiteness in the mill-garden. He alighted, and on close inspection discovered it to be a Provence rose. He sought an interview with the inmate of the mill, who was an elderly woman, and begged a flower, which was instantly given to him. The old lady must, no doubt, have been considerably surprised at being in turn presented with a guinea. In cutting off the flower—so runs the tale, which has been recorded by the late Mr. Henry Shailer, of Battersea Fields—Mr. Grimond cut three buds, and, on arriving at the nearest inn, he packed up the flower and sent it directly to Chelsea, addressed to his foreman, who was no other than the father of the same Mr. Shailer who now relates the story. Two of the buds grew, and in the following autumn the florist went down to Norfolk again, and bought the whole stock for five guineas. The foreman was then allowed to propagate it, and for doing so was paid five shillings a plant for three years. At the expiration of that time the plants were sold at a guinea apiece, the foreman's share of the profits amounting to three hundred pounds. Not the least pleasant part of this little 'romance of the rose' is the fact that the old lady who had been the unconscious discoverer of a grand secret in horticulture was gratified by receiving out of the proceeds of the undertaking a handsome present, consisting of a silver tankard and other plate to the value of sixty pounds."

From the rose to the clematis is a short journey for the memory to take, since both often aid and assist each other in the decoration of the cottage, the porch, the pergola, or the arch in the garden. In Berkshire and other of the southern counties, the common

Clematis vitalba, or "Traveller's Joy," is quite a feature, its great wreaths of shoots and leaves being swung hammock-like in the road-side hedges; or now and then, wood-bine-like, it actually clambers over the tops of the lowest trees. Jackmann's clematis, of a rich claret-purple hue, is one of the most commonly seen of all the garden seedlings in London gardens, scarcely a village garden or road-side cottage-porch being without its wreaths of wine-purple flowers. Our illustration shows a flower and bud of the natural size, which shows its form and contour excellently well, but gives no idea of its luxuriance as seen invested with a thousand flowers in the sunshine of an August morning. Although represented in the English flora, all the clematis now most popular for their large and showy flowers in our gardens seem to have originated as wild species in Southern Europe, or in Japan, and were improved by seed, hybridism, and selection. Of late years these flowers have become popular, and so specialists have been repaid for the trouble of rearing and improving them from seeds. Of the species most beautiful in their native or wild state, we may mention the lovely soft blue Alpine clematis, the silver-starred mountain species so lovely in May or June, and last, but not by any means the least, the dainty and fragrant Virgin's Bower clematis, which blooms in snow-wreath-like clouds of white during September and October. No garden is complete without a few at least of the very best species and varieties of clematis well planted in suitable positions.

The question of botanical names is a very important one. As some writer has well said, it is a shame to brand lovely blossoms with such atrocious bilingual or Latin names. Of course Latin names are adopted to enable botanists to understand each other all the world over; but to some of us it seems more important that all who run and labour should also be able to read and understand the names of our wild and garden flowers, which grow all around them day by day. As it is, botanical names very often disguise all natural relationships, instead of revealing them. The genus clematis, for example, really is nothing more than a branch or offshoot of the anemones or wind flowers, which have become developed into more or less woody shrubs, although, so far as the names are concerned, no one could ever tell that clematis was related to anemone, or that asparagus, convallaria, and scillas were simply different forms or developments of the lilies. The chemists

have managed to alter their nomenclature, so as to indicate in some more or less perfect manner the relationship of things alluded to, and the sooner the botanist betakes himself to a simple expressive nomenclature the better. Some of us, while awaiting a second Linnæus to rectify our now nearly obsolete system of naming, have taken to speaking of all garden plants under some simple English name. Thus, instead of *Viola odorata*, we are content to say "Sweet Violets." Most of our wild flowers, such as oxlip, cowslip, wood anemone, bluebell, haw-

thorn, blackthorn, daisy, and woodruff, have old English names, which are practically as efficient as any Latin ones can ever be; and following out this idea, in the interest of the English-speaking races, the editor of the *Garden* has for years encouraged the promulgation of popular English names for all plants and flowers that are grown and admired in English gardens. Of course, the cosmopolitan value of Latin names is fully acknowledged; but there is also a language of poetry and of common-sense



Feverfew, or Pyrethrum.



Pink Yarrow.

which has an ever-increasing sphere of usefulness, and in ordinary parlance one need not obtrude the Latin when speaking of such exquisitely lovely things as white lilies, pinks, carnations, pansies, violets, daisies, forget-me-nots, lilacs, iris, and daffodils—all names enrolled in English literature; all names almost as fresh, and homely, and expressive as the flowers themselves. As we have said, we plead for homely old-fashioned, hardy flowers, because every one, with a few square yards of garden, can grow them. No tropical orchids from Andes or Cordilleras can be more exquisite than are the various iris: the so-called Flag Iris of the out-door garden, the white Iris of Florence, the great lilac iris of Dalmatia, the "Queen of May" iris, and various sorts of the English and Spanish bulbous-rooted kinds are amongst the most easily grown and most beautiful of all flowers. It is so also with all the best narcissi or daffodils, with lilies, with carnations, with pansies or violets, with lilies, with tulips, and, in fresh country air, with the rose. Nor must the homely primroses, polyanthus, and the Alpine auricula be forgotten. The last-named plant is an anomaly, in its endurance. Coming, as it does, from Alps and Pyrenees, it is a truly Alpine flower, and yet one of the very few that can defy the smoke of the town with impunity. It sounds curious, perhaps, but it is true that better florist's auriculas have been grown amid the dust and chimney-smoke of Sheffield than anywhere else in England; and the same is true of Gesner's tulip, from the corn-fields near

Florence, which is far better grown in England than elsewhere.

Ruskin tells us to study Shelley in order to know how to use flowers, and Shakespeare to show us how to love them, and I would add that we may all peep into the late Mrs. Ewing's charming little book entitled "Mary's Meadow," in order to learn how to grow them. It is a beautiful story of a little girl who tried to make a flowery meadow more beautiful by putting plants from the garden into it, instead of doing as so many do—that is to say, robbing it of the flowers that already were there, wild and happy. It is ostensibly a book for children, but even grown-up people may glean a few ears of golden grain therein. Of all flowers, those represented by our common weeds, such as the daisy, the groundsel, and the dandelion, are perhaps the most highly developed from an evolutionary and botanical point of view, even if they are not so lovely as other plants considered lower in the social scale. Having many flowers together in a head or capitulum, they are known as composite flowers, and to this great natural order belong all our now popular marguerites and asters, chrysanthemums, marigolds, and sun-flowers, and Michaelmas daisies, the yarrows and hawk-weeds, the doricums, or "Wolf's Bane," and hundreds of other things which one need not name. Three representatives of this group are shown in our illustrations, viz., the brilliant "Corn Marigold," the "Feverfew," or Pyrethrum, and the rosy or pink-flowered Yarrow, a native plant named after

the great Greek Achilles, and considered a sovereign remedy long ago for all sorts of bruises and wounds. No garden is ever quite complete without some at least of these bright daisy flowers, or composites, which flower from early spring to latest autumn.

It has been suggested to me that a short list of the very best of hardy flowers and creepers for small town gardens would be useful, and a selection from the following

would, I think, keep a garden gay for at least eight months out of the twelve :—

Snowdrops.	Sunflowers.	"Creeping Jenny."
Crocus.	Sweet Peas.	Violas.
Narcissus.	Asters.	Michaelmas Daisies.
Tulips.	Mignonette.	Chrysanthemums.
Iris.	Dianthus.	Christmas Roses.
Lilies.	Wallflowers.	Lenten Roses.
Colchicum.	Snaydragons.	Carnations.
Wistaria.	Pansies.	Virginian Creeper.
Lilac.	Canary Creeper.	Veitch's Japan Creeper.
Musk.	Tropeolum Magnus.	Scarlet-Runner Bean.

All the above are easily grown in almost any deeply dug soil, and do not require any



Corn Marigold.

special knowledge in their after management if once well planted.

To those born with a love of the soil and its beautiful flowers, all things in the garden seem easy, but we must not forget that there are many people to whom a garden is a sort of perpetual enigma—a white elephant—and really a trouble rather than a pleasure. Such people should read Mr. Charles Dudley Warner's little book entitled "My Summer in a Garden," which treats of some of the gardener's troubles in an original and amusing

way. Another most enjoyable book—all gardeners who have not hitherto read it will be sure to enjoy—is, "A Tour Round my Garden," by Alphonse Karr, highly fraught as it is with a deep and subtle sympathy for the garden, with all its treasures of plant and bird and insect life. Most great men have had genuine sympathy with the garden and its produce from the days of Solomon to the days of Victoria; and is it not the "Prophet of the nineteenth century" who tells us, in Letter XII. of his "Fors Clavigera," that "the noblest human life was appointed to be by the cattlefold, and in the garden, and to be known as noble in the breaking of bread"?

F. W. BURBIDGE.

SICK IN THE CITY.

By ROBERT RICHARDSON.

THREE feet by two of hazy blue,
As near as the eye can measure,
I can see of the sky from where I lie,
But oh! the springs of pleasure
That streak of azure can bring a man
Who all the while is knowing,
As a-bed he lies, that the azure skies,
And the summer days are going.

This is all of the summer I'm like to know,
This and the blithe canary
Who sings for my cheer so brave and clear
Gavottes and rondos airy.
Such a masterly "brio!"—such gay roudades
Come throbbing thick and fast;
What trills and shakes the little bird takes
For the warm days come at last.

This is all the summer that's wafted down
From sky and cloud to me :—
While the folk are flocking out of town
To mountain, loch, and sea,
I am lying here in the prime o' the year,
And dreaming of uplands sweet,
With the honey of heather blent together
"With the smell of bog myrtle and peat."*

I shall not hear this passing year
The dithyramb song of the tide,
But I listen instead to the hollow tread
Of the weariful street outside.
The ceaseless beat of London's feet
Comes dreamily up to me,
Not the long cool plunge of the western wave
When the wind blows in from the sea.

All the summer I know!—nay, 'tis not so—
It were a sin unshriven
Forgetting the sweetest boon of all
Dropt straight to me from heaven.
Two women for heart of charity
Will visit my room forlorn,
And in their grace make the dusky place
Shine like the breaking morn.

They bring bright smiles and merry words,
And womanly kind looks—
Words sweeter than the song of birds
That sing by hidden brooks.
They come and bring the summer's dower,
And straight my city room
Is filled with the colour of fern and flower,
And the forest's faint perfume.

* The refrain of Mr. Andrew Lang's "Ballad of his Own Country."

They bring me spoil of brook and brake
 From lush-green Berkshire valleys,
 Buds of amethyst that the dews have kissed
 In glowing garden alleys.
 White lilies, white as the hands they fill,
 From glimmering river ledges ;
 And roses—I know where these roses grow,
 By trailing hawthorn hedges.

A spell they weave, and a peace they leave,
 A calm beyond the telling ;
 But scarce to song the thoughts belong
 That in my heart are dwelling.
 For when the thought is overwrought,
 The muse will fold her wings,
 And kindly wise will not surprise
 The heart's profoundest springs.

TRAVELLING IN CENTRAL ASIA.

M. Bonballot's Journey across the Pamir, or Roof-tree of the World.

By DR. C. J. WILLIS, AUTHOR OF "THE LAND OF THE LION AND SUN," "PERSIA AS IT IS," ETC.

FIRST PAPER.

THERE is a strange charm in Asiatic travel ; one seems, as by the touch of an enchanter's wand to go back several centuries—the railway, steamer, and generally even the wheeled vehicle, are not ; the choice lies between the horse, the camel, the ass, or tramping it. We begin to reckon distances, not in miles, but in hours, or as so many days' journey. Protracted exercise, homely diet, and freedom from care, gradually raise one's spirits, and make one literally as "hard as nails." Our casual travelling acquaintances, the chance participators in the trials and tribulations of the road, become our friends, social distinctions being almost forgotten, and men are taken simply for what they are worth. How we respect the varied experience and knowledge of his business of some good-natured, honest, but tatterdemalion muleteer ! His instinct at finding the road upon an apparently trackless waste is something wonderful ; he is the pathfinder of the East. And then the muleteer is prepared to beguile the tedium of the way with jokes, songs, long quotations from the poets, politics, philosophy, or religion. And when one doesn't feel inclined to talk, there is so much to see ; every stage has its speciality, the road is good, bad, or abominable ; it may be impassable. Will the river be fordable ? Has the bridge broken down ? are serious questions. Will there be food, fuel, or even fresh water at the next halting-place ? This is frequently a momentous matter. "We shall see Persepolis, or the tomb of Cyrus, or the ruins of Shushan the palace, to-morrow," says the muleteer carelessly. "Not a bad place to breakfast at," he adds with a smile. And then the everyday sights, the adventures pleasant to look forward to, and the perils, for there are perils, pleasanter to look back upon ; the ever-varying scenery, the

sharp and sudden changes of climate, and the mysterious and delightful silence of the desert or steppe, broken only by the musical clangour of the distant mule-bells. And then how everybody brightens up as the day's journey of twenty to five-and-thirty miles approaches its end ; the beasts of burden quicken their pace, the travellers begin to smile and sing, the distant halting-place comes at last in sight, or at night it is announced by the welcome light of camp-fires or the loud barking of the village-dogs. Taking all these things into consideration, it is not to be wondered at that the nomadic spirit is strongly developed among all Orientals, for in the East it is possible for the traveller to live upon fivepence a day, while the "vagrom man" can exist upon the charity of his companions ; and no man's education can be considered complete until he has expanded his mind and enlarged his ideas by travel. But the great incentive to travel, particularly in Asia, is the making of pilgrimages. Pilgrimage is one of the duties of the pious Moslem ; pilgrimage, hospitality, and charity are inculcated and practised throughout the Mahommedan world. As in Germany, travel, usually in the form of pilgrimage, is a part of education ; the pilgrim, on his return, is looked up to as a man who has seen the world ; and the man or woman who has made the great pilgrimage to Mecca prefixes the coveted title of Hadji to his or her name, thus simple Hassan becomes Hadji Hassan, having made the pilgrimage to Mecca. If he has been to Meshed or Kerbela, he enjoys the minor distinction of Meshedi or Kerbelai Hassan, as the case may be. But not a tithe of the Hadjis in the East have made the great pilgrimage, for Hadji is a very common name in Asia.

Pilgrimages are made with vast retinues at an enormous expense, and immense sums are presented to the shrines by wealthy pilgrims and distributed at the holy places in indiscriminate charity. Mussulmen, however, consider the pilgrimage which is made on foot the most efficacious. Not unfrequently pilgrimages are made by proxy.

It is needless to say that the great shrines are infested with vast crowds of beggars, and that the lame, the halt, and the blind, the lunatic, and the leper, are found in numbers at the holy places.

Beggary throughout the East is a thriving profession. There are guilds of beggars, besides the numerous communities of dervishes, who are semi-religious mendicants. Many families have been beggars for generations, and are mendicants from choice. Some of these professional beggars are actually wealthy. Four-and-twenty years ago the writer well remembers a case. The Chief Beggar (the title was not conferred in derision) gave his daughter in marriage to a substantial farmer. The girl's dowry consisted of two freehold houses, the rooms of which were entirely filled with dry pieces of bread, and the sale of these begged crusts subsequently realised a considerable sum, being disposed of as food for cattle. It must be remembered that in the East there is no organized charity, that most Mussulmen are exceedingly charitable, many giving away a fifth and some even a third of their income. Under such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the professional beggar thrives.

When Monsieur Bonvallet, an experienced French traveller, set himself the task of proceeding through Persia *via* Teheran and Meshed, through the historic cities of Bokhara, Samarcand, and Balkh, and so across the vast and trackless deserts of snow covering the lofty mountain ranges of the Pamir, or "Roof-tree of the World," which separate what is vaguely known as Central Asia from India, he showed his spirit, determination, and pluck. He and his two European companions accomplished their purpose. The illustrations to these papers were made from untouched sketches by Monsieur Pépin, one of Bonvallet's fellow

travellers. They were sketches often made in the broiling sun at the risk of a *coup de soleil*, or in a temperature many degrees below zero. The journey, after leaving Teheran, was commenced in the great heat of the Meshed desert and terminated in the intense cold of the Indo-Afghan frontier.

The interest of the journey commences when the travellers leave the railroad, at Hadji-Kaboul, and enter Lenkoran on the Caspian, a country of vast forests, swarming with game, full of luxuriant vegetation, a kind of earthly paradise, were it not for the vast swamps and the ravages of intermittent



Leper asking for alms.

fever. Through forests so thick that the overhanging branches had frequently to be hacked away, while the riders had to crouch upon their horses' necks, through swamp, marsh, and swollen rivers innumerable, some of which were fordable; over others the travellers were ferried in rude canoes dug out of the trunk of a single tree, while the horses swam across the rushing streams. Ghilan, one of the most fertile of Persian provinces, the country of thatches, is now reached, and the vivacious Frenchmen are astonished at the laziness and apathy of the inhabitants. In one wretched village it is impossible to obtain bread.

"Why don't you eat bread?" asks the traveller.

"We prefer rice," replies the villager.

"Why?"

"Well, you see it takes four times as much bread to thoroughly satisfy a man; rice grows well here, wheat is difficult to raise, and fish is abundant. To make bread, wheat must be sown, then there is harvest,

threshing, kneading and baking. We pound the rice and then we cook it, and so we don't want bread."

The Ghilanis are an easy-going race; their rivers swarm with fish, their forests with game; the men loll over a fire-pot in the winter, and sit in the sun in summer; the little field work that is done is performed by the women. They, the women, sow the rice-crop, the neighbouring mountaineers harvest it for the lazy inhabitants of the plains, and get a third of the produce for their pains. Nobody dies of starvation in Ghilan, but the fearful miasma from the swamps causes it to be sparsely populated, and the people have a sickly appearance, while the infant mortality is very large.

The women of the provinces of Ghilan and Mazenderan are celebrated for their fair complexions, plumpness, and personal beauty, and once transplanted from the fever districts they deserve their reputation and preserve their good-looks.

All round the neighbourhood of Resht, Peri Bazaar and Enzelli, which is the principal Persian port upon the Caspian, the country is covered with lush vegetation, forests, and tangled thickets, while the open spaces are bright with rich turf—a rare sight in the East—and the banks of the raised road which passes through the swamps are vast ferneries, among which flowers and orchids bloom. The innumerable runnels and brooklets at the roadside swarm with small tor-

and partridges rise on all sides, and the place teems with water-fowl of every description; grebe, mallard, teal and widgeon, wild geese and cormorants swarm; hawks, vultures, cranes, herons, the wild swan, storks and pelicans, and occasionally in an open space strange-looking habitations built upon a few posts are seen. In these places the villagers dwell secure from the attacks of wild beasts at night, and high above the wet soil. In the great thatched roof is stored the rice which is the staple of the country, and ingress is obtained by a ladder.

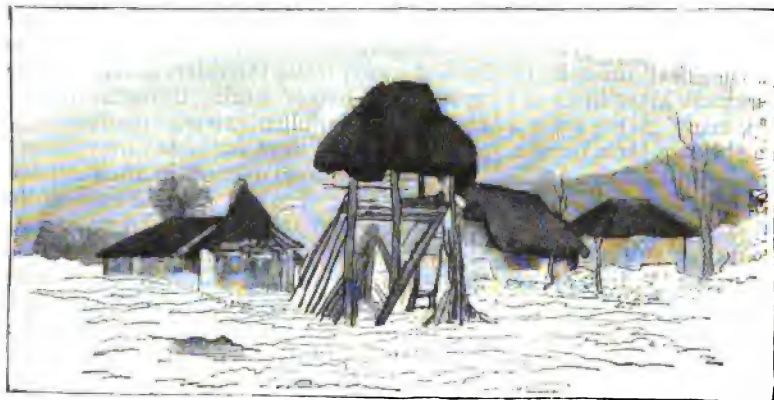
Of course the province is misgoverned, and the natives long for the advent of the Russian. A poor, hungry, out-at-elbows Persian major makes the following plaint in bad French upon the wall of his bedroom. The poor native official grumbles, but he grumbles in poetry, or what he means for poetry, and this is what he wrote on the wall of his bedroom in Peri Bazaar:

"Moi povere Abdullah Kan que je suis,
Tombé ici malouréjement (malheureusement),
Suis élève du gouvernement.
Sortons de cette pays."

But he was very polite to the travellers, as are all Persians.

There is little to be said as to the trip from the Caspian to Teheran; it was very much what was described by the writer in "A Journey from the Caspian to the Capital of Persia," which appeared in GOOD WORDS last year. This bit of road was

got over in a clumsy, springless wheeled vehicle, which is also used in riding post in Russia, and the journey from Teheran to Meshed was performed in a waggon. A waggon has its advantages; one can sleep in it, and so avoid the miserable halting-places in which one is



Strange-looking habitations.

toises and tiny fish; while little green lizards dart hither and thither, and beetles, numberless butterflies, and huge dragon-flies of gorgeous hue, fill the air; squirrels spring from bough to bough, and the ear is deafened by the croakings of millions of frogs; pheasants

often compelled to pass the night. The writer has hailed with delight, after a ten hours' post upon a single horse in Asia Minor, a mud cabin five feet high, twelve feet long, and six feet wide, as a welcome shelter; it was full of sheep, they were packed like

herrings in a barrel; the sheep turned out, the traveller turned in—it was Hobson's choice—and he and the guide slept like dormice, to turn out again at early dawn upon the two hardy little ponies which were dignified by the name of post-horses. It has been the writer's fortune to see a great deal of the Oriental post-boy, and our illustration is a characteristic one. There he stands, the guide or post-boy, the youth upon whom depends the traveller's comfort for the next stage. The hard-working, sober, good-natured charpa boy is the guide, philosopher, and friend of the traveller who rides post in the East. He is ready to amuse his temporary master, to tell him the local gossip, to quote poetry to him, and to do his duty to the traveller and to the horses under his charge to the best of his ability. Naturally enough the Persian post-boy prefers the society of the native servant to that of the foreigner, his master. The traveller who is not in a hurry is his delight, but if the man who posts is really anxious to travel quickly the post-boy rises to the occasion and honestly does his best. He doesn't look much like the Courier of Lyons, the gentleman in the jack-boots, the be-ribboned hat, the red waistcoat, and the laced jacket. To tell the truth our post-boy is not ornamental. He is shod with great brown leather slippers, and his legs are swathed in coarse woollen bandages bound with goat's-hair string; in lieu of the traditional buckskins he wears a loose pair of blue cotton peijamas; a jerkin of gaily-coloured but time-worn and dirty chintz, a sleeveless sheepskin jacket, hair side inwards, and a hemispherical felt skull-cap complete his costume. His waist is girt by a bit of cotton cloth which forms his girdle, and contains his frugal meal, a "flap-jack" or loaf of unleavened bread, and perhaps a couple of onions. The post-boy always takes his food with him, for as often as not at the next stage nothing is to be got but water, at times even not that. In the matter of hard-riding the seasoned and expert European will always beat the Oriental, for the latter is heavily handicapped by the Eastern saddle, which tires the horseman from the cramped position he is forced to maintain; the stirrup-leathers are so short that the knees of the rider are but three inches below the level of his waist. The Eastern saddle has its advantages; the rider cannot be thrown, he can rise in the great shovel-shaped stirrups, and standing firm as a rock, high above his saddle, can use his curved sword or spear with advantage, and



Eastern Post-Boy.

can actually fire an effective shot over his horse's croup at a pursuer with gun or pistol. The sword of the Eastern horseman is curved and highly tempered; it is carried not at the rider's belt, but under the surcingle that binds the thin blanket, that forms his bed at night, down on his peaked saddle. The reason why the Oriental horseman is hardly ever thrown is simply that the pommel of the saddle is furnished with a high peak, which is clutched in case of need; these high peaks are dangerous in the extreme to a European's idea, but the Asiatic cannot ride without them, and among the wealthy they are lavishly ornamented with silver, gold, enamels, and valuable gems. The Eastern saddle, giving a very firm seat as it does, enables the horseman to use his gun with good effect, game is frequently shot from the saddle, and the antelope is usually hunted on horseback and shot. The great shovel-shaped Eastern stirrup forms a firm platform for the foot, and its pointed corner is used in lieu of the spur throughout Asia. Spurs are unknown in Central Asia, though

the mention of the spur, the name of which still remains, is frequent in Persian poetry.

From Teheran to Meshed is not a pleasant journey; it is terribly hot in summer, bitterly cold in winter, but there are small oases in which villages and even towns, as Simnan, Nishapur, Subzavar, &c., are situated, and the traveller sleeps either in his waggon or in a caravanserai, or in the open air; water is seldom seen save at the halting-places; it is very bad as a rule, and frequently salt. Near the large towns long lines of crater-like mounds are observed running across the howling wilderness for many miles; these are the orifices of the underground channels or *kannats* which convey the water from distant springs, "the veins which may be said to carry in their streams life in the midst of death." In the hot sandy desert a breath of delightfully cool air may always be obtained at any of these numerous openings, while the deep water-cellars in which these subterranean channels frequently terminate are a delight to the traveller through the parched wilderness. At Dowletabad, once a strongly fortified place, but now going to ruin, and surrounded in every direction by watch-towers, now happily unnecessary, for since the advent of the Russians the country is no longer desolated by Turkomand raids, the governor was building a square tower which considerably puzzled the French traveller. The khan informed his guest that the thing was a "ventilator." These lofty square towers, or *Bad girs*, literally wind-catchers, are common throughout Persia; at the top are orifices on all four sides which catch the slightest breath of cool air, a strong down draught is thus produced, and the rooms below are effectually cooled.

In the twenty-eight days' journey in the waggon from Teheran to Meshed the vehicle is several times overturned; the pleasantest part of the pilgrimage is the halting at night in the great caravanserais, where water and

shelter can be had for nothing. The traveller takes possession of the first empty cell and its little platform looking out upon the vast courtyard. Long strings of mules with their jangling bells frequently enter or leave the place; muleteers and pilgrims shout, sing, and chatter far into the night, and render sleep impossible; but the traveller enjoys himself, nevertheless, comfortably rolled in rugs, and with the knowledge that he can rest until the dawn. Piles of luggage and merchandise are stacked in every direction in the great courtyard of the caravanserai, each surrounded by a little square

of picketed mules. Time was, and not so very long ago either, when the whole of the province of Khorassan was continually raided by small or large parties of Turkomand marauders; thanks to the Russians these *alamans* or plundering expeditions have now almost entirely ceased. The pilgrimage to Meshed could then only be accomplished by caravans consisting of several hundreds of pilgrims guarded by soldiers and accompanied by a piece of artillery. The Turkomans were not merely robbers, they were

kidnappers and man-stealers; they didn't content themselves with plundering the towns, villages, or caravans, but they carried off the wealthy for the sake of a possible ransom, and the young and robust with the object of selling them into slavery. Did the unhappy prisoners break down upon the journey or fall sick, they were decapitated at once, and their heads carried off by the ruthless Turkomans as trophies. The horrors of slavery in Central Asia among the Turkomans and at Khiva and Bokhara are indescribable, and the Persians retorted whenever they had the opportunity, while a price was paid for Turkoman heads by the Governor of Meshed. Let us hear what M. Bonvallot has to say upon the Russians in Central Asia; we may or may not look upon him as an unprejudiced witness, and we can draw our own



A Kirghiz Girl.

conclusions. "We saw the roads that lead to these regions" (which M. Bonvallet calls a prolongation of Russia) "swarming with soldiers, who were going to make a channel" (the railway) "for the inundation to follow; soldiers who were sinewy, temperate, indefatigable, well disciplined. . . . I can see nothing to check the advances of a people whose sources of energy and action are increasing each day, as its population grows, and as it gains strength and knows how to use it."

He compares the English in India to "the conjurer who keeps twenty plates twirling in the air at the same time," and he considers that the *tour de force* must come to an end sooner or later. Since the Russians have been at Merv security reigns in Khorassan; the farmer no longer cultivates his crops between four walls; the shepherd, armed to the teeth, is not prepared at any moment to take shelter with his flock in a mud tower, which is rendered impregnable by closing the tiny doorway with a big stone. The towers are there, but they are falling into ruin.

The Russians at Merv have built barracks, two streets, and a church. The fact is that, thanks to the Russians, the country between Meshed and Merv is now perfectly safe, and M. Bonvallet and his companions crossed it with a servant and three muleteers.

As to holy Meshed, the "Pearl of Islam," having been so often described—its dirt, its heat, its fanaticism, and its great shrine with its golden dome—M. Bonvallet tells us very little. "Besides the mosques," he says, "there is nothing remarkable about Meshed, except the degradation of its population, the most depraved in the world, with a hypocritical outward show of the most bigoted fanaticism. It is a place where is held, in the fashion of the Middle Ages, a vast religious fair, where people trade, or amuse themselves, or pray. The great sanctuary, filled with Persian refugees from justice and local bankrupts, is a vast Eastern Alsatia; once within the sacred precincts which surround the tomb of holy Imam Reza, the thief, the murderer, the political refugee, or the bankrupt, is perfectly safe."

These *basts*, or sanctuaries, exist at all the great shrines in Central Asia; not only the shrine is sanctuary, but frequently a whole quarter of the city itself in the immediate vicinity of the shrine. The impetuous criminal has but to join the vast crowd of professional beggars who throng the precincts of the shrine, and he is sure of at least

food and shelter and the lavish charity of the pilgrims. The man who declines to pay his creditors, can easily hire a house and set up a comfortable establishment within the sanctuary. Pilgrims and poor are fed, and well fed, every day at the shrine of Imam Reza at Meshed, out of the vast funds belonging to the shrine. The privileges of the sanctuary are jealously guarded by a horde of fanatical mollahs, while the townspeople would be easily aroused to tumult or open rebellion should those in authority, or even the Avenger of Blood himself, attempt to violate the sacred place of refuge.

Meshed is one of the holiest of these shrines. Close to Teheran is another sanctuary, the tomb of the holy Abdul Azim. Isfahan has its sanctuary, while half-way between the ancient and modern capitals of Persia is one of the holiest of Persian shrines, the tomb of the sainted Fatima at Kūm. This, like that at Meshed, is covered by a vast dome plated with pure gold a quarter of an inch thick. These golden domes, which are visible for many miles, are welcome sights to the criminal who is flying from justice, or to the innocent man pursued by his oppressors.

Besides these religious sanctuaries the great cannon at Teheran is an inviolable *bast*; so is the King's stable, and the stable of any provincial governor; the heel-ropes of the royal horses give safety to the criminal who touches them, and in a lesser degree the stables of local governors and great men are also *bast*. But a criminal at times falls into the hands of justice by being starved into surrender, the grooms being forbidden to give him food or water, or, if they are not bribed, they may decline to do so. Sanctuary in the East is rarely or ever violated; stratagem, bribery, false promises, or even poison, being secretly had recourse to, to secure the criminal.

M. Bonvallet is one of the few Eastern travellers who has a very bad opinion indeed of the Persians; possibly the extortions practised upon the road have something to do with this. He sees some old men seated beside a stream. How is the water? he inquires. The old men declare that it is sweet. The traveller tastes it, and finds it to be salt, and his servant whispers in his ear, "Persians can never speak the truth, even when they are white-bearded." Now it is quite possible that to the palates of these old men the water was pleasant enough. This experience has frequently occurred to the writer, and in many Persian villages the

inhabitants drink water which a stranger would think very much like brine.

Elsewhere is given a Persian's opinion of Persia.

The Persian.—"Look at the earth, it is salt; taste the water, it is salt; the roads are so bad that vehicles upset; wages are low; the soldiers are thieves; the governors are thieves."

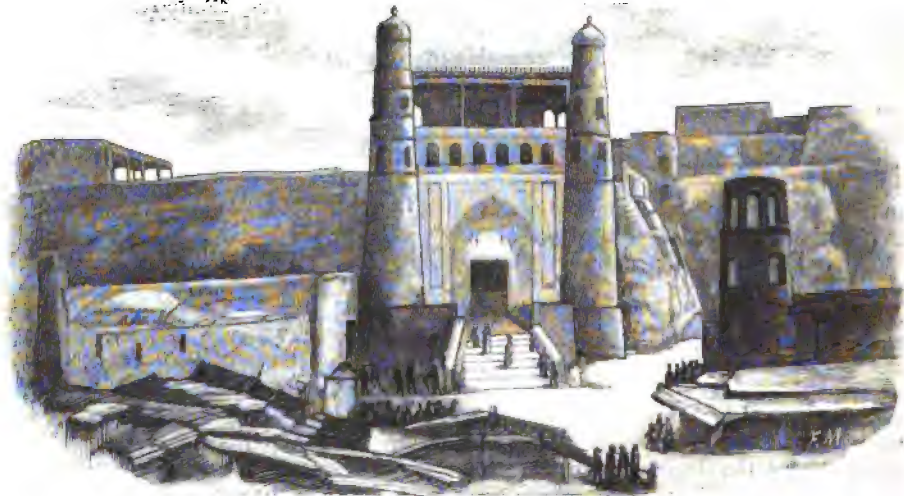
The Traveller.—"And the Shah?"

The Persian.—"Oh, he's no good."

But Persians are hospitable and excessively polite, capital companions and fellow-travellers, generally ready to make the best of things, while their fanaticism is as a rule only skin-deep. As to their intelligence there can be no two opinions upon the sub-

ject. Where is the European, rich or poor, who would admit the travelling stranger to his house and give him shelter, frequently appropriating to his use a room littered with portable property, and trusting absolutely in the stranger's honour? And yet this is the constant experience of the European travelling in Persia. It is quite true that "there is no patriotism in Persia, and that the Persians have never been attacked by that 'sublime fever,'" but these faults are produced by despotic government, and the Persian dearly loves his country all the same.

At Shah rūd is a little colony of gipsies, who work in metal, and obtain a precarious living as buffoons and dancers, singers and musicians. They are under the protection



The Emir's Palace, Bokhara.

of the King's Shatir-Bashi, or head running-footman, and they pay him a tax of ten shillings a year. These people live in tents, or between four mud walls with a felt roof; they are in a state of abject poverty. As to the Armenians, M. Bonvallet is very concise: "they are to be met with everywhere in Persia where money is to be made;" "by their numbers in the city one can gauge the quantity of drunkards their customers." These statements are true, but some allowance may be made for centuries of oppression.

From Meshed M. Bonvallet proceeded to the river Oxus, now bridged for the first time by the Russians, and he remarks the strange ravages produced by moving seas of sand, which gradually, silently bury villages

and even towns; he proceeds to Bokhara and interviews the Emir in his imposing palace fortress. He received the traveller in his throne room, clothed in velvet, and wearing a fine muslin turban embroidered in gold. The Emir is described as a handsome man, with regular features of almost Jewish type, a well-kept black beard; solemn, dignified, and silent, he was seated upon a European chair; a clock, a wardrobe with mirrors, and a big pier-glass decorated the hall of audience. The Emir's mind was preoccupied with the newly constructed railway and terror of the Russian advance.

From Bokhara to Samarcand and so on, making the acquaintance of numerous nomads, Usbeks and Kirghiz. The illustration

which we give on page 542 is the portrait of a young Kirghiz girl; the curiously shaped silver box attached to the plait of her hair

contains an amulet, and is a sign of the affection of her parents.

The traveller passes lightly over his jour-

The start from the Turkoman tents.



ney from Merv to Samarcand, "it needs no description now, as you merely take the train and dine in the restaurant car."

In the next paper the writer will attempt to give some account of M. Bonvallet's successful journey across the snowy wilderness

that covers the great mountain range of the Pamir, or "roof-tree of the world," into India. The concluding illustration shows the start of the traveller from the Turkoman tents into the snowy desert, which is made at night by the light of the moon.

THE GREATER THE SINNER THE GREATER THE SAINT.

By HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF "DAGMAR," ETC.

THIS is one of those startling, half-paradoxical sayings which at first hearing hardly provoke other answer than a rapid and instinctive "No!" Shall a man walk nearer to God for having defied Him for long years? Shall the spirit's robe be whiter for having been trailed through the mire, or the wings soar higher for having been clipped and caged by evil passions and base desires until the power of flight and the longing for it are alike lost?

It cannot be: there is no doing evil that good may come! We are what our actions make us; and the man who wilfully makes choice to taste of evil as well as of good, in order that he may be as God, will find himself deceived, as were his parents of old—will find that the forbidden fruit is like the poppy-juice in its fatal power over him who has once abandoned himself to its sway; that he cannot relinquish it, even while he loathes it and knows it to be his ruin.

And yet this, like all proverbial sayings, may have a side of truth; and when we study it closely we may find something in it which the Bible, and common-sense, and practical experience seem to corroborate.

"Out of the deep," says the Psalmist King, "have I called unto thee, O God." And what that deep of temptation, and sin, and despair was like, his life and his writings show but too well. Yet out of that deep he called to God, and out of that deep he rose repentant, to flee to God to hide him from his own shame and misery, and to trust Him utterly for evermore, knowing that in Him is plenteous redemption. It is a hard question, but would he ever have known that quite so well if he had not gone down into that deep of sin, and so learned to hate himself and repent in dust and ashes?

Further, there was one in the Gospels who said that he to whom most was forgiven would love his Lord the most—words of which our Lord approved. And there are, moreover, those vaguely beautiful hints, which have comforted so many a penitent, concerning the joy that is in heaven over one repentant sinner; hints which sound almost as though the souls that had trembled on the brink of destruction were *more* precious than those who had never felt, and yielded to, and at last wrenched themselves away from, the horrible fascination of sin—had never cut off the right hand or plucked out the right eye,

and thus through pain and mutilation entered at last into the kingdom.

Moreover experience and our own judgment will show us that a man who has sinned and repented may be the better for that sin—humbler, wiser, more on the watch against himself; having been filled with the fruit of his own devices, and having found the flavour thereof bitter, and so being determined henceforth to follow God's ways rather than his own.

At least, he may be a whole heaven above the man who has never fallen in such a way, but whose innocence is mainly the result of lack of temptation; who has had no combat with Apollyon, no fiery-arrow-wounds from the Evil One, simply because he has never got so far on his journey as the Valley of Humiliation.

And yet we cannot but see that there are many sins which can but make the strait gate still narrower, and the path still more hard to find; sins which dull and degrade the soul, and make repentance all but impossible, as it is written, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

Perhaps the axiom can only be strictly true when taken with an addition; "The greater the sinner, the greater the saint—that *might have been!*"

The same strong will, the same keen intellect and fiery passions that made the hardened and daring sinner, might, under other circumstances, and with different training, have made a holy, valiant, and true-hearted saint. The raw material which makes the *man* must be good, or neither sinner nor saint worthy of the name can be made out of it.

The man who is not *very* bad, who shuffles through life content with little sins on the safe side of the law, petty meannesses and small evasions, would surely never, even with the best of training, have been *very* good, but would have rested content with narrow views and cold affections, faith that would trust only where it could not help itself, hope that was only another name for dull want of fear; poor material out of which to make a saint or a hero.

The craze for Byronic heroes, creatures "linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes," has been much and deservedly ridiculed, but it is not without its reasonable,

and even admirable side. It was not their crimes which rendered these men interesting, it was the halo of better things which still surrounded them, the pathos of great talents wasted and great gifts abused; the sense of what they might once have been and of what, with deep repentance and under better guidance, they might yet become; the unconscious measuring—by the depth of sin that was—of the height of holiness that might have been.

Perhaps it might not be too much to say that any man who has ever shown himself a hero might, under favourable circumstances, have become a saint. There have been heroes, only too often, who have been far enough removed from the saintly ideal, who have made to themselves a law of their own will, and have trampled under foot all laws human and divine. And yet, when opportunity has been given them, they have proved that valour and unselfishness were first in their hearts after all; when the Spirit that moves to all noble deeds has said to them, "Do this thing," they have at once obeyed, and the world has called them heroes.

Heroes!—or, as the word signifies, sons of God. Of the saints of old time the apostle said, "To them gave He power to become the sons of God."

May it not be that to some of the world's half-heathen heroes, ignorant, faulty, and passionate though they were, the Spirit—in provoking them to do noble deeds—gave power to become, somewhere and somehow, the sons of God?

The whole question of sinfulness and saintliness is inextricably entangled with the dark mystery of chance and circumstance, God's fore-knowledge and ordinance, and man's choice and free-will. It seems, as far as we can see, to depend upon the cast of a die whether a man be a saint or a sinner.

"The urchin that squalls in a gaol,
By circumstance turns out a rogue;
While the castle-born brat is a senator born,
Or a saint if religion's in vogue."

Some are so shut in and guarded, so taught and trained, from their earliest infancy, that every temptation is set far from them, every germ of good fostered in them, till they cannot fail to be good and innocent even, so to speak, against their will.

Others, again, have the odds so terribly against them from the first that no one, however sanguine, could expect them to turn out well, doomed to sin as they are by precept and example, by hereditary impulse and hourly contamination.

Surely if one of these, in spite of such drawbacks, in spite of sins—committed almost before their full sinfulness was known, yet bringing, none the less, their full meed of shame and punishment—if such a one, loving the light, should struggle up towards it and repent and amend, his hardly-attained goodness would be worth more than the easy virtue of one who has never fairly grappled with sin, who is innocent because he has been heedfully kept from temptation.

And surely, also, if such a one, so lost and degraded from the very cradle, should do *one* heroic and unselfish deed, such a flower of nobleness, springing under such circumstances, would prove the existence of a root which, under more favourable auspices, might have borne the fair fruit of a saintly life.

We cannot but think so, and dimly trust the while that somewhere and somehow that—

"dear growth that, shaded by the palma,
And breathed on by the angels' song,
Blooms on in heaven's eternal calma,"

shall attain that full development which was denied it here.

There is a story told by an American poet in rough ballad music of a helmsman on board a burning steam-boat, who swore to hold the tiller and keep her head ashore until every man was safe out of her, and who, at the cost of his own life, kept his word. And at the end his comrade says of him:

"He warn't no saint,—but at Judgment Day
I'd take my chance with Jim,
Before some very fine gentlemen
That wouldn't shake hands with him.
He'd seen his duty—a dead sure thing—
And he went for it there and then,
And Christ is not going to be too hard
On a man that died for men."

The words are rough and plain-spoken but they strike a chord that vibrates in all our hearts. This Californian hero was no doubt a man of somewhat careless life, hardly a "church-going Christian" at all events, and he certainly pledged himself to his heroic deed in language which was profane, to say the least of it. But we feel in hearing of him that, however great a sinner he may have been according to the respectable world's way of thinking, he was of the stuff of which heroes are made—of which saints might be made—and that it might be that it would please the Master, beyond the veil, to make a saint of him after all.

And as regards the ordinary run of unheroic sinners, what can we say, but that there is no country so remote but that thence the wanderer's heart may turn with longing to his Father's house, and that he who has

wandered farthest from that beloved shelter, who has longest shared the swine's meal in the open, desolate fields, may—when once he has come to himself—long the most sincerely, and strive the most earnestly, to find his way home again.

And once there, may he not love his Father's house the more for having tasted the horror of that outer darkness, and cling more closely to his Father's hand for having tried to walk alone and failed; and so be a better man all his days for the sin and folly of his youth?

But if this be "dangerous doctrine" we have but to remember (lest we should be tempted to presume upon it, and think that we may sow our wild oats without having after all to reap them) that hunger, and shame, and penitence are very hard and terrible realities—that it is a long and toilsome journey from the swine's trough to the bosom of the father, and that, after all, though the prodigal had the ring, and the robe, and the feast, it was to the elder son that the Father said,

"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."

THE BARD OF BENDERLOCH.

By WILLIAM JOLLY.

II.—HIS LIFE-STORY AND POETIC DEVELOPMENT.

"Seasons may roll, but no time shall divorce me
From my land and my people, the light of mine eyes."

AS Wordsworth was the flowering out of an ancestry of the quiet Saxon dalesmen of Cumberland, so John Campbell is the blossom of a long lineage of the healthy Celtic crofters of Lorn—both poets expressing the deeper thought and feeling of generations, accumulated amidst the beauties of nature, in healthy air, and by hearty work. He was born in Oban on the 23rd of October, 1823. His grandfather was a small farmer, dwelling on the green trap hills above it; and his ancestors had lived in view of the glorious landscape which is dominated by Cruachan, variegated by land and sea, and illuminated by the glowing west. His father was a schoolmaster, a worthy man, of pleasant look and manner, who, besides teaching his school, visited the sick, dispensed simple medicine to the rural folks, vaccinated their children long before it was compulsory, did what good he could to his generation, and passed away in 1873, respected for his character and work, at the ripe age of eighty-two. He had a family of seven, and, when his eldest boy and second child was two years old, in 1825, he removed to Ledaig, where, for thirty-five years, he taught the old school near Dunvalanree, and officiated as elder in the parish church of Ardchattan, some miles off across the plains of Lora. John's mother died in giving birth to her next son, shortly after coming to Ledaig; but his step-mother, who by-and-by nurtured him, was a kindly and undistinguishable substitute, and rejoiced in his after poetry and fame as if he had been her own child.

Thus it came that the boy was brought up in the shade of that mighty cliff, beneath which he has had his home for over sixty years—in sight of the broad bay of Ardmucknish and Ossianic Morven beyond, near Dunstaffnage on the one hand and Beregonium on the other: with the wide sandy shore to play on and chase the tumbling waves; the piled boulders of conglomerate to climb among, where now his garden smiles; the old graveyard and ruined chapel of Keil beyond the cliff to feed his young imagination; the vitrified fort of Usnach and its standing stones to examine; and the Burn of the Smugglers behind his cottage, rumbling over its cataracts, to explore in its swift descent from the wild and wonderful Heights of Lora above his father's dwelling; while, like Whittier's "Bare-foot Boy,"

"O'er him like a regal tent, cloudy-ribbed the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold, looped in many a wide-swung fold."

No better spot in the broad world could have been found "meet nurse for a poetic child," to inspire his ardent patriotism and love of nature, as uttered in the lines at the head of this paper, and other burning verses, and feed the thoughts that have kindled into kindly, living song.

The boy was a puny, sickly child, the bright soul seeming too big for its little casket, and his life was often despaired of till he reached manhood. Under the open air, with congenial garden work, and the Highland sibyl's help and the fairy flax, as already told, it then became firmly estab-

lished. He received a fair education in his father's school, though as a boy he had no special inclination for study. In a poem on his school days, the only things he recalls, *inside* the school, are the tawse hanging near the master's ear and the whispers of the children when his snuff went done! But *outside*, he gloried in the beauties of nature around him, the green fields, the cool streams, the mountain peaks, the pretty primroses, and the frisking lambs; and he paints the joy of the pupils at the skailing of the school, when they poured from it "like lambkins from the fank up the face of the hill," and "roamed together among the moors and mosses gathering flowers, free as the birds."

Though destined by his father for the church or the school, his high sense of its responsibility kept him from the pulpit, and want of health from the class-room. Inherited tendencies towards teaching have, nevertheless, found outlet in the remarkable Sabbath school for old and young, which he has conducted for some forty years, some twenty of them in the wonderful "Rock-room" at his garden foot.

In Glasgow, where he went at sixteen, he essayed to become a merchant; but during the six years he was there, he had thrice to return to the shores of Loch Etive to recruit in his native air. While in the city, the extraordinary religious upheaval of 1843, which roused such enthusiasm in the Highlands, kindled his utmost fervour. He left the Old Church, to which his father was attached to the last, and joined the dissentients, among whom he has since borne office—his father, as he says, allowing his children full liberty of choice in religion as in love. Three years later, he quitted the city for good—this sprig of heather being unable to thrive in its murky smoke; and returned to his mother's care, to be again nursed as a hopeless invalid—"almost at death's door," as he pathetically tells. Happily recovering in six months amid his own hills and sea breezes, he determined to remain in Benderloch, and there do what he could to make a living among his people.

Utilising his city experiences, he built a small shop, his present thatched house, on a croft held by his grandmother, and started a humble store, in which he invested his little all, and some funds lent by helpful friends. Bad times and the potato failure brought disaster, and it took him more than twenty years to repay his lost loans. This, however, he finally achieved, and he now proudly owes no man anything.

His delight in nature, wild flowers and living creatures, blissfully turned his attention to gardening, which he had in a small way worked at from boyhood in his father's plot. The difficulty was to get ground; for, though the kindly factor favoured him, a big sheep-farmer, to whom the land was rented, refused all concession, even of the bare uncultivated shore round his grandmother's hut, between the boulders and the cliff of Dunvalanree. In four years, however, the expiry of the rigid Southerner's lease gave John possession of the unpromising slope, at a small rent, from the more generous landlord.

When he took the place, it was a barren tract, bare and unsheltered from the fierce ocean blasts, without a flower or shrub, except the trees that clustered round the rolling burn above, at the base of the precipice. But his practical eye noted its capabilities—in protection from bitter north and blighting east, in warm exposure to the south, and in openness to the genial though watery west. Through unparalleled exertion and skill, born of industry, taste and love of plants, by bringing soil from long distances wherever available, and with unremitting culture, he has literally made "the wilderness blossom as the rose." Roses! the place is smothered in roses, many of them rare and costly, and all of them choice and charming. His garden is now the largest, fairest, and fullest on the West Coast, a marvel and delight to all beholders. The precipice above it not only gives kindly shelter, but, reflecting the sun's best rays on the blooming enclosures below, enables tender exotics to flourish in open air; while the embowering hedgerows effectually keep the fierce gales off the sea from destroying them.

The warmth and brightness concentrated in that cosy nook are simply wonderful, so that it is rightly characterized by his friendly and frequent visitor, Mr. Anderson Smith, as "a summery corner," a "sun-favoured rock." Our poetical Professor vies with him in praise of the flowery spot, declaring that "neither the Queen in all her majesty at Balmoral, nor Tennyson in all the beauty of heath, gorse, and copsewood at Haslemere, can boast of a dwelling so poetical." And so say all of us.

At thirty-eight, he married his fair and frugal dame, who soon presented him with seven fair children. His two boys are no more; but his five daughters still survive, rarely comely in form and feature, and brightly helpful in the home. Nearly thirty years ago, he became postmaster of the di-

trict, at first having few letters, but now doing a large business, which includes the telegraph. The instrument is intelligently managed by his clever girls, who not only relieve him of its superintendence, but, like the good daughters they are, contribute all they can to increase his studious leisure.

The garden has abundantly rewarded all his care, and now mainly supports the household by its splendid produce. Its strawberries, in particular, are famous; and these and other tender fruits, which land-carriage would spoil, he conveys by a carrier-boat twice a week to Oban, where they arrive fresh as when pulled, and where he can dispose of any quantity. They ripen remarkably early under the Rock, being sometimes red and ready in May.

By the unremitting industry and attention to business for which our gardener is famous—for this poet has practical power—he has not only cleared off irksome debts, but gathered a little posie for age. Few men have lived a happier, calmer, and more contented and thoughtful life. This has come through natural cheerfulness, alert activity, "benign simplicity of life," keen but joyous poetic temperament, and, not least, love of nature, which finds beauty in everything and matter for song in the simplest incident. He has travelled very little, and since he left the great city, has spent all his days among the glens and bens of Lorn—contented with the joy of his own thoughts and the wealth of life and loveliness he finds and feels everywhere round him, sustained, as he truly puts it, by hope in this life and faith in the next.

Of all nature's living forms, both plant and animal, he has been, as Mr. Smith says, "a keen observer in the little bower under the big Rock," "a loving observer of all that flies." To dead things like rocks, he has paid less attention than he would have done had his sharp eyes been turned to these in his youth. In the pages of Mr. Smith and others, we find abundant proof of his deep love of living creatures and joy in their companionship, which characterizes such genuine good-heartedness, and which overflows in an uncommon sympathetic and kindly touch. In this and other respects, John has always vividly reminded me of another friend, the singular gardener by the shores of the Solway, whose story has been told in the "Life of John Duncan"—both John Campbell and Charles Black being well endowed and winningly good.

Thus John Campbell has succeeded in getting not a few of the wild birds to come

obediently to his call—notably a robin, which perches on his fingers, eats the crumbs there offered him, and flies away when sated. Nay, so great is the confidence he inspires in the birds, that both robin and his shy mate will settle and eat on the hands of strangers, if he is by.

Flowers he has loved and studied from boyhood, like John Duncan, though he is much less versed in their wonderful virtues than the old weaver. He has told me how he could never tire of working among flowers and talking about them, as far back as he can remember; and how, often while "going a message" from the school-house, he took the by-path instead of the highway, when not too hurried, to try if he could see a new plant, a rare bird, or a treasured nest, so early and so ardent was his love of wild nature. I inadvertently cut my finger on our way down the burn behind his house, and he at once stopped the bleeding by tying round the cut a piece of the leaf of the common plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), as had long been his custom; though I told him that the broader-leaved variety, the *media*, known to old Scotchmen as "the healing leaf," was more potent for the purpose, as John Duncan had taught me.

The Muse early marked him for her own—but only and rightly in his native, sweet-tongued Gaelic, in which his facility and felicity stamp him a true poet, as declared by Celtic critics and as is evident to Lowlanders. Coila's description of young Burns aptly pictures, *longo intervallo* certainly, but with simple truth, the youthful Campbell. Wandering "in pensive walk" by the "sounding shore" of Benderloch, he also watched the "floweret's birth," the "ripened fields," and "grim nature's visage hoar"—and Campbell, as well as Burns, "eyed the general mirth with boundless love." His first poetic attempt was made at the age of ten, when he recited some verses to a brother in the barn, sarcastically descriptive of some of his playmates. Casually overheard by his father, who asked him "if he intended to be a poetaster!" these rhymes called forth hostile criticism, and this stifled his song for twenty years!

His latent poetic sensibilities were unconsciously but powerfully nurtured in his youth by the variedly grand and beautiful country in which he dwelt; by his intense love of nature and her creatures and his rambles in search of them; by Ossianic legendary poetry, specially copious and vivid in that very re-

gion, Ossian's own; by the rich folk-lore then abundant in every Highland cottage; and not least, by his father's happy habit of reading choice Gaelic literature by the fireside to his family and neighbours in the evenings—especially those remarkably cultured Highland journals issued by the father of the great Norman Macleod, which appeared between 1830 and 1848, the *Teachdaire Gaelach* and the *Cuairtear nan Gleann*, for which the good teacher wisely subscribed. His son vividly recalls these rare assemblies, gathered to hear such pieces as "The Emigrant Ship," by old Dr. Macleod, which Professor Blackie deliberately declares to be second to nothing in any language for graceful simplicity and profound pathos; or the Highland Emigrant's "Farewell to my Country," when scarcely a dry eye was seen in the throng, and the boy's soul, as he says, was stirred to its depths by the woes of his expatriated countrymen.*

While in Glasgow, the young man of twenty was intimate with a cousin, who was fond of poetry. Having no Gaelic, this lad used to recite the English poets in their walks round the city, which purified John's taste and extended his knowledge of literature. But after his abortive rhyming effort at ten, he wrote not a line till he was over thirty years old. The fountain of song that now wells up so fully and constantly, remained sealed till opened by a seemingly trivial incident—which has been the experience of other children of song.

But this long silence was also the result of other external circumstances. At that period, the writing of poetry was much discouraged in Scotland by the devout, as savouring, at the least, of reprehensible lightness of fancy, and as associated, in the Highlands and elsewhere, with Burns and heterodoxy, if not with dancing and the devil. Even when, in later life, John resumed his verses—for the sacred fire still slumbered on the hearth of his heart—he was remonstrated with by not a few anxious but narrow friends, such practices showing, they said, that he had less "grace" than he should have; especially by some rigid Skye elders, who counselled him, for his soul's sake, to give up such frivolities! The same was then sadly true of others all over the country. "As a Highland poetess," remarks Professor Blackie, "Mary Mackellar," for example, "had to encounter the same strange, grim superstition, that

secular song is a thing essentially ungodly, and that nothing ought to be sung but psalms. This nightmare oppressed her in such a fashion that, though the desire to write songs was strong upon her, she crushed it down in deference to the opinions of the pious Highlanders, who declared song to be a sin."*

Fortunately, both she and John Campbell found nature too strong, and have sung their songs, seeing no inconsistency between secular and sacred, and viewing both as divine gifts. In neither, happily, could the true light of poesy be hid under any traditional bushel, and it successfully struggled through the dark lantern of prejudice and discouragement.

In 1855, then about thirty-two, John was talking one day with a brother, since dead, about poetry and music, when he remarked that he thought he could write the words of a song, though he could not sing them, not having much voice. His brother, who was musical, urged him to try composition, promising to sing it when done. Next day, John produced his first piece, in eight four-line verses, simple and effective, called "Na Companaich," in praise of friendship, which his brother at once sang to an old favourite Gaelic tune. That was the birth of the mountain brook of his poetry, which has since rippled brightly on, now for more than thirty years.

But it flowed a hidden stream for many years, the shy poet for long not daring to recite the poems even to friends, and for longer to publish them to the world. The first pieces appeared anonymously about 1860, in a local newspaper in Oban, called the *West Highland Journal*, and at distant intervals, thereafter, in it and its successor, the *Oban Times*; the editors of both papers recognising their merit and encouraging their production.

The first wide personal recognition of his poetry was at a Harvest Home, about 1862, in Loch Nell House, at the other side of Ardmucknish Bay, when one of his manuscript songs was well sung by a clever woman. The poem happily drew the attention of one of the party, Mr. C. Macniven, of Manchester, a good Highlander then residing there, who obtained a copy of that and other pieces by our author. To John's surprise, several of these appeared shortly after, with his name, in the first number of the Canadian Gaelic magazine, *The Gael*. That was the beginning of his fame, which has steadily grown with the years.

* See both of these translated in Blackie's "Literature of the Highlands," pp. 300 and 319; and the first also, in Dr. Norman Macleod's "Reminiscences of a Highland Parish."

* "Language and Literature of the Scottish Highlands."

His pieces, fortunately, soon gained the admiration of Professor Blackie, then living at Altnacraig, who has since done more than any other to make John Campbell's name known as a genuine Highland bard. As he says, "in the harmonious tones of a language in which poetry is more natural than prose, John conducts the inspiration derived from Alastair Macdonald, Duncan Ban Macintyre, and Dugald Buchanan, through a living electric wire, to animate future generations of Highlanders."

Though he has composed not ineffectively in English, his genius finds its true expression, like Burns, in his native musical speech, for which his love is intense and undying. As he sings, in the words of the professor—

"The songs of the Gael on their pinions of fire,
How oft have they lifted my heart from the mire!
On the lap of my mother I lisped them to God;
Let them float round my grave when I sleep 'neath the sod!"

Of the poets who have influenced him, his Celtic precursors just named, along with Ossian, Macleod, of the *Teachdairne*, and Macdonald, "the Apostle of the North," stand, of course, first; especially, from his congenial devoutness, Dugald Buchanan, whose "Day of Judgment" claims high rank in British as well as Gaelic poetry. In English, his favourites have been Burns, whom he learnt as early as he can remember, Cowper, Pollok, Mrs. Hemans, Eliza Cook, and Longfellow; and, in a less degree, Scott, Campbell, Hogg, Allan Ramsay and Byron. "The Course of Time" he *devoured* in his youth, reading it again and again. "The Cottar's Saturday Night" was the most cherished of Burns'. "The Psalm of Life" at once fascinated him, and "has influenced him," he says, "more than he could tell"—Longfellow being his chief favourite. Wordsworth, surprisingly, he has known very little, beyond fugitive pieces, and he never possessed a copy of his works till two years ago, when they were presented by an admirer. It is not strange that he should have been less, indeed, very little affected by the greater bards—Shakespeare and Milton. John's muse is "the lowly daisy," not "the unrivalled rose," and shines in its own "humbler sphere." But the book that has swayed him above all others, in life and literature, is the Bible.

Verse-making he has found easy when in the mood, and several of his best pieces have been produced at one heat, by a kind of strong afflatus, as in all real poets; but when not in the strain, he cannot write a stanza,

"though you gave him an estate for it," as he remarks—which is the experience of all these wayward children of genius. For example, he composed his sweet piece, "My Ain Fireside," between Connel Ferry and Ledaig in returning home on a stormy night; his elegy on the wreck of the *Royal Charter* he produced as he stood under the cliff of Dunvalanree a few nights after, on his way home, while listening to the hoarse swell of the Atlantic on the rocks below; and his long poem of eleven verses, "The Highland Soldier," he finished in a similar fervour. But he has usually composed while digging quietly in his garden or walking gently along the road, writing the verses as they have been produced, for, otherwise, they would be lost. He has never, it seems, used the file much, his facility in Gaelic being so ready that the first word has generally been the best; though, when at a loss, he keeps a poem in his pocket to polish it.

His subjects are unambitious, being natural, social, domestic, and religious themes, as becomes a man who has a just estimate of the character and extent of his powers. Love songs he has written, all sweet and mild, but wanting the furnace blast of Burns. Nature he describes as one that adores her. He eulogises friendship, and he has produced many personal poems, including those to General Gordon and dear John Campbell of Islay, the elegy on the latter being read at his grave. He has touched simple emotions and experiences with feeling and power. He has also produced effective translations of popular English poems, such as "Ilka blade o' grass," and of several hymns, like "Had I the wings of a dove." His greatest strength, however, has been evoked, as he thinks himself, by subjects affecting his land and his people, especially the sad "clearances," the woes of which he first heard at his father's hearth, and has since witnessed. These terrible experiences, as he feels, should rouse to fever pitch "every Highlander's blood and patriotism";—to have seen, as he has done, old soldiers weep, bareheaded, on the ruins of their homesteads, when taking farewell for ever of their native land—scenes, he says, "written on the heart, never to be effaced."

Long may it be before John Campbell's patriotic wish is fulfilled, as some day it will be, by the hands and hearts of his grateful countrymen:

"Though I should wander far west to the Indies,
Where the green isles uprise from the clear coral bed,
Be my rest 'neath a sod in the Land of the Heather,
And a cairn of grey granite be piled on my head!"

PREACHED TO DEAF EARS.

By LADY MAGNUS.

AMONG the many infirmities and weaknesses of humanity there are some which appeal directly to sympathy, and some few even, which, in a delicate and hardly to be defined manner, seem rather to add a subtle charm than to hinder a legitimate attraction. Cupid, we know, is always pictured blind, and whilst a dumb divinity would be distinctly uninteresting, and a deaf one grotesque, the bandaged eyes of the little boy-god jar on no susceptibilities of any sort, æsthetic or humanitarian. Blindness, by a happy gift, where it ceases to be pathetic, becomes at once picturesque, and a certain sweet savour of association clings about the loss of eyesight, lifting it almost from a defect into a dignity.

Little of the like can be claimed for the kindred infirmity of loss of hearing. Blind heroes and heroines of fiction, charming, gifted, lovable, recur to us by the score; but the sorrows of deafness have seldom been sung save in comic verse. In the poet's corner reserved for deaf folks Dame Eleanor Spearing keeps her mirth-provoking and well-nigh solitary niche, and in the ranks of the real they come hardly better off. Romance, in all such cases, either takes to insisting on the facts, resolutely refusing to let Stella stand in softening outline of her "Dean, too deaf to hear," or as resolutely ignores them, and regarding neither the evidence of reason nor of relations, makes the blind poet, dictating to his wearied, worried daughters, a more heroic figure to the imagination than the deaf musician to whom, patient and uncomplaining, his own melodies grew slowly meaningless. And what is read into law on this subject, no less than what is read into history, is apt to be grudging. "Thou shalt not curse the deaf" stands part and context of the injunction against putting a stumbling-block in the way of the blind; but whilst this latter would be accounted an outrage by barbarians, "to curse the deaf"—just a muttered anathema say, where the "deaf" is dense and interrogative—would scarcely be reckoned as more than a very venial sin among the most civilised.

Some explanation of this lack of both poetic and prosaic sympathy possibly lies in the fact that, the blind man feeling his deprivation most when alone, and the deaf man most when he is with others, the

dignity that belongs to "dark hours passed unseen," the sanctity that attaches to sorrows borne in silence, is, in the case of deafness, from its very nature, for ever and irrevocably absent. Blindness is unobtrusive, it makes its appeal to sympathy in silent, pathetic fashion, and never puts its helpers into awkward and ungraceful positions. We may be eyes to the blind in a dozen different and charming ways, whilst the most sympathetic can hardly be ears to the deaf without drawing to himself, as well as to the sufferer, a good deal of embarrassing attention. It is, in the main, the distinction between a great loss and a perpetually recurring annoyance, and it is undoubtedly far easier to be patient under a paralyzing stab than under smarting pin-pricks. "My lord," said that shrewd servant of the Syrian, as his master turned indignantly away from the presence of the prophet, "if thou hadst been bidden do some great thing wouldest not thou have done it?" and deaf folks, it may well be, feel a throb of sympathy with Naaman in the difficulty he experienced of making a dignified or a heroic business out of that simple daily prescribed washing in the Jordan. Some great thing might be managed, a bigger affliction might be better borne. One does not altogether resent looking pathetic, but it is so very hard to look awkward! Yet if the thing is faced, honestly and bravely, half the awkwardness and all the self-consciousness, which is its root, disappears.

Let it be at once fully acknowledged that of all the burdens which must be borne on one's own shoulders, and which will not bear shifting for a moment on to that of others, deafness takes first rank. One's friends are complaisant up to a certain point. They will let you beg of them, even on occasion borrow of them, but they will never let you bore them, and the deaf people who do not frankly acquiesce in their disability, and who, in general conversation, are always "wanting to know," are, it cannot be denied, distinctly bores. Blind folks seem wiser. They, as a rule, accept the fact that the view or the picture which others are discussing must be, by them, unseen, and sometimes even, with a brave hypocrisy, they will join in the general chorus of criticism. Deaf people, curiously enough, seem quite incapable of this form of social heroism.

They either interrupt talk by their fruitless efforts to follow it, or produce constraint by the heavy, irritable look with which they give it up. It seems such a pity, for an intelligent smile has often all the effect of a parenthetic remark, and to an appreciative-looking listener a good-natured person will rarely mind the trouble of slightly raising his voice. General conversation, it is certain, must be resigned, but our social arrangements, visits, dinners, at-homes, permit of many a pleasant talk *à deux* to all but the extremely deaf, and even these, by help of the lip language, which to quick sight and quick intelligence is not difficult of acquirement, or by use of the audiphone, which, to some sorts of deafness, is a veritable crutch, need not feel themselves altogether shut out. The clumsy expedient of an ear-trumpet is scarcely to be reckoned upon. It shifts the burden, and in sharing, doubles it. The wisest plan is to entirely realise the disability, and then to do the utmost not to placard its effects. Between the aggressively and obtrusively deaf, and those dwellers at street-corners who insist on exhibiting their deformities, there is only a difference of degree. To be pleasant is an obligation which society imposes on all her subjects, and such obligation is laid with twofold force and in many a prosaic, pathetic form on those who own besides the sovereignty of suffering. And here again the blind have the advantage over the deaf. It is very much easier, and infinitely more becoming, to translate in well-chosen phrase an unseen view to a grateful, graceful neighbour, listening "with long-lashed eyes abased," on a distant sofa, than to have to come close and reproduce in too-distinct tones an unheard speech to a too-eager auditor. That necessary closeness of contact with all sorts and conditions of men is, it must be confessed, "trying" to helped and helpers both, and not the least of the annoyances which deafness entails on fastidious folks is this nearness of approach which is the first essential to its alleviation. The only way to meet the difficulty and to minimize it, is for deaf people to rise to the occasion and to manage to be extra charming to every sense, *bien-mise* to their finger tips, delicately, refreshingly responsive to the demands made upon them. And this can be done in many a trivial but effectual way till, reversing the fairy gift which turned gold into withered leaves, this ugly blight, by skilful handling, may change almost to beauty. "You wear your cross like a crown," was once said to a deaf lady of our acquaintance, whose gra-

ciousness did positively seem to turn into a privilege that awkward necessity of near approach, and whose infirmity served certainly to individualise her, but scarcely to isolate. Winners of the world's battles can rarely tell completely the secret of their success, and they who conquer fate might find the task as difficult. Yet we suspect that such solutions, were they given, might often prove to be of the simplest, and to hinge much on attention to detail. Cæsar, in the throes of death, was heedful of the folds of his cloak; they who are wounded daily should be no less unselfishly concerned as to the adjustment of the lint and the bandages.

It is an art to grow old gracefully, and all defects and disabilities are only symptoms, premonitory or premature symptoms it may be, of growing old. To put it quite plainly, where intercourse implies some complaisance, that complaisance should be met half-way; where it compels some nearness of contact, that nearness should be rendered as entirely pleasant to sight and touch as circumstances can be made to yield it. Deaf people, in a very complete sense, have to take heed to their ways, but the heedfulness is worth while, since it emphasises that, good as it is to make use of one's advantages, a better use yet may be made of one's disadvantages. "Remember," says a very old philosopher,* "on every occasion which leads thee to vexation, to apply this principle, that this is not a misfortune, for that to bear it nobly is good fortune." And if only we could be induced to treat our troubles as well as we do our pictures, to twist them and turn them till we get them into a good light, we might discover that there is something of "good fortune" about the thing itself. First and foremost, against the loss of sense we might set the gain in sensibility; for deafness teaches, as no other deprivation can, a feeling for awkward and absurd forms of suffering, a swift sympathy for the snubbed and the silent, for the motley martyrs of no sect and no century, who mourn in gay-coloured garments and "dare not leave their smile." Such a power of comprehension once gained is a new and compensating sense. To the good also must be placed the revelation—it is little less—which personal trouble brings, of the immense amount of quiet kindness and helpfulness that there is in the world; to be the occasion for evoking this, is an end which goes far towards making the

means tolerable. Many a pleasure, it is true, has to be definitely relinquished, "the daughters of music are brought low" in a sense not less pitiful than of old, because the fact may be borne in on us in the commonplace form of a concert ticket; yet without going so far as poor John Leech, who wished himself in his grave, as presumably a place of rest from the noises of the street, there is, undoubtedly, some compensation for the deaf who are shut out from sweet sounds in the knowledge of their consequent immunity from irritating and distracting ones. If the birds are mute for them, so also are the hurdy-gurdy men, and the cats, and the steam-rollers and the Salvationists, and that latest terror of the streets, the men who've "got no work to do." Their infirmity insures them a power of concentrated work by day and of undisturbed sleep by night which Carlyle would have envied, and a comfortable certainty, too, of needing no straw laid

down before their doors in the event of the severest illness.

No preaching, even to "deaf ears," is complete without a moral, and this preachment being of an irregular sort, the moral may perhaps be permitted to be picked up from an out-of-the-way source. In one of Lear's nonsense verses there is the pathetic story told of a Pobble who has no toes, but "had once as many as we." All remedies failing as restoratives, the toeless hero is calmly assured by his aunt Jobiska that—

"All the world knows
A Pobble is happier without his toes."

The Pobble's reply is not recorded, but if he were at all worthy of such a delightfully comfortable relative, we may be certain that he did his very best to agree with her, and at any rate took to wearing indoor and outdoor shoes of so ingenious a make that the absence of his toes was rarely remarked upon.

A DAY-DREAMER.

SINCE coming from the land of dreams is lonely,
And the world's daylight very cold and grey,
I will return beyond the sun's rim only,
Into the gold dusk of my yesterday.

I will return through yonder purple coppice,—
But O, thou love-worn nightingale, be still!—
Into a world of silken, scarlet poppies,
Wherein who loveth dreams shall have his fill.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—POLL PERROW GOES A-BEGGING.

DARK days of clouds with gloomy days of rain, such as washes the fertile soil from the tops of the granite hills, leaving all bare and desolate, with nothing to break the savage desolation of the Cornish prospect but a few projecting blocks, and here and there a grim-looking, desolate engine-house standing up like a rough mausoleum erected to the memory of so much dead coin.

There were several of these in the neighbourhood of Hakemouth; records of mining adventures where blasting and piercing had gone on for years in search of that rich vein of copper or tin, which experts said

existed so many feet below grass, but which always proved to be a few feet lower than was ever reached, and instead of the working leading to the resurrection of capital, it only became its grave.

The rain fell, and on the third day the wind beat, and much soil was washed down into the verdant, ferny gullies, and out to sea. The waves beat and eddied and churned up the viscous sea wrack till the foam was fixed and sent flying in balls and flakes up the rocks and over the fields, where it lay like dirty snow.

In and out of the caverns the sea rushed and bellowed and roared, driving the air in before it, till the earth seemed to quiver, and the confined air escaped with a report like that of

some explosion. Then the gale passed over, the stars came out, and in the morning, save that the sea looked muddy instead of crystal clear and pure, all was sunshine and joy.

During the storm there had been an inquest, and with the rain pouring down till there were inches of water in the grave, the body of the unfortunate man was laid to rest.

Duncan Leslie had been busy for a couple of hours in a restless, excited way, till, happening to look down from up by his engine-house, he caught sight of a grey-looking figure seated upon a stone by the cliff path. Giving a few orders, he hurried along the track.

Uncle Luke saw him coming, out of the corner of one eye, but he did not move, only sat with his hands resting upon his stick, gazing out at the fishing-boats, which seemed to be revelling in the calm and sunshine, and gliding out to sea.

"Good morning."

"Bah! nothing of the kind," said Uncle Luke, viciously. "There isn't such a thing."

"No?" said Leslie, smiling sadly.

"Nothing of the kind. Life's all a mistake. The world's a round ball of brambles with a trouble on every thorn. Young Harry has the best of it, after all. Get wet?"

"Yesterday, at the funeral? Yes, very."

"Hah! Saw you were there. Horrible day. Well, good job it's all over."

Leslie was silent, and stood watching the old man.

"Something upset you?" he said at last.

"Upset me? Do you think it's possible for me to go to my brother's without being upset?"

"No, no. It has been a terrible business for you all."

"Wasn't talking about that," snapped out Uncle Luke. "That's dead and buried and forgotten."

"No, sir; not forgotten."

"I said, 'and forgotten.'"

Leslie bowed.

"Confound that woman!" continued Uncle Luke, after a pause. "Talk about Huguenot martyrs, sir; my brother George and that girl have lived a life of martyrdom putting up with her."

"She is old and eccentric."

"She has no business to be old and eccentric. Nobody has, sir; unless—unless he shuts himself up all alone as I do myself. I never worry any one; I only ask to be let alone. There, you needn't sneer."

"I did not sneer, sir."

"No, you didn't, Leslie. I beg pardon. You're a good fellow, Leslie. True gentleman. No man could have done more for us. But only to think of that woman attacking poor George and me as soon as we got back from the funeral. Abused him for degrading his son, and driving him to his terrible death. It was horrible, sir. Said she would never forgive him, and drove Louise sobbing out of the room."

Duncan Leslie winced, and Uncle Luke gave him a stern look.

"Ah, fool—fool—fool!" he exclaimed. "Can't you keep out of those trammels? Louise? Yea, a nice girl—now; but she'll grow up exactly like her aunt. We're a half-mad family, Leslie. Keep away from us."

"Mr. Luke Vine——"

"No, no. You need not say anything. Be content as you are, young man. Women are little better than monkeys, only better-looking. Look at my sister. Told George last night that he was living under false pretences, because he signed his name Vine. Bah! she's an idiot. Half mad."

He turned sharply round from gazing out to sea, and looked keenly in Leslie's face.

"Very well," he said quickly. "I don't care if you think I am."

"Really, Mr. Luke Vine, I——"

"Don't trouble yourself to say it. You thought I wasn't much better than my sister. I could see you did. Very well; perhaps I am not, but I don't go dancing my lunacy in everybody's face. Ah, it's a queer world, Leslie."

"No, sir; it is the people who are queer."

"Humph! That's not bad for you, Leslie. Yes; you are about right. It is the people who are queer. I'm a queer one, so my folks think, because I sent my plate to the bank, had my furniture in a big town house sold, and came to live down here. My sister says, to disgrace them all. There, I'm better now. Want to speak to me?"

"N—no, nothing very particular, Mr. Vine."

Uncle Luke tightened his lips, and stared fiercely out to sea.

"Even he can't tell the truth," he said.

"Stupid fellow! Just as if I couldn't read him through and through."

The meeting was assuming an unpleasant form when there was a diversion, Poll Perrow coming slowly up, basket on back, examining each face keenly with her sharp, dark eyes.

"Morning, Master Leslie," she said in her

sing-song tone. "Nice morning, my son. Morning, Master Luke Vine, sir. Got any fish for me to-day?"

Leslie nodded impatiently; Uncle Luke did not turn his head.

"I said to myself," continued the old woman, "Master Luke Vine saw that shoal of bass off the point this morning, and he'll be sure to have a heavy basket for me of what he don't want. Dessay I can sell you one, Mr. Leslie, sir."

"Can't you see when two gentlemen are talking?" said Uncle Luke, snappishly. "Go away."

"Ay, that I will, Master Luke, only let's have the fish first."

"I told you I haven't been fishing."

"Nay, not a word, Master Luke. Now, did he, Master Leslie? No fish, and I've tramped all the way up here for nothing."

"Shouldn't have come, then."

"It's very hard on a poor woman," sighed Poll, sinking on a stone, and resting her hands on her knees, her basket creaking loudly. "All this way up and no fish."

"No; be off."

"Iss, Master Luke, I'll go; but you've always been a kind friend to me, and I'm going to ask a favour, sir. I'm a lone woman, and at times I feel gashly ill, and I thought if you'd got a drop of wine or sperrits——"

"To encourage you in drinking."

"Now listen to him, what hard things he can say, Master Leslie, when I'm asking for a little in a bottle to keep in the cupboard for medicine."

"Go and beg at my brother's," snarled Uncle Luke.

"How can I, sir, with them in such trouble? Give me a drop, sir; 'bout a pint in the bottom of a bottle."

"Hear her, Leslie? That's modest. What would her ideas be of a fair quantity? There, you can go, Poll Perrow. You'll get no spirits or wine from me."

"Not much, sir, only a little."

"A little? Ask some of your smuggling friends that you go to meet out beyond the East Town."

The woman's jaw dropped, and Leslie saw that a peculiar blank look of wonder came over her countenance.

"Go to meet—East Town?"

"Yes; you're always stealing out there now before daybreak. I've watched you."

"Now think of that, Master Leslie," said the woman with a forced laugh. "I go with my basket to get a few of the big mussels yonder for bait, and he talks to me like that.

There see," she continued, swinging round her basket and taking out a handful of the shell fish, "that's the sort, sir. Let me leave you a few, Master Luke Vine."

"I don't believe you, Poll. It would not be the first time you were in a smuggling game. Remember that month in prison?"

"Don't be hard on a poor woman," said Poll. "It was only for hiding a few kegs of brandy for a poor man."

"Yes, and you're doing it again. I shall just say a word to the coast-guard, and tell them to have an eye on some of the caves yonder."

"No, no; don't, Master Luke, sir," cried the woman, rising excitedly, and making the shells in her basket rattle. "You wouldn't be so hard as to get me in trouble."

"There, Leslie," he said with a merry laugh; "am I right? Nice, honest creature this! Cheating the revenue. If it was not for such women as this, the fishermen wouldn't smuggle."

"But it doesn't do any one a bit of harm, Master Luke, sir. You won't speak to the coast-guard?"

"Indeed, but I will," cried Uncle Luke; "and have you punished. If you had been honest your daughter wouldn't have been charged with stealing down at my brother's."

"And a false charge too," cried the woman, ruffling up angrily. Then changing her manner, "Now, Master Luke, you wouldn't be so hard. Don't say a word to the coast-guard."

"Not speak to them? Why time after time I've seen you going off after some game."

"And more shame for you to watch. I didn't spy on you when you were down the town of a night, and I used to run against you in the dark lanes by the harbour."

Uncle Luke started up with his stick in his hand, and a curious grey look in his face.

"Saw—saw me!" he cried fiercely. "Why, you—but there, I will not get out of temper with such a woman. Do you hear? Go, and never come here again."

"Very well, Master Luke, sir, I'm going now," said the woman, as she adjusted the strap across her forehead; "but you won't be so hard as to speak to the coast-guard. Don't sir, please."

The woman spoke in a low, appealing way; and after trying in vain to catch Luke Vine's eye, she went slowly up the hill.

"Bad lot—a bad family," muttered Uncle Luke uneasily, as he glanced sharply up at Leslie from time to time. "Good thing to

rid the place of the hag. Begging at my brother's place for food and things every time I've been there. Yes. Good morning, Leslie, good morning."

He nodded shortly and went into the cottage, cutting short all further attempts at being communicative.

Leslie walked steadily back up the hill to his works, and had not been at his office five minutes before Poll Perrow's basket was creaking outside.

"I know you won't be so gashly hard on a poor woman, Master Leslie," she said. "It arn't true about me getting brandy, sir. Let me have a drop in the bottom of a bottle, sir. You'll never miss it, and you don't know what good you'll do a poor soul as wants it bad."

"Look here," said Leslie, "I'll give you some on one condition; that you do not come here again to beg."

"Not if I can help it, sir; but a well-off gentleman like you will never miss a drop. A pint will be plenty, sir, in as small a bottle as you can."

Leslie could not help laughing at the woman's impudence, but he said nothing, only went into the house and returned with a pint bottle filled with the potent spirit.

"And bless you for it, Master Leslie!" cried Poll Perrow, with her eyes sparkling. "Now, sir, only one little thing more."

"No," said Leslie, sternly. "I have given you what you asked; now go."

"I only want you to put in a word for me to Master Luke, sir. Don't let him speak to the coast-guard."

"Don't be alarmed; the old man is too good-hearted to do anything of the kind. But I should advise you to give up all such practices. There: good-day."

"Good-day, and bless you, my son!" cried Poll eagerly. "I shan't forget this."

"I was foolish to give it to her," said Leslie to himself, as he watched the woman's slowly retiring figure; and then he turned his eyes in the direction of the Vines', as it stood peaceful and bright-looking on its shelf by the cliff, across the intervening valley.

"Might venture to-night. Surely they would not think it intrusive! Yes: I will."

Duncan Leslie felt better after coming to this determination, and went busily about his work at the mine.

Poll Perrow went straight down into the little town and then up the path at the back, trudging steadily along and at a very good pace, till she saw about fifty yards in front a figure going in the same direction.

"Miss Madlin!" she said to herself. "I'd know her walk anywhere. And all in black, too. Ah!"

Poll Perrow stopped short with her mouth open.

"How horrid!" she ejaculated. "It killed him then, after all. Poor Master Van Heldre! Poor Master Harry Vine!"

She rubbed a tear away with her rough brown hand. Then starting up, she made the mussels in her basket rattle.

"What nonsense!" she said. "Why, Master Crampton told me last night, and down the street, that Master Van Heldre was much better, and he couldn't ha' died and Miss Madlin gone in mourning since last night. They couldn't ha' got the gownd made."

By this time Madelaine had reached the Vines' gate and gone in.

"Phew!"

Poll Perrow gave vent to a low whistle, something like the cry of a gull.

"Why, I know!" she muttered. "Miss Madlin's gone into mourning all along o' Master Harry. Then my Liza's a great goose. She was fond of him after all. Why! only to think!"

She turned off down a narrow path, so as to get round to the back door, where she was met by Liza, looking very red and angry.

"Now, what have you come for again? I saw you coming as I let Miss Madlin in, and it's too bad."

"Oh, Liza, Liza!" said the fish-woman, "what a wicked girl you are to talk to your poor mother like that!"

"I don't care whether it's wicked or whether it arn't wicked, but I just tell you this: if you come begging again, you may just go back, for you'll get nothing here. It's disgraceful; you taking to that."

"No, no, not begging, my dear," said Poll, staring at her daughter's red-brown face, as if lost in admiration. "Lor, Liza, what a hansum gal you do grow!"

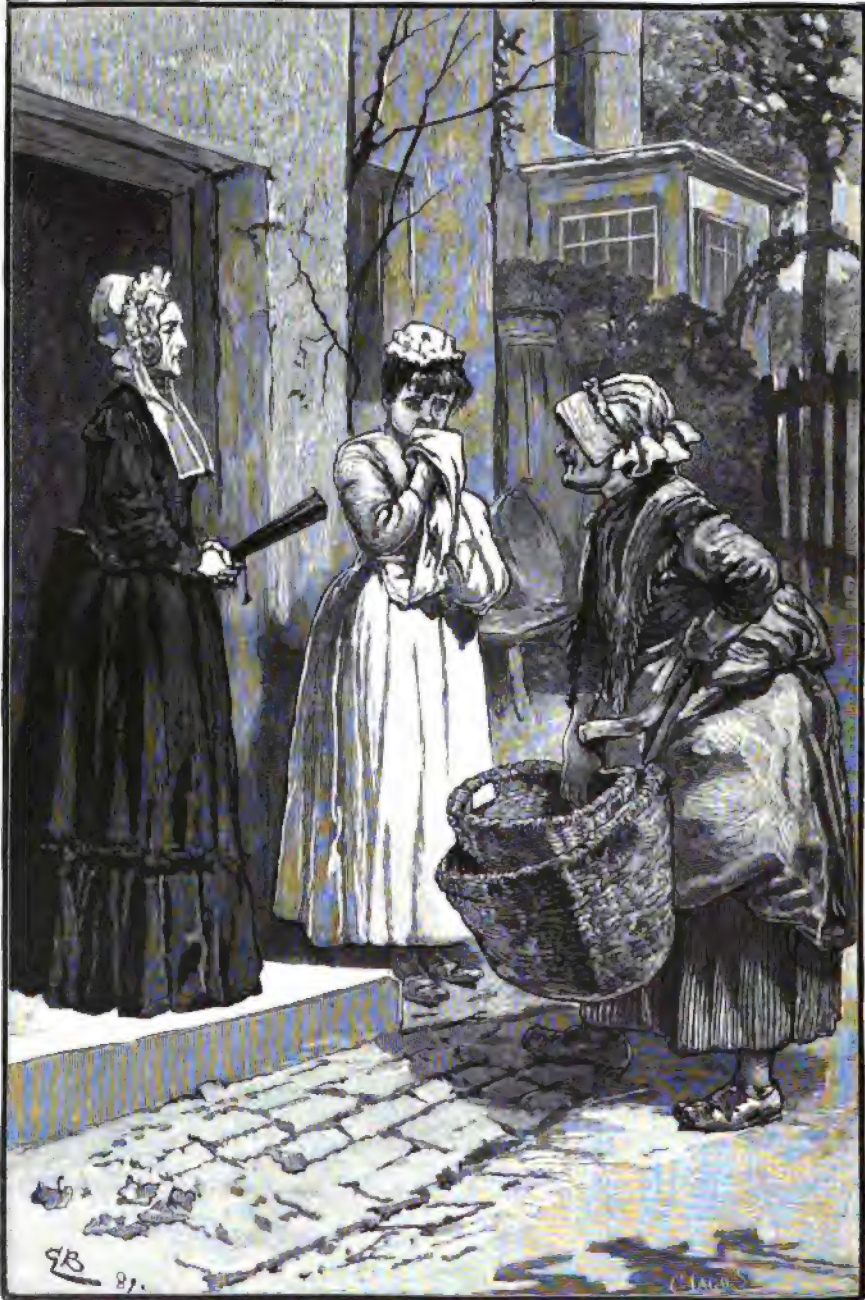
"Now, do adone, mother, and don't talk like that."

"I can't help it, Liza. I wonder half the fisher-lads in port arn't half mad after you."

"Now, mother, be quiet; you'll have Miss Margreet hear!"

"Nay, she'll be down-stairs with the company, won't she? Yes, Liza, you do grow more and more hansum every day."

"Then you oughtn't to tell me so, mother. It'll only make me prouder than I am. Now, what do you want again? This is four times you've been here this week."



"Put that basket down," said the old lady sharply.

"Is it, my dear! Well, you see, I've got some of them big mussels as you're so fond on, and I brought you a few to cook for your supper."

"It's very good of you. Well, there: give them to me, and do please go."

"Yes, my dear, there you are. That's right. Haven't got a bit o' cold meat, and a bit o' bread you could give me, have you, Liza!"

"No, I haven't, mother; and you ought to be ashamed to ask."

"So I am, my dear, almost. But you have got some, or half a chicken and some ham."

"Chicken! Oh, the idea!"

"Yes. There's a good girl; and if there's a bit o' cold pudden, or anything else, let's have it too. Put it all together in a cloth."

"Now, mother, I won't. It's stealing, and I should feel as if I'd stole it."

"Oh, what a gal you are, Liza! Why, didn't I wash, and iron, and bring home that last napkin, looking white as snow!"

"Yes, but—"

"And so I will this."

"But you won't bring back the cold chicken and ham," retorted Liza.

"Why, how could I, my dear! You know they won't keep."

"Well, once for all, mother, I won't, and there's an end of it."

"You'll break my heart, Liza, 'fore you've done," whimpered the fish-woman. "Think o' the days and days as I've carried you 'bout in this very basket, when I've been out gathering mussels or selling fish."

"Now, don't talk stuff, mother. You weared out half-a-dozen baskets since then."

"P'raps I have, Liza, but I haven't weared out the feeling that you're my gal, as lives here on the fat o' the land, and hot puddens every day, and refuses to give your poor mother a bit o' broken wittle to save her from starving. Oh!"

"Mother, don't!" cried Liza, stamping her foot. "If you cry like that they'll hear you in the parlour."

"Then give me a bit o' something to eat, and let me go."

"I won't, and that's flat, mother."

"Then I shall sit down on the front doorstep, and I'll wait till Miss Louy comes; and she'll make you give me something. No, I won't; I'll stop till cook comes. Where is she?"

"A-cleaning herself."

"Then I shall wait."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" cried Liza, stamp-

ing about, and speaking in a tearful whisper. "I do wish I never hadn't had no mother, that I do."

"There's a ungrateful gal," said the fish-woman; "and you grewed up so beautiful, and me so proud on you."

"Well, will you promise to go away, mother, and never come and ask no more if I give you something this time?"

"To be sure I will, my dear, of course. There, be quick, before any one comes, and do it up neat in a napkin, there's a good gal, and I'll bring you a lobster next time I come."

"There, now, and you promised you wouldn't come no more."

"Ah, well, I won't then, my dear."

"Then I'll get you a bit this time; but mind, never no more."

"No, never no more, my beauty. Only be quick."

Liza disappeared, and Poll Perrow took off her basket and sat down on the edge, rubbing her knees and laughing heartily to herself, but smoothing her countenance again directly, as she heard her daughter's step.

"There, mother," whispered Liza, "and I feel just as if there was the police after me, same as they was after Master Harry. This is the last time, mind."

"Yes, my beauty, the last time. What is there?"

"No, no, don't open it," cried the girl, laying her hand sharply upon the parcel she had given to her mother. "There's half a pork pie, and a piece of seed cake, and a bit o' chicken."

"Any bread?"

"Yes, lots. Now hide it in your basket, and go."

"To be sure I will, Liza." And the white napkin and its contents were soon hidden under a piece of fishing-net. "There, good-bye, my dear. You'll be glad you've helped your poor old mother, that you will, and—Good mornin', Miss Margreet."

"Put that basket down," said the old lady sharply, as she stood gazing imperiously at the detected pair.

"Put the basket down, miss?"

"Yes, directly. I am glad I came down and caught you in the act. Shameful! Disgraceful! Liza, take out that parcel of food stolen from my brother."

"No, no, Miss Margreet, only broken wittles, as would be thrown away."

"Quick! Take it out, Liza. Now go."

Liza stooped down, sobbing, and pulled the bundle out of the basket.

"I always said you'd be the ruin of me, mother," she sobbed.

"No, no, my dear," cried the woman; "Miss Margreet won't be hard on us. Let me have it, miss, do, please."

"Go away!" cried Aunt Marguerite fiercely.

"Pray, pray do, miss," cried the woman imploringly.

"Go away, I say!" cried Aunt Marguerite, "and if you set foot on these premises again, you shall leave with the police. Go!"

Poor Liza stood inside the door, sobbing, with the bundle of good things neatly pinned up in her hand, while Aunt Marguerite stood pointing imperiously with her closed fan, as if it were a sceptre, till Poll Perrow, with her basket swung once more upon her back, disappeared out of the gate.

"Now, madam," said Aunt Marguerite, "the moment that young person in the drawing-room has gone, you shall receive your dismissal, and in disgrace."

CHAPTER XXXIX.—A MEETING IN PAIN.

GEORGE VINE sat in his easy-chair in front of the fire-place, gazing at the cut paper ornaments and willow shavings, and seeing in them the career of his son, and the dismal scene in the churchyard, with the rain falling and making little pearls on the black coffin cloth.

He had not spoken for hours, but from time to time, as Louise laid her hand upon his arm, he had slowly taken and pressed it between his own before raising it with a sigh to his lips.

"Don't speak to me, my darling," he had pleaded to her when he first took his place there that morning. "I want to think."

She had respected his prayer, and in her endeavours to take her thoughts from the horrors which oppressed her she had stolen into her father's study, as an idea struck her, but only to come away sadly. Her visit had been too late; the cherished collection of marine objects were one and all dead.

Her father looked up as she returned. He had not seemed to notice her, but he knew where she had been, and as he gave her a questioning look Liza entered the room.

"Miss Van Heldre, miss."

Vine caught his child's hand, as if too weak for the encounter; but, as the closely-veiled figure in black crossed the room quickly, and both realised the meaning of those mourning garments, Louise burst into a wild fit of sobbing, and turned away for a

moment, but only to be clasped directly in Madelaine's arms.

There was an earnest, loving embrace, and then Madelaine turned to Vine, laying her hands upon his breast, and kissing him as a child would its parent.

"So much better," she said, in answer to the wistful, inquiring look directed at her. "I have come to fetch you both."

"To fetch us?" faltered Vine with a horrified look.

"My father begs you will come to him. I am his ambassador. You will not refuse?"

"I cannot meet him," said Vine in a faint voice full of despair; "and," he added to himself, "I could not bear it."

"He would come to you, but he is weak and suffering," said Madelaine as she laid her hand upon the stricken man's arm. "'Tell him I beg he will come to me,' he said," she whispered. "You will not refuse, Mr. Vine?"

"No, I will not refuse. Louise, dear?"

"Yes, father, I will go with you," she said slowly; and in a few minutes she returned, ready for the walk, and crossed to where her father sat holding Madelaine's hand.

As she entered he rose and met her.

"Louise, my child, must we go?" he said feebly. "I feel as if it were almost more than I can bear. Must we go?"

"Yes," she replied gravely; "we must go."

Vine bowed his head.

"Come, my child," he said, turning to Madelaine, and he was half-way to the door when Aunt Marguerite entered.

"Going out?" she said, shrinking from the sombre figure in black.

"Yes, aunt."

"You must attend first to what I have to say, Louise. Miss Van Heldre can, I daresay, wait."

Madelaine bent her head and drew back.

"I have business with Mr. Van Heldre, Marguerite," said Vine more sternly than he had ever spoken to her before. "You must wait till our return."

Aunt Marguerite's eyes flashed an indignant look at Madelaine, as the cause of this rebuff, and she drew back with a stiff courtesy and walked slowly before them out of the room.

George Vine gazed wildly round him as he walked slowly down the steep way toward the town. It seemed terrible to him that in such a time of suffering and mourning, sea, sky, and earth should be painted in such lovely colours. The heavy rain of the pre-

vious days seemed to have given a brilliancy to leaf and flower that before was wanting; and as, from time to time, he glanced wildly at the rocky point, the scene of the tragedy of his life, the waves were curling over, and breaking in iridescent foam upon the rocks, to roll back in silvery cataracts to the sea.

He turned away his eyes with a shudder, fighting hard to keep his thoughts from the horrors of that night; but he was doomed to have them emphasised, for, just before reaching the foot of the steep way, the little party came suddenly upon the great burly fisherman, who had undertaken to sail across to St. Malo with the fugitive that night.

"Mornin', master," he said.

Vine turned ghastly pale, and his brain reeled; but he soon recovered himself.

"Louise, Madelaine, my children, go on, and I will follow."

Louise looked at him appealingly; but he was perfectly firm, and she went on with her friend.

"I fear, in the midst of my trouble, Perrow, that I had forgotten my engagement with you."

"Like enough, master, and no wonder. There was no hurry."

"Yes, but there is," said Vine slowly. "Will you come to my house to-night or to-morrow morning? and I'll give you my cheque to take to the bank."

"For how much?" said the man eagerly.

"One hundred pounds; the amount I promised you."

"Ay, but that was for taking the poor boy across. No, Master Vine, we've been talking it over, the five on us, and there's the boat, and one night's fishing gone as might have been a good one or it mightn't been nothing; so we're going to ask you to pay us a pound apiece."

"But——"

"Good day, Master Vine, busy now. I'll come on in a day or two."

The man turned away abruptly, and, with his brow heavily wrinkled, as he felt moved by the man's generosity, Vine walked slowly on, and overtook Louise and Madelaine.

Mrs. Van Heldre was waiting in the hall as the little party entered, and she hurried forward with extended hands, and her lips parted to speak, but no words would come. She could only press their old friend's hand before leading him up to where Van Heldre lay, his face ghastly pale beneath his bandaged head.

As they entered he held out his hand to

Vine, who stood gazing at him without an attempt to accept the friendly grip.

"Louise, my child," said Van Heldre, turning to her; and she stepped quickly across to take the extended hand. "Now leave us," he said quietly; and, in obedience to his wish, the rest quitted the room.

"You did not take my hand, George Vine," said Van Heldre, as soon as they were alone.

"How can I, after the wrong you have received at mine?"

"Hah! that is why I sent for you," said Van Heldre. "I have lain here insensible and ignorant of what was done, else those proceedings would never have been taken. You have much to forgive me, Vine."

"You have much to forgive me," said the latter slowly.

"Then take my hand, and let us forgive, if there is any call for such a proceeding on either side. Vine, old friend, how you must have suffered, and I not there to say one kindly word!"

"Van Heldre," said Vine slowly, as, holding his friend's hand, he slowly seated himself by the bed's head, "did you ever know what it was to pray for death?"

"Thank Heaven, no," replied Van Heldre with a slight shudder, for there was something weird and strange about his old friend's manner. "Since I have regained my senses I have prayed to live. There seems so much to be done at times like this. But, Vine, old friend, what can I say to you? For pity's sake don't look at me like that!"

"Look at you—like that?" said Vine slowly.

"Yes; your eyes seem so full of reproach. I tell you, my dear old fellow, that I would rather have died than that poor boy should have been prosecuted for my sake."

"I know everything," said Vine slowly. "I do not reproach you, John. I reproach myself, and at times it seems more than I can bear."

"Louise," said Van Heldre softly.

"Louise! Ah, Louise!" said Vine eagerly. "Without her I must have died."

The two old friends sat, hand clasped in hand, in perfect silence for quite an hour before there was a gentle tap at the door, and Madelaine entered.

"He is so weak yet, Mr. Vine," she said, taking and separating their hands.

"Madelaine—my child!"

"Mr. Vine may come again in the evening for a little while," said Madelaine, smiling, as she bent down and kissed her father's brow.

"So stern and tyrannical," protested Van Heldre.

"Only to make you well, father," replied Madelaine smiling; and she led their old friend from the room.

"He spoke as if he wanted my forgiveness," said Vine as he walked slowly back, noting as they went the kindly deference paid to them by those they met.

"Mr. Van Heldre, father!" said Louise gently.

"Did I speak aloud, my child?"

"Yes, dear."

"Ah, these thoughts are too keen, and will not be crushed down. Yes, child, yes. My forgiveness, when it is I who should plead, for all the horrors of the past, plead for his forgiveness, Louise. He must have suffered terribly to be brought down to this."

Louise looked wistfully in her father's face, whose sunken cheeks and hollow eyes told of mental suffering greater far than that which their friend had been called upon to bear.

"Will time heal all this agony and pain?" she asked herself; and it was with a sigh of relief that she reached the gate, and her father went straight to his chair, to sit down and stare straight before him at the unlit grate, as if seeing in the burning glow scene after scene of the past, till he started excitedly, for there was a ring at the gate-bell.

Louise rose to lay her hand upon his shoulder.

"Only some visitors, or a letter," she said tenderly.

"I thought—I thought it might be news," he said wearily. "But no, no, no. There can be no news now."

"Mr. Leslie, miss," said Liza from the door.

"To see me, Liza? Say that——"

"No, sir. In the drawing-room, sir. 'Tis to see Miss Louise, if she will give him an interview, he said."

Louise looked wildly at her father.

"Must I see him, father?" she said, with her face now ghastly pale.

He did not answer for some moments, and then slowly said the one word—

"Yes."

She bent down and kissed him, and then summoning up all her courage, slowly left the room.

CHAPTER XL.—DUNCAN LESLIE SPEAKS OUT.

DUNCAN LESLIE was standing at a table

on which was a photograph of Louise, as she entered the room silently; and as, after a long contemplation of the counterfeit, he drew a long breath, and looked up to see the object of his thoughts standing just inside the doorway, too much agitated to give notice of her presence, he coloured like a boy caught in some act of which he was ashamed.

"Miss Vine," he cried, advancing quickly with extended hands.

Louise did not speak, but slowly raised one hand for him to take, and suffered him to lead her to a chair.

He remained standing before her as she looked up at him in a wild, frightened manner, as if imploring him not to speak, and for a few moments silence reigned.

"You will forgive me," said Leslie, at last, "if my visit is ill-timed, for I am a busy man, ill-versed in the etiquette of such matters. I was in a dilemma. I wished to try and show my sympathy, and I was afraid to stay away for fear of seeming neglectful."

"Mr. Leslie need have been under no apprehension," said Louise slowly, and speaking as if sorrow had exhausted itself, and there was nothing left but resignation. "My father and I have thought very deeply, and can never be sufficiently grateful for all that has been done."

"You have suffered so," he said in a low voice, "that I am going to beg of you not to refer to the past. Of course, I know," he added quickly, "how easy it is to speak platitudes—how hard to express what one feels at a time like this."

"Mr. Leslie need not speak," said Louise quietly. "He has shown his sympathy in a way that no words can express."

Leslie gazed down at the piteous, sorrow-stricken face before him; and, as if wrenching himself away, he walked to the window, and stood gazing out for a few moments while Louise sat watching him, and fighting hard with her emotions. She felt weakened by all that had gone by, and as if, had he extended his arms to her, she could have flown to him, nestled in his breast, and begged him to help her in this terrible strait. And yet all the time her sorrow had strengthened, as well as enfeebled, for she was able to master her weakness and follow out the course she had planned.

Leslie returned to her side.

"I must speak," he said hoarsely. "It is not cruelty at a time like this; it is the desire to help, to console, to be near you in distress,

Miss Vine—Louise—you—forgive me for saying it—you must have known that for months past I have loved you."

She looked up at him wistfully, and there was a look of such pain and sorrow in her eyes that he paused, and took the hand which she resigned to him without shrinking, but only to send a thrill of pain through him, for the act was not that of one accepting the offer of his love.

"Yes," she said after a painful pause, "I did think that you must care for me."

"As I do," he whispered earnestly, "and this is my excuse for speaking now. No: don't shrink from me. I only ask you to think of me as one whose sole thought is of you, and of how he may help and serve you."

"You have helped us in every way," she said sadly.

"I have tried so hard," he said huskily; "but everything has seemed little compared to what I wished; and now—it is all I ask: you will let this formal barrier between us be cast away, so that in everything I may be your help and counsellor. Louise, it is no time to talk of love," he cried earnestly, "and my wooing is that of a rough, blunt man; and—don't shrink from me—only tell me that some day, when all this pain and suffering has been softened by time, I may ask you to listen to me; and that now I may go away feeling you believe in my love and sympathy. You will tell me this?"

She softly drew away her hand, giving him a look so full of pity and sorrow that a feeling akin to despair made his heart swell within his breast. He had read of those who resigned the world with all its hopes and pleasures from a feeling that their time was short here, and of death-bed farewells, and there was so much of this in Louise's manner that he became stricken and chilled.

It was only by a tremendous effort over self that he was able to summon up the strength to speak; and, in place of the halting, hesitating words of a few minutes before, he now spoke out earnestly and well.

"Forgive me," he said; and she trembled as she shrank away to cover her eyes with her hand. "It was folly on my part to speak to you at such a time, but my love is stronger than worldly forms, and though I grieve to have given you pain, I cannot feel sorry that I have spoken the simple, honest truth. You are too sweet and true to deal lightly with a man's frank, earnest love. Forgive me—say good-bye. I am going away patiently—to wait."

His manner changed as he took her dis-

engaged hand and kissed it tenderly and respectfully.

"I will not ask to see your father to-day. He is, I know, suffering and ill; but tell him from me that he has only to send a messenger to bring me here at once. I want to help him in every way. Good-bye."

"Stop!"

He was half-way to the door when that one word arrested him, and with a sense of delicious joy flooding his breast, he turned quickly to listen to the words which would give him a life's happiness. The flash of joy died out as quickly as that of lightning, and in the same way seemed to leave the hope that had arisen scathed and dead. For there was no mistaking that look, nor the tone of the voice which spoke what seemed to him the death warrant of his love.

"I could not speak," she said in a strange low voice full of the pain she suffered. "I tried to check you, but the words would not come. What you ask is impossible; I could not promise. It would be cruel to you—unjust, and it would raise hopes that could never be fulfilled."

"No, no. Don't say that," he cried appealingly. "I have been premature. I should have waited patiently."

"It would have been the same. Mr. Leslie, you should not have asked this. You should not have exposed yourself to the pain of a refusal, me to the agony of being forced to speak."

"I grant much of what you say," he pleaded. "Forgive me."

"Do not misunderstand me," she continued, after a brave effort to master her emotion. "After what has passed it would be impossible. I have but one duty now: that of devoting myself to my father."

"You feel this," he pleaded; "and you are speaking sincerely; but wait. Pray say no more—now. There: let me say good-bye."

"No," she said sternly; "you shall not leave me under a misapprehension. It has been a struggle that has been almost too great; but I have won the strength to speak. No: Mr. Leslie, it is impossible."

"No, Mr. Leslie, it is impossible!" The words were like a thin, sharp echo of those spoken by Louise, and they both started and turned, to see that Aunt Marguerite had entered the room, and had not only heard her niece's refusal of Leslie, but gathered the full import of the sentence.

She stood drawn up half-way between them and the door, looking very handsome

and impressive in her deep mourning; but there was the suggestion of a faint sneering smile upon her lip, and her eyes were half closed, as with hands crossed over her breast, she seemed to point over her shoulder with her closed black fan.

"Aunt!" exclaimed Louise. "How could——"

Her strength was spent. She could say no more. Her senses seemed to reel, and with the impression upon her that if she stayed she would swoon away, she hurried from the room, leaving Leslie and the old woman face to face.

He drew in a long breath, set his teeth, and meeting Aunt Marguerite's angry look firmly, he bowed, and was about to quit the house.

"No, not yet," she said. "I am no eaves-dropper, Mr. Leslie; but I felt bound to watch over that poor motherless girl. It was right that I should, for in spite of all my hints, I may say my plain speaking regarding my child's future, you have taken advantage of her helplessness to press forward your suit."

"Miss Vine——"

"Miss Marguerite Vine, if you please, Mr. Leslie," said the lady with a ceremonious bow.

"Miss Marguerite Vine then," cried Leslie angrily, "I cannot discuss this matter with you: I look to Mr. Vine."

"My brother is weak and ill. I am the head of this family, sir, and I have before now told you my intentions respecting my niece."

"Yes, madam, but you are not her father."

"I am her father's sister, and if my memory serves me rightly, I told you that Monsieur De Ligny——"

"Who is Monsieur De Ligny?" said Vine entering the room slowly.

"Mr. Vine, I must appeal to you," cried Leslie.

"No. It would be indecorous. I have told Mr. Leslie, who has been persecuting Louise with his addresses, that it is an outrage at such a time; and that if our child marries there is a gentleman of good French lineage to be studied. That his wishes are built upon the sand, for Monsieur De Ligny——"

"Monsieur De Ligny?"

"A friend of mine," said Aunt Marguerite quickly.

"Mr. Vine," said Leslie hotly, "I cannot stay here to discuss this matter with Miss Vine."

"Miss Marguerite Vine," said the old lady with an aggravating smile.

Leslie gave an impatient stamp with one foot, essayed to speak, and choking with disappointment and anger, failed, and hurried out of the house.

"Such insufferable insolence! And at a time like this," cried Aunt Marguerite, contemptuously, as her brother with a curiously absorbed look upon his face began to pace the room.

"He has sent the poor girl sobbing to her room."

"Louise has not engaged herself to this man, Marguerite?"

"Engaged herself. Pah! You should have been here. Am I to sit still and witness another wreck in our unhappy family through your weakness and imbecility? Mr. Leslie has had his answer, however. He will not come again."

She swept out of the room, leaving her brother gazing vacantly before him.

"She seems almost to have forgotten poor Harry. I thought she would have taken it more to heart. But Monsieur De Ligny—Monsieur De Ligny? I cannot think. Another time I shall remember all, I dare say. Ah, my darling," he cried eagerly, as Louise re-entered the room. "You heard what Mr. Leslie said?"

"Yes, father."

"And refused him?"

"Yes."

Her father took her hand, and stood trying to collect his thoughts, which as the result of the agony from which he had suffered, seemed now to be beyond control.

"Yes," he said at last, "it was right. You could not accept Mr. Leslie now. But your aunt said——"

He looked at her vacantly with his hand to his head.

"What did your aunt say about your being engaged?"

"Pray, pray, do not speak to me about it, dear," said Louise, piteously. "I cannot bear it. Father, I wish to be with you—to help and comfort, and to find help and comfort in your arms."

"Yes," he said, folding her to his breast; "and you are suffering and ill. It is not the first time that our people have been called upon to suffer, my child. But your aunt——"

"Pray dearest, not now—not now," whispered Louise, laying her brow against his cheek.

"I will say no more," he said tenderly. "Yes, to be my help and comfort in all this trouble and distress. You are right, it is no time for thinking of such things as that."

CHAPTER XL.—AUNT MARGUERITE MAKES PLANS.

"I COULD not—I could not. A wife should accept her husband, proud of him, proud of herself, the gift she gives him with her love; and I should have been his disgrace. Impossible! How could I have ever looked him bravely in the face? I should have felt that he must recall the past, and repented when it was too late."

So mused Louise Vine as she sat trying to work that same evening after a wearisome meal, at which Aunt Marguerite had taken her place to rouse them from their despondent state. So she expressed it, and the result had been painful in the extreme.

Aunt Marguerite's remedy was change, and she proposed that they should all go for a tour to the south of France.

"Don't shake your head, George," she said. "You are not a common person. The lower classes—the uneducated of course—go on nursing their troubles, but it is a duty with people of our position to suffer and be strong. So put the trouble behind us, and show a brave face to the world. You hear this, Louise?"

"Yes, aunt," said Louise, sadly.

"Then pray listen to it as if you took some interest in what I said, and meant to profit by it, child."

Louise murmured something suggestive of a promise to profit by her aunt's wisdom, and the old lady turned to her brother.

"Yes, George, I have planned it all out. We will go to the south of France, to the sea-side if you wish, and while Louise and I try and find a little relaxation, you can dabble and net strange things out of the water-pools. Girl: be careful."

This to poor Liza, whose ears seemed to be red-hot, and her cheeks alternately flushed and pale, as she brought in and took out the dinner, waiting at other times being dispensed with fortunately. For Liza's wits were wool-gathering, according to Aunt Marguerite's theory, and in her agitation respecting the manner in which she had been surprised when yielding to her mother's importunities, she was constantly watching the faces of her master and Louise, and calculating the chances for and against ignominious dismissal. One minute she told herself they knew all. The next minute her heart

gave a thump of satisfaction, for Louise's sad eyes had looked so kindly in hers that Liza told herself her young mistress either did not know, or was going to forgive her.

Directly after Liza dropped the cover of a vegetable dish in her agitation right on Aunt Marguerite's black silk crape-trimmed dress, for her master had told her to bring him bread, and in a tone of voice which thrilled through her as he looked her in the face with, according to her idea, his eyes seeming to say, "This is some of the bread you tried to steal."

Liza escaped from the room as soon as possible, and was relieving her pent-up feelings at the back door when she heard her name whispered.

"Who's there? what is it?" she said.

"It's only me, Liza, my dear. Has she told—"

"Oh, mother! You shouldn't," sobbed Liza. "You won't be happy till you've got me put in prison."

"Nonsense, my dear, they won't do that. Never you fear. Now look here. What become of that parcel you made up?"

"I don't know; I've been half wild ever since, and I don't know how it's going to end."

"Then I'll tell you," cried the old fish-woman. "You've got to get me that parcel, or else to make me up another."

"I won't; there!" cried Liza angrily.

"How dare you say won't to your mother, miss!" said the old woman angrily. "Now look here; I'm going a bit farther on, and then I'm coming back, and I shall expect to find the napkin done up all ready. If it isn't, you'll see."

Liza stood with her mouth open, listening to her mother's retiring footsteps; and then with a fresh burst of tears waiting to be wiped away, she ran in to answer the bell, and clear away, shivering the while, as she saw that Aunt Marguerite's eyes were fixed upon her, watching every movement, and seeming to threaten to reveal what had been discovered earlier in the day.

Aunt Marguerite said nothing, however, then, for her thoughts were taken up with her project of living away for a time. She had been talking away pretty rapidly, first to one and then to the other, but rarely eliciting a reply; but at last she turned sharply upon her brother.

"How soon shall we be going, George?"

"Going? Where?" he replied dreamily.

"On the Continent for our change."

"We shall not go on the Continent, Mar-

guerite," he said gravely. "I shall not think of leaving here."

Aunt Marguerite rose from the table, and gazed at her brother, as if not sure that she had heard aright. Then she turned to her niece, to look at her with questioning eyes, but to gain no information there, for Louise bent down over the work she had taken from a stand.

"Did you understand what your father said?" she asked sharply.

"Yes, aunt."

"And pray what did he say?"

"That he would not go on the Continent."

"What?"

"That he would not leave home with this terrible weight upon his mind."

Aunt Marguerite sat bolt upright in her chair for a few moments without speaking, and the look she gave her brother was of the most withering nature.

"Am I to understand," she said at last, "that you prefer to stay here and visit and nurse your Dutch friend?"

Her brother looked at her, but there was no trace of anger in his glance.

Aunt Marguerite lowered her eyes, and then turned them in a supercilious way upon Louise.

"May I count upon your companionship," she said, "if I decide to go though Auvergne and stay there for a few days, on my way to Hyères?"

"If you go, aunt?" said Louise wonderingly.

"There is a certain estate in the neighbourhood of Mont d'Or," she continued; "I wish to see in what condition it is kept. These things seem to devolve now on me, who am forced to take the lead as representative of our neglected family."

"For Heaven's sake, Marguerite!" cried Vine impetuously. "No—no, no," he muttered, checking himself hastily. "Better not—better not."

"I beg your pardon, brother," she said, raising her glass.

"Nothing—nothing," he replied.

"Well, Louise, child, I am waiting," she continued, turning her eyes in a half-pitying, condescending way upon her niece. "Well? May I count upon you?"

"Aunt, dear——"

"It will do you good. You look too pale. This place crushes you down, and narrows your intellect, my child. A little French society would work a vast change in you."

"Aunt, dear," said Louise, rising and crossing to her to lay her hands upon the

old lady's shoulder, "don't talk about such things now. Let me come up to your room, and read to you a little while."

Aunt Marguerite smiled.

"My dear Louise, why do you talk to me like this? Do you take me for a child?"

George Vine heaved a deep sigh, and turned in his chair.

"Do you think I have lived all these years in the world and do not know what is best for such a girl as you?"

"But indeed, aunt, I am not ill. I do not require a change."

"Ah, poor young obstinacy! I must take you well in hand, child, and see if I cannot teach you to comport yourself more in accordance with your position in life. I shall have time now, especially during our little journey. When would it be convenient for you to be ready?"

"Aunt dear! It is impossible; we could not go."

"Impossible! Then I must speak. You will be ready in three days from now. I feel that I require change, and we will go."

"Margaret!" cried Vine, who during the past few minutes had been writhing in his seat, "how can you be so absurd!"

"Poor George!" she said, with a sigh, as she rose from her chair. "I wish I could persuade him to go. Mind, Louise, my child, in three days from now. We shall go straight to Paris, perhaps for a month. You need not trouble about dress. A few necessaries. All that you will require we can get in Paris. Come in before you go to bed, I may have a few more words to say."

She sailed slowly across the room, waving her fan gently, as if it were a wing which helped her progress, as she preserved her graceful carriage. Then the door closed behind her, and Louise half ran to her father's side.

"Shall I go up with her?" she whispered anxiously.

Her father shook his head.

"But did you not notice how strange she seemed?"

"No more strange, my dear, than she has often been before, after something has agitated her greatly. In her way she was very fond of poor Harry."

"Yes, father, I know; but I never saw her so agitated as this."

"She will calm down, as she has calmed down before."

"But this idea of going abroad?"

"She will forget it by to-morrow. I was wrong to speak as I did. It only sets her

thinking more seriously. Poor Margaret! We must be very patient and forbearing with her. Her life was turned out of its regular course by a terrible disappointment. I try always to remember this when she is more eccentric—more trying than usual."

Louise shrank a little more round to the back of her father's chair, as he drew her hand over his shoulder, and she laid her cheek upon his head as, with fixed eyes, she gazed straight before her into futurity, and a spasm of pain shot through her at her father's words, "a terrible disappointment," "eccentric." Had Aunt Marguerite ever suffered as she suffered now? and did such mental agony result in changing the whole course of a girl's young life?

The tears stood in her eyes and dimmed them; but in spite of the blurring of her vision, she seemed to see herself gradually changing and growing old and eccentric too. For was not she also wasting with a terrible disappointment—a blow that must be as agonizing as any Aunt Marguerite could have felt?

The outlook seemed so blank and terrible that a strange feeling of excitement came over her, waking dream succeeding waking dream, each more painful than the last; but she was brought back to the present by her father's voice.

"Why, my darling," he said, "your hand is quite cold, and you tremble. Come, come, you ought to know Aunt Margaret by now. There, it is time I started for Van Helder's. I faithfully promised to go back this evening. Perhaps Luke will be there."

"Yes, father," she said, making an effort to be calm, "it is time you went down. Give my dear love to Madelaine."

"Eh? Give your love? why you are coming too."

"No, no," she said hastily; "I—I am not well this evening."

"No, you are not well," he said tenderly. "Your hands are icy, and—yes, I expected so, your forehead burns. Why, my darling, you must not be ill."

"Oh no, dear. I am not going to be ill, I shall be quite well to-morrow."

"Then come with me. The change will do you good."

"No; not to-night, father. I would rather stay."

"But Madelaine is in sad trouble, too, my child, and she will be greatly disappointed if you do not come."

"Tell her I felt too unwell, dear," said Louise imploringly, for her father's persist-

ence seemed to trouble her more and more; and he looked at her wonderingly, she seemed so agitated.

"But I don't like to leave you like this, my child."

"Yes, yes; please go, dear. I shall be so much better alone. There, it is growing late. You will not stop very long."

"No; an hour or two. I must be guided by circumstances. If that man is there—I cannot help it—I shall stay a very short time."

"That man, father?"

"Yes," said Vine, with a shudder. "Crampton. He makes me shiver whenever we meet."

His face grew agonized as he spoke; and he rose hastily and kissed Louise.

"You will not alter your mind and come?" he said tenderly.

"No, no, father; pray do not press me. I cannot go to-night."

"Strange!" said George Vine thoughtfully. "Strange that she should want to stay."

He had crossed the little rock garden, and closed the gate to stand looking back at the old granite house, dwelling sadly upon his children, and mingling thoughts of the determined refusal of Louise to come, with projects which he had had *in petto* for the benefit of his son.

He shuddered and turned to go along the level platform cut in the great slope before beginning the rapid descent.

CHAPTER XLII.—A STARTLING VISITATION.

"FINE night, master, but gashly dark," said a gruff voice, as Vine was nearly at the bottom of the slope.

"Ah, Perrow! Yes, very dark," said Vine quietly. "Not out with your boat to-night?"

"No, Master Vine, not to-night. Sea brimes. Why, if we cast a net to-night every mash would look as if it was a-fire. Best at home night like this. Going down town?"

"Yes, Perrow."

"Ah, you'll be going to see Master Van Helder. You don't know, sir, how glad my mates are as he's better. Good night, sir. You'll ketch up to Master Leslie if you look sharp. He come up as far as here and went back."

"Thank you. Good night," said Vine, and he walked on, but slackened his pace, for he felt that he could not meet Leslie then. The poor fellow would be suffering

from his rebuff, and Vine shrank from listening to any appeal.

But he was fated to meet Leslie all the same, for at a turn of the steep path he encountered the young mine-owner coming towards him, and he appeared startled on finding who it was.

"Going out, Mr. Vine?" he stammered. "I was coming up to the house, but—er—never mind.; I can call some other time."

"I would turn back with you, only I promised to go down to Mr. Van Heldre's to-night."

"Ah, yes, to Van Heldre's," said Leslie confusedly. "I'll walk with you if you will not mind."

"I shall be glad of your company," said Vine quietly; and they continued down to the town, Leslie very thoughtful, and Vine disinclined to converse.

"No, I am not going in, Mr. Vine. Will you let me come and say a few words to you to-morrow?"

"Yes," replied Vine gently.

He had meant to speak firmly and decisively, but a feeling of pity and sympathy for the young man, whose heart he seemed to read, changed his tone. It had been in his heart, too, to say, "It will be better if you do not come," but he found it impossible, and they parted.

Leslie hesitated as soon as he was alone. What should he do? Go home? Home was a horrible desert to him now; and in his present frame of mind, the best thing he could do was to go right off for a long walk. By fatiguing the body he would make the brain ask for rest, instead of keeping up that whirl of anxious thought.

He felt that he must act. That was the only way to find oblivion and repose from the incessant thought which troubled him. He started off with the intention of wearying his muscles, so as to lie down that night and win the sleep to which he was often now a stranger.

His first intent was to go right up by the cliff-path, by Uncle Luke's, and over the hill by his own place, but if he went that way there was the possibility of finding Uncle Luke leaning over the wall, gazing out at the starlit sea, and probably he would stop and question him.

That night his one thought was of being alone, and he took the opposite direction, went down to the ferry, hunted out the man from the inn hard by, and had himself rowed across the harbour, so as to walk along the cliff eastwards, and then strike in north and

round by the head of the estuary, where he could recross by the old stone bridge, and reach home—a walk of a dozen miles.

At the end of a couple of miles along the rugged pathway, where in places the greatest care was needed to avoid going over some precipitous spot to the shore below, Leslie stopped short to listen to the hollow moaning sound of the waves, and he seated himself close to the cliff edge, in a dark nook, which formed one of the sheltered look-outs used by the coastguard in bad weather.

The sea glittered as if the surface were of polished jet, strewn with diamonds, and, impressed by the similarity of the scene to that of the night on which the search had been carried on after Harry Vine, Leslie's thoughts went back to the various scenes which repeated themselves before his mental gaze from the beginning to that terrible finale when the remains lay stark and disfigured in the inn shed, and the saturated cards proclaimed who the dead man was.

"Poor girl!" he said half aloud, "and with all that trouble fresh upon her, and the feeling that she and her family are disgraced for ever, I go to her to press forward my selfish, egotistical love. God forgive me! What weak creatures we men are."

He sat thinking, taking off his hat for the cool, moist sea air to fan his feverish temples, when the solemn silence of the starry night seemed to bring to him rest and repose such as he had not enjoyed since the hour when Aunt Marguerite planted that sharp, poisoned barb in his breast.

"It is not that," he said to himself, with a sigh full of satisfaction. "She never felt the full force of love yet for any man, but if ever her gentle young nature turned towards any one, it was towards me. And, knowing this, I, in my impatience and want of consideration, contrived my own downfall. No, not my downfall; there is hope yet, and a few words rightly spoken will remove the past."

The feverish sensation was passing away swiftly. The calm serenity of the night beneath the glorious dome of stars was bringing with it restfulness, and hope rose strongly, as, far away in the east, he saw a glittering point of light rise above the sea slowly higher and higher, a veritable star of hope to him.

"What's that?" he said to himself, as above the boom of the waves which struck below and then filled some hollow and fell back with an angry hiss, he fancied he heard a sob.

There was no mistake; a woman was talking in a low, moaning way, and then there came another sob.

He rose quickly.

"Is anything the matter?" he said sharply.

"Ah! Why, how you frightened me! Is that you, Master Leslie?"

"Yes. Who is it? Poll Perrow?"

"Yes, Master Leslie, it's me."

"Why, what are you doing here?" said Leslie, as cynical old Uncle Luke's hints about the smuggling flashed across his mind.

"Nothing to do with smuggling," she said, as if divining his thoughts.

"Indeed, old lady! Well, it looks very suspicious."

"No, it don't, sir. D'you think if I wanted to carry any landed goods I should take 'em along the coastguard path?"

"A man would not," said Leslie, "but I should say it's just what a cunning old woman's brain would suggest, as being the surest way to throw the revenue men off the scent."

"Dessay you're right, Master Leslie, but you may search me if you like. I've got nothing to-night."

"I'm not going to search you, old lady. I'll leave that to the revenue men. But what's the matter?"

"Matter, Master Leslie?"

"Yes; I heard you sobbing. Are you in trouble?"

"Of course I am, sir. Aren't I a lone widow?"

"So you have been these fifteen years."

"Fourteen and three-quarters, sir."

"Ah, well, I was near enough. But what is it, old lady? Want a little money?"

"No, no, no, Master Leslie, sir; and that's very kind of you, sir; and if I don't bring you up half-a-dozen of the finest mack'rel that come in these next days, my name aren't Perrow."

"Thank you. There, I don't want to be inquisitive, but it seems strange for a woman like you to be crying away here on the cliff two miles from home on a dark night."

"And it seems strange for a young gentleman like you to be up here all alone and three miles from home. You was watching me, Master Leslie."

"You'll take my word, Poll Perrow," said Leslie quietly. "I did not know you were here."

"Yes, I'll believe you, Master Leslie, sir. But you was watching someone else?"

"No, I came for a walk, my good woman, that's all."

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"Then I won't stop you, sir. Good night, sir."

"Good night," said Leslie; and feeling more content, he took out his cigar case, and after selecting one by feeling, he went back into the coastguards' station and struck a match.

He looked along the cliff path as the match flashed, and caught sight faintly of the old woman.

"Watching me anyhow," he said to himself, as he lit his cigar. "Now what can that old girl be doing here? She's fifty-five if she's a day, but if she is not courting and had a quarrel with her youthful lover, I'm what that old lady says that Van Heldre is—a Dutchman."

He turned back along the path feeling comparatively light-hearted and restful. The long, dark, weary walk to tire himself was forgotten, and he went slowly back along the coastguard path, turning a little from time to time to gaze over his left shoulder at the brilliant planet which rose higher and higher over the glistening sea.

"Hope!" he said half aloud. "What a glorious word that is, and what a weary world this would be if there were none! Yes, I will hope."

He walked slowly on, wondering whether Poll Perrow was watching and following him. Then he forgot all about her, for his thoughts were fixed upon the granite house across the estuary, and the sweet sad face of Louise half in shadow, half lit by the soft glow of the shaded lamp.

"Mr. Vine will be back by now," he said. "I might call in and ask how Van Heldre is to-night. It would be sociable, and I should see her, and let my manner show my sorrow for having grieved her and given her pain; and, is it possible to let her see that I am full of patient, abiding hope, that some day she will speak differently to the way in which she spoke to-day? Yes, a woman would read all that, and I will be patient and guarded now."

It was astonishing how eager Duncan Leslie felt now to see what news George Vine had brought from Van Heldre's; and with the beautiful absurdity of young men in his position, he never allowed himself to think that when he crossed the ferry he would be within a stone's throw of the merchant's house, and that all he need do was to knock and ask old Crampton or Mrs. Van Heldre for the latest bulletin, which would be gladly given.

It was so much easier to go on by the house, make for the path which led up the steep slope, and go right to the home on the shelf of the cliff, and ask there.

Meanwhile, Louise Vine had seated herself by the dining-room table with the light of the shaded lamp falling athwart her glossy hair, and half throwing up her sweet pale face, just as Leslie had pictured it far away upon the cliff. Now and then her needle glittered, but only at rare intervals, for she was deep in thought.

At times her eyes closed, and as she sat there bending forward, it seemed as if she slept; but her lips moved, and a piteous sigh escaped her overlaid breast.

The night seemed hot and oppressive, and she rose after a time and unhasped the casement window, beneath the old painted glass coat-of-arms; and, as she approached it, dimly seen by the light cast from behind her, she shuddered, for it struck her there was a black stain across the painting, and a shadowy dark mark obliterated the proud words of the old family motto.

As she threw back the casement she stood leaning her head against the window, gazing out into the starlit space, and listening to the faint whisper of the coming tide.

While she listened it seemed to her that the faint boom and rush of the water obliterated every other sound as she tried in vain to detect her father's step slowly ascending the steep path.

"Too soon—too soon," she said softly, and she returned to her seat to try and continue her work, but the attempt was vain. The light fell upon her motionless hands holding a piece of some black material, the thread was invisible, and only at times a keen thin gleam of light betrayed the whereabouts of the needle. Her sad eyes were fixed on the dark opening of the window through which she could see a scarcely defined patch of starry sky, while the soft night air gave her a feeling of rest, such as had come to the man who had told her that he loved.

"Never more," she sighed at last; "that is all past. A foolish dream."

Making an effort over herself, she resumed her work, drawing the needle through quickly for a few minutes, and trying hard to dismiss Duncan Leslie from her thoughts. As she worked, she pictured her father seated by Van Heldre's side; and a feeling of thankfulness came over her as she thought of the warm friendship between her elders,

and of how firm and staunch Van Heldre seemed to be. Then she thought of the home troubles with her Aunt Marguerite, and her father's patient forbearance under circumstances which were a heavy trial to his patience.

"Poor Aunt Marguerite!" she sighed, as her hands dropped with her work, and she sat gazing across the table straight out at the starry heavens. "How she loved poor Harry in her way; and yet how soon he seems to have passed out of her mind!"

She sighed as the past came back with her brother's wilfulness and folly; but, throwing these weaknesses into the shade, there were all his frank, good qualities, his tenderness to her before the troubles seemed to wrench them apart; the happy hours they had passed with Madelaine as boy and girls together; all happy days—gone for ever, but which seemed to stand out now as parts of Harry's life which were to be remembered to the exclusion of all that was terrible and black.

"My brother!" she breathed, as she gazed straight out seaward, and a faint smile passed her lips; "he loved me, and I could always win him over to my side."

The thought seemed frozen in her brain, her half-closed eyes opened widely, the pupils dilated, and her lips parted more and more, as she sat there fixed to her seat, the chilly drops gathering on her white brow, and a thrill of horror coursing through her veins. For as she looked she seemed to have conjured up the countenance of her brother, to gaze in there by the open casement—the face as she had seen it last—when he escaped from her bedroom, but not flushed and excited; it was now pale, the eyes hollow, and his hair clinging unkempt about his brow.

Was she awake, or was this some evolution of her imagination, or were those old stories true that at certain times the forms of those we loved did return to visit the scenes where they had passed their lives? This then was such a vision of the form of the brother whom she loved; and she gazed wildly, with her eyes starting, excited more than fearing, in the strange exaltation which she felt.

Then she sank back in her chair with the chill of dread now emphasized, as she gazed fixedly at the ghastly face, for she saw the lips part as if to speak, and she uttered a low, gasping sound, for from the open window came in a quick hoarse whisper,

"Louy, why don't you speak? Are you alone?"

PERENNIAL CHRISTIAN GRACES.

Short Sunday Readings for August.

By PROFESSOR ELMSLIE, D.D.

"Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."—1 THESS. v. 16—18.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalm lxx., and Revelation iv.

REJOICE EVERMORE.

MANY traits and graces of Christian character are individual and occasional. They show in some lives, not in others, and even in the same life they appear and disappear under varying circumstances. Like the diverse foliage, flower, and fruitage of the trees, that come with the seasons and go with the seasons, they belong to personal temperament and passing experience. Certain elements, on the contrary, are universal and perpetual. They form the essential core of Christian character. They are like those central fibres of a great tree that, springing from the extremities of the deepest roots, run unbroken through the whole length of the vast trunk, till they terminate in the tips of the topmost branches. Of such are the dispositions commended by the Apostle when he bids us rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. These are not casual ornaments or optional qualities; they are of the very warp and woof of Christianity, perpetual, ever-present, and indispensable. In the Christian life a song of glad rejoicing ever rings; a voice of prayer murmurs in pleading whispers that never sink into silence; and all along its chequered pathway a sweet breath of thanksgiving ascends unceasing to the throne of the great Father on high. Rejoicing, prayer, thanksgiving—these are the keynotes of Christian character. They are the music become audible of its inmost and essential chords—faith, hope, and charity.

It is a question of the day whether our world is a happy or a miserable world. The answer depends very much on when and where the query finds us. Who of us has not sometimes said, "The world is all wrong and wretched"? But it was when our own spirit was full of evil and unrest. There have been days when we have said, "The world is a vale of tears; there are in it more sobs than smiles." But that was because our heart was aching, and our eyes were blinded

with tears. Whenever we escape from ourselves, and with unjaundiced gaze look mother-nature in the face, the world that looks back on us is a world where happiness outweighs evil and pleasure conquers pain. Were it otherwise the world could not continue. Life would become worn out, were misery, the procuress of death, stronger than happiness, the minister of life. There is, indeed, enough of decay, and pain, and strife, and death. But these are not the substance of existence. They are but the shadow of its sunlight. Spite the struggle for existence, the prevalent aspect of the world of feet and fins and feathers is one not of depression, but of alert enjoyment and vitality. And humanity's burden of centuries of toil and sorrow has not broken the spring of joy in the heart of our race, for still at its fountain-head, as it bursts eager into existence, it sparkles and bubbles with gladness in the mirth and laughter and pure joy of living, of early childhood. The world is not a vale of tears. The gladness is more than the sadness, and most of that is an accident. The face that looks at us out of nature in the song of the birds, the sweetness of the air, the glow of the sunlight, is a face of joy, and its message to us is, "Rejoice!"

The religion of Jesus is not a reversal of nature's ideal, but the fulfilment of its purpose thwarted by sin. The aim of the Gospel is not to make men sad, but glad. It takes up the command of nature, repeats and re-enforces it. Religion ought to be a joy-giver, ay, a joy-heightener. Where nature said, "Rejoice!" Christianity says, "Rejoice evermore!" It takes the gladness of life, and multiplies and transfigures its radiance, like the sunlight that streams through the painted panes of a cathedral window, till its beams melt and glow and flame into gold and crimson glory. This effect of religion is not a remote and random accompaniment, but a necessary and essential attribute. The injunction of rejoicing is not a cold permission or a friendly counsel, but it is a high and peremptory command. It stands in equal rank with prayer and thanksgiving, and comes borne on the solemn tones of a voice

that says, "This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." It is not a thing you may choose or eschew, it is a purpose of God, a part of redemption, a heart-desire of Jesus Christ, that your Christian life should be pervasively and persistently a life of rejoicing.

What is this spirit of rejoicing that is so imperatively demanded, that knows no break, that blooms with perennial sweetness? Since it is universal, it cannot be a thing of excited feeling or high-strung emotion, nor can it be anything incompatible with other rightful moods. It must be something that can go essentially unchanged through toil and rest, solemnity and mirth, success and failure, smiles and tears. Strong, subtle, diffusive, it is a temperament rather than a temper, a spirit more than a mood. Hard to define, it may best be understood by marking the disposition that it excludes—hopelessness, depression, despond. Under the worst burdens of sorrow, struggle, sin, the dominant note of the Christian's heart must be uncrushed buoyancy of courage, hope, and cheer. In the Bible all moods of the human spirit are ascribed to God—anger, vexation, grief, but never once despond. For that is the mood of weakness, of defeat. Thwarted God may be in the processes of His love, but not baffled in His eternal designs. Delayed He may be in the fulfilment of His purposes, but defeated never. He is God, and the end of all His ways must be rejoicing. And God is ours! In the world we may have trial, but the end of it is triumph. *Sursum corda!* We cannot be defeated. God is our portion. As combatants we suffer, but as conquerors we endure, sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

Can it be that joy is the dominant mark of a religion, that has been peculiarly called the worship of sorrow, whose special benedictions are for those that mourn, and that sets over its altar a cross, and on it the image of one pouring out his soul unto death? Is it not rather the characteristic note of that light-hearted religion of the old world, that has painted its conception of life in the joyous procession of the Hours—those lovely female forms that flit by with such eager life in their sweet faces, such strength and beauty in their rounded limbs, and something like the soaring of the lark in their starry eyes, unbent by toil, unclouded by fear, unblurred by tears? It is joy, the joy of living, but it is a joy shallow, selfish, and insufficient. It has not faced the darkness. It has fled from pain and sorrow and sin. It

is a religion not of strength but of weakness. What we men and women in this world of death and grief and wrong must have is a religion for the shadow as well as the sunlight, that with equal serenity can confront life or death, joy or sorrow. And this we have in the faith of Jesus Christ. It is indeed by pre-eminence a worship of sorrow, but of sorrow turned into joy, a religion of defeat that carries victory in its bosom. It has faced everything in life, good and evil, gain and loss, sadness and gladness. It has gone through all, and it comes again, with the scars of the conflict, and the tears of endurance on it, and with calm, triumphant glance it says, "Rejoice evermore."

How much religion needs to be lit up with joy! It is not enough to be good. We must be good attractively. Piety that is laborious, strained, despondent, is like the air when it is empty of sunshine. We want to fight the good fight of faith hopefully, light-heartedly. Is that possible with the world so perverse, with sin so strong within us, and our hearts so weak and wayward? Yes, in Christ, it is the will of God concerning you.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Genesis xviii. and John xvii.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

Life is for most of us a busy, bustling scene. There is so much to see and hear and do. Sight and sounds, persons and things jostle one another at the gateways of the senses. The mind is full of ideas, the heart of emotions, the hands of business. Amid the hurly-burly that is about our feet on earth, we have no time to lift our eyes to the stars and heaven. It is much if morning and evening we can make a brief pause to interject a few petitions of personal or family supplication to God. But perpetual prayer! Surely that is for the anchorite and recluse. Doubtless, if prayer be necessarily an overt act of devotion, a posture of the body, an articulate expression of desire. But what if prayer be rather an attitude of the soul, a temperament or disposition of the spirit? God is a God of reality. He cares nothing for pomps and shows and ceremonies. He regards only truth and actuality. Of phrases He makes little. He reckons with solid facts. God is a spirit. His direct contact is with our spirit. In His sight a man's prayers are not the utterances of his lips, but the active endeavours of his will; not

the sentimental aspirations of his emotional hours, but the steady determinations of his heart. The requests of his mouth matter little, the bent of his life counts for everything. His real prayers are heard not in the murmur of his devotions, but in the music of the footsteps of his spirit, as these lead him on earthward or heavenward. People complain that their prayers are not heard. Their actual prayers are heard—and answered. A mother prayed for her daughter that she might be good and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and be the child of God, and so be happy here and hereafter. But that mother in her inmost heart loved the world more than goodness, valued in her acquaintance social rank above moral worth, worshipped in very deed and truth money and title beyond purity and honour and love. Her child, living in the breath and atmosphere of her mother's heart desires, drank in her mother's real world's gospel, and so in the choosing time preferred to purchase worldly position at the price of affection and self-respect and religion. But when a loveless choice had its sequel in misery and shame, why did that mother bemoan herself that her prayers for her child's happiness had not been answered. Not answered! her prayers, her real prayers had been only too fully answered. God gave her the desire of her heart, but He sent leanness into her soul. Our conscious prayers may be few and fitful, but our actual prayers in the bent of our character, the endeavours of our life, the secret hankerings of our souls—are unending and perpetual. In a very real and in a very awful sense we all of us "pray without ceasing."

Is prayer efficacious? Is it any use for me to ask God to protect me from harm, to avert a menace of evil, to brighten my life with some great joy? Has not science shown us that our life is knit into a great fabric of interlocked and fast-fixed machinery, in which our lot is irrevocably determined, and where all things fall out by routine and of necessity? That is not so. If we have over our world a loving-hearted Father, there is naught discovered yet in His works that forbids our faith in His willingness and ability to help us. Rather has our new knowledge of the marvellous mechanism of nature strengthened the necessity we feel to postulate behind and above nature a mind of all power and wisdom. That God is and that He hears our prayers, was never a theorem of reason, but always an intuition of faith. Prayer was and is the child, not of calculation, but of

heart instinct. He who insists on knowing how God may answer, has forgotten what prayer is; while he who proposes to prove by experiment or test by statistics the fact of God's answering, has not even begun to understand what we mean by that word God. If for me it is certain that I have in heaven a God of all might, and wisdom, and goodness, a host of vexed questions become empty and irrelevant. Believing that my life is in His hands, whose will is holy, good, and perfect, what care I to inquire whether my prayer makes, or modifies, or reverses that will divine? What matters it to me, to tell me that I am but one of myriad creatures, whose good shall not for any partiality be sacrificed to mine, when I feel myself in the care and keeping of a heart that is absolute love to me? Precisely because of these ignorances, and enigmas, and awes, which some men foolishly make barriers to prayer, my prayers shall pour forth the more daringly, more abundantly, more unrestrained. With such a Father I need not fear to speak out all my heart—not merely my wise wishes, but my foolish cravings, too; not merely my aspirations of nobility, but my cries of weakness, my shrinkings of the flesh, my pains, and agonies and tears—even as Christ in Gethsemane sought that the cup of His anguish might be taken from Him. My Father is too wise to yield to my erring importunities, but He will be gracious to show me their error, and to wean my heart from them. He is too magnanimous to judge me harshly, but He made my surcharged heart to seek and find relief in utterance, and His love likes that I should choose His ear to tell my wayward, childish troubles and cravings to. And surely it is just this that is prayer's proper and most potent efficacy, that in this world of darkness and difficulty it brings my heart, with its mingled good and evil, into touch and fellowship with that great heart of all light, and strength, and goodness, where alone my heart can perfectly rise above the dark world, alone learn the secret of its true holiness and happiness, alone lay down the burden of its sins and sorrows, and enter into rest.

The distinctive mark of the Christian life is its possession now amid life's struggle of the joy of final triumph. That joy springs not from attainment, but from hope, and that hope rests in a faith that sees the invisible. It is much to have one's heart set to the quest of the ideal, to have the striving of our life directed to what is good and honourable. But all alone, by ourselves, how dreary the

conflict, how hopeless the prospect, how heart-breaking the odds for evil! Our little short-lived personality in such a vast lost world, against such a measureless and inveterate entail of sin, and sorrow, and shame! We need a great Heart, lifted up high above sin and death, holy and eternal, earnest beyond our earnestness, strong where we are weak, leading us in our conflict, fighting still when we fall, linking on our fragile efforts to the firm persistence and final triumph of His everlasting goodness and truth. Such faith breathes hope in the face of defeat, kindles the smile of joy in the midst of struggle, and makes life one long, glad fellowship with God in conflict and in victory. This is indeed to pray without ceasing.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Psalm cvii., and Heb. xii. 1-18.

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS.

Gratitude is rare. There is in the world plenty of thanksgiving, but not much thankfulness. Acknowledgment of a debt is one thing, payment in kind quite another. The first is light, the second is laborious. The one is an activity of the lips, the other a movement of the heart. In words of thanks we are all profuse, but in the matter of heart gratitude we are mostly insolvent debtors. The default is not always due to want of heart. It is perhaps more often caused by want of thought. Few of us know how happy we are. We do not perceive how well we are off. It is the point where the shoe pinches that we think of, not the fact that we have a shoe. The profits of our business are put aside, while we worry over the losses. Our heart is bitter over the *mal-à-propos* remark of our friend; it never occurs to us to congratulate ourselves on the thousand unpleasant things he was good enough not to say. Nay, when we are grateful to our earthly friends or our Heavenly Father, is it not usually for some small external gift, while we remain unconscious of the best they do for us in making about us that ever-present, sweet environment of kindly love, that is our heart's true home amid earth's cold and empty wastes?

There are degrees in thankfulness and gradations of gratitude. The commodity that is put on the market under these names is not all of the same quality. Much is spurious, still more raw and alloyed; only a little quite pure and perfect. Here is a man

well-to-do and prosperous, surrounded by comforts, enjoying his good things, conscious of his good fortune, happy and contented. Behold his pleased face, mark his good-humour, hear his expressions of satisfaction. Is that man not thankful? If that be all, if your description be complete, certainly not. His condition is one of selfish enjoyment, but not of gratitude. Happy he may be, thankful never. What he feels is simply his own well-being, not the thoughtful love that gave it. He is conscious only of the external bounties, but blind to the kind hand and the planning heart of the Bountiful Giver. Gratitude is an emotion possible only between two persons. Many things are mistaken for it; or make but its beginnings. Before I can truly thank God, I must feel Him really with me, and feel His love to me. A vague sense of living in a world suffused with the action of a general beneficence, and a glad experience of security and comfort in the sense, are much beyond mere self-satisfaction in one's own well-being, but these feelings still come short of genuine gratitude to God. For that we must have a touch of God more real and substantial than our contact with His gifts. For that the sweetest thing for us must be that the glow of goodness in them is the very warmth of His giving hand, and the wonder and joy of them that they came direct to us from the love of His heart divine. Then, and only then, shall we give thanks, not with the easy tribute of our lips, but with that genuine movement of the heart in responsive gratitude and love, which is the sweetest thing man can give to man on earth, and the gift dearest to God's heart in heaven.

Thanksgiving, like joy and prayer, is to be a continuous element in the melody of a Christian heart. Our life is to be one unbroken, soaring song of grateful thanksgiving to God. That seems strange. To give thanks in our hours of gladness, when our hearts are happy, when fortune smiles on us, that is natural and easy. But when disaster shatters our hopes and flings us out roofless into the cold world; when the grinding wheels of toil roll monotonous over hearts that are weary unto death; when pain, and sickness, and bereavement, or trial and temptation come like chill spectres and banish all our joy; in our days of doubt, and grief, and strife, must we then also give thanks? Surely that were hard; that were unnatural. The birds sing in the sunshiny mornings. They are silent in the rain and tempest. But our hearts must give thanks alike by day and by night, in rain and in shine, not merely in

the budding spring, not merely in the sweet summer when the air is all tingling with warmth and light, not merely in the golden autumn laden with fruit and corn, but also in the icy winter when the driving sleet sweeps by and the bitter frost-wind moans across the snow-locked plains? If my path lay ever in the sunlight of prosperity, my heart might be ever chanting psalms of thanks and gladness. But in truth it passes through such contrasted regions, such changeable seasons; now warm with trustful love, anon chilled with deep despair; now rich in tender ties of sweet companionship, again empty, desolate, bereaved; here entering on a grand triumphal march, and anon dragging itself wearily along, wounded and broken. That my heart should make melody of thanksgiving when the soft zephyrs of joy play over its strings I can understand; but shall wailing winds of sorrow, fierce blasts of woe, wild storms of calamity strike the chords and wake the same thankful music there? How should the same result emerge from causes so diverse?

When things unlike produce a like effect, we know that beneath their discordant forms they hold at heart the same common cause. Since joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity equally call forth our thanksgiving, there must reside beneath their divergent dress, behind the smiles of the one, the tears of the other, one and the same root and motive of gratitude. There need be no surprise in that. For in our successes and good fortunes, it is not the external bounty, it is not the personal pleasure, that produces our thankfulness. So far we experience no more than selfish satisfaction and enjoyment. What stirs my gratitude is the sweet sense of an unseen love going out to me and finding me in these joys. My thanksgiving is the response of my heart to God's heart. Because I believe that my Father meant and secures my good in this prosperity, I ought to and I do give thanks. So then thanksgiving ought to arise, whenever God is kind, in everything in which He seeks my well-being. Only when in anything God has not been kind, has not sought my good, has ceased to be loving, only then may my thankfulness fail and my thanksgiving cease. And we said in our haste, that thanksgiving belonged only to the days of shining summer, and not to the winter days of sorrow! Why that is as much as to say that it is only in prosperity and not at all in adversity, only in life's pleasures and not in life's pains, only in our hours of ease and not in our hours of earnest-

ness, only in the light and selfish places of our lot and not in its grave and solemn and grander heights, that God cares for us, seeks our welfare, is kind and good and loving. How could we ever so misjudge the great heart that made us as to dream a dark dream like that?

No wonder that gratitude is rare. What seems a spontaneous instinct is in truth one of the hardest of ethical attainments. It is a grace possible only to faith and hope, to be achieved alone by love. In life's chagrins and crosses, battles, bereavements, and losses, faith must confront not iron fate, or chance caprice, but the good and holy will of God. To fulfil life's duties faithfully, to fight its conflicts bravely, to bear its burdens loyally, our hands must be nerved and our hearts uplifted by a hope high and imperishable as heaven. To take the discipline of our life from God's hand, as it sweeps through the whole gamut of its varied music from the heights of joy to the deep notes of sorrow, to understand and gladly acquiesce in His high design to give us not pleasure but goodness, to have us not happy but holy, we need to have in us a nobility of soul and an unselfish purity of love such as are in His great heart on high. When thus in faith and hope and love our heart answers to His heart, and love on earth interprets love in heaven, then, and only then, shall we love Him as we ought, and in everything give thanks.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Psalm viii., and 2 Cor. vi.

THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS
CONCERNING YOU.

The Christian life is one of perpetual rejoicing, prayer, and thanksgiving. It is a poem of hope and faith and love, set to a music of joy and prayer and praise. Amid the squalor of our sinful world that makes a fair picture—the three central elements of Christian life melting into the sister graces of Christian character—hope with its smile of undying joy, faith with its fellowship of prayer unceasing, and love with its song of thanks unending. Here it stands over against our maimed lives, luring us with its unearthly loveliness, beckoning us with its holy hands, claiming us with its imperative Divineness. It is the will of God concerning you.

How have you dealt with the heavenly vision? For it comes to every one of us.

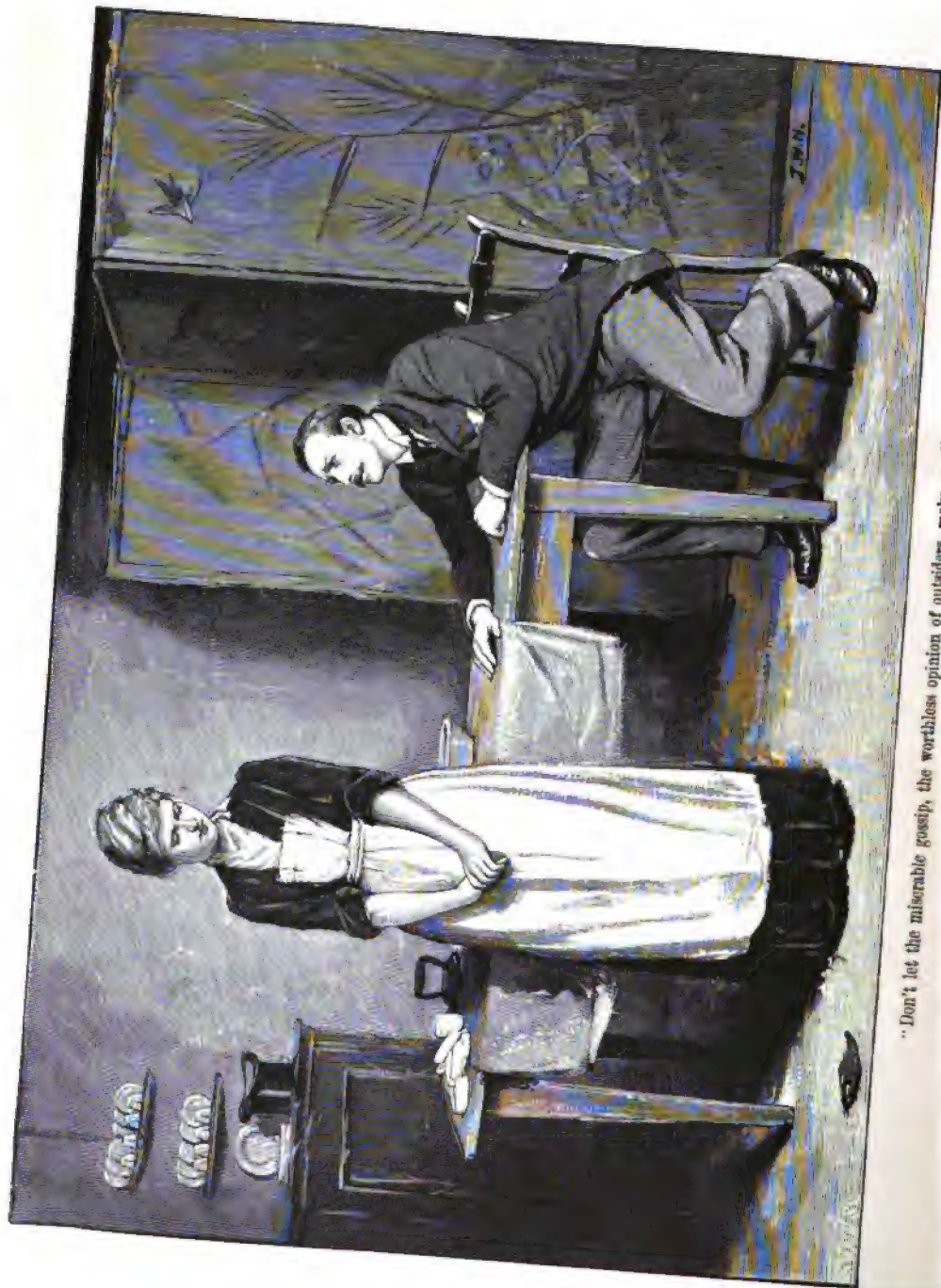
Christ has lived in our lost world, has died to take away the world's sin. He has risen from the dead, He has come again into our world in His holy spirit. He lives and moves and works in a very real fashion in our world's story. Down through the centuries His heart has been moulding the thoughts of men, His spirit inspiring their aspirations, controlling their purposes, forming and fashioning their characters. He has created for us a new heaven and a new earth; He has given birth to a new humanity, Himself the head and we the members. All about us, in our modern civilisation, we encounter His thoughts, His promises, His desires, His commands. In the State as in the Church, in society as in the home, beyond all else in the sacred recesses of our inmost spirit, we meet Him with His holiness, with His pity, with His love, with His grave call to come and follow Him. From that contact with the living, redeeming, claiming Christ you cannot escape. You may say what you will to the Church, to the evidences of religion, to the records of the Gospel. You may criticise them, despise them, reject them, deny them. Against the historical Son of Man of the past you may thus speak a word of scorn, of misunderstanding, of refusal, and that may be forgiven you. But what have you to say to the Holy Spirit of Jesus, that meets you in your everyday life, that confronts you in the State, in social duties, in the secrecy of your own soul, summoning you to all goodness, purity, and truth, to the love of men and the fear of God? That contact is decisive; for if you refuse and still reject that Holy Spirit within you, it is the sin unpardonable, here and hereafter. Resisting that, you resist God direct. It is the refusal, not of an erring or confused reason, but of a wicked and evil heart. It is God in His perfect Godhead offering you a life of godliness and beauty, hated and repelled; knowing it to be God you reject, knowing it to be good you refuse. The decision has finality in it. You have rejected the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

What is it to be in Christ Jesus? It is a very simple and a very real thing. Thousands of men and women have realised it. It just means losing your heart to Him, so that you choose Him rather than yourself, take His will for yours, please Him rather than yourself, hate what He hates, love what He loves, and in all things strive to be what He would have you be and to do what He would have you do. You are no more your

own; you have become Christ's. It is no longer you that live, but Christ living in you. That, nothing less, nothing more, is to be in Christ Jesus.

Is it reasonable that a man should so give himself up to another, so abdicate his own proper self, so constitute another his lord and master? That depends on what you think of yourself and what you think of Christ. Put your self side by side with Christ's. Is your own so fair and good and happy that you had rather keep it than have His? Even at the very best how infinitely more noble, pure, and honourable is the heart of that sinless Jesus! Where shall you reach a manhood so majestic save by sinking your own self in Him, by merging your life in His, by dying to yourself that you may live in Him? Perchance you consent so far. You are willing to be Christ's disciple in earthly things, but you hesitate to follow Him when He speaks of heavenly things. Even an unbeliever, you say, can do no better than take Christ's manhood as the measure and model of his own. But is it rational for a man to accept the God and heaven of Jesus on His bare word? What better can you do? Will your reason ever give you demonstration? Are these not things that reason can never either quite prove or disprove? And yet a man must have some heart-attitude to them. Desire or undesign? Hope or despair? Man does not live by sight alone. Where sense fails, faith must come in. And, perchance, a man's spiritual growth hangs less on his attainments of knowledge and most on his faith and hopes. If God is, He is a Spirit. Not through our senses but through our spirit we must discern Him. For that our spirits must be clean. The pure in heart see God. If I fail, what wonder, seeing how soiled and blurred the purity of my spirit is. One man has lived who had no doubt of God, who lived ever in the lap of His Father's love. He was the one stainless, sinless Son of Man. What better, what more rational thing can I do, who so much need it, than in simple faith to take to my spirit the God and Father of Jesus Christ, and to my heart His guarantee of life everlasting? Thus in Christ I am conqueror of sin and sorrow; I possess God and immortality; all things are mine in time and in eternity, for I am Christ's and Christ is God's. In Christ I can rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. It is the will of God concerning me. His will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

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"Don't let the miserable gossip, the worthless opinion of outsiders, make our lives miserable."

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WINE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CARLO DONATI had considerable insight into character; not only had he been born with this gift, but his wandering life had brought him into contact with all sorts and conditions of men, and had been an excellent education to one who had always known how to observe. He was, moreover, of so sympathetic a temperament that he could generally tell in a moment when trouble was in the air, and the ridiculously trivial affair about the music-stand, which could not have dwelt in his mind for a minute on its own account, opened his eyes to the relations existing between Mr. Horner and the Norwegian. That something was wrong with the latter he had perceived when Frithiof had first spoken to him in the cloak-room, and now, having inadvertently been the cause of bringing upon him a severe rebuke, he was determined to make what amends lay in his power.

He cut short Mr. Horner's flattering remarks and reiterated apologies as to the slight *contretemps*.

"It is of no consequence at all," he said. "By-the-bye, what is the nationality of that young fellow? I like his face."

"He is Norwegian," replied Mr. Horner, glancing at Frithiof, who was arranging the platform for Madame Gauthier, the pianiste.

"You think, no doubt, that I spoke too severely to him just now, but you do not realise what a worthless fellow he is. My partner retains him merely out of charity, but he has been proved to be unprincipled and dishonest."

The last few words reached Frithiof distinctly as he came down the steps; he turned ghastly pale, his very lips grew white; it was as though some one had stabbed him as he re-entered the little room, and the eyes that turned straight to the eyes of the Italian were full of a dumb anguish which Donati never forgot. Indignant with the utter want of kindness and tact which Mr. Horner had shown, he turned abruptly away without making the slightest comment on the words, but often through the evening, when Frithiof was engrossed in other things, Donati quietly watched him, and the more he saw of him the less was he able to believe in the truth of the accusation. Meantime he was waiting

for his opportunity, but he was unable to get a word with the Norwegian until the end of the concert, when he met him on the stairs.

"Are you at liberty?" he asked. "Is your work here over?"

Frithiof replied in the affirmative, and offered to look for the great baritone's carriage, imagining that this must be the reason he had addressed him.

"Oh, as to the carriage!" said Donati easily, "it will be waiting at the corner of Sackville Street. But I wanted a few minutes' talk with you, and first of all to apologise for having been the unwilling hearer of that accusation, which I am quite sure is false."

Frithiof's clouded face instantly cleared; all the old brightness returned for a moment to his frank, blue eyes, and, forgetful of the fact that he was not in Norway, and that Donati was the idolized public singer, he grasped the hand of the Italian with that fervent, spontaneous gratitude which is so much more eloquent than words.

"Thank you," he said simply.

"Well, now, is it possible for an outsider to help in unravelling the mystery?" said Donati. "For when a man like you is accused in this way I take it for granted there must be a mystery."

"No one can possibly explain it," said Frithiof, the troubled look returning to his face. "I can't tell in the least how the thing happened, but appearances were altogether against me. It is the most extraordinary affair, but God knows I had no hand in it."

"I want to hear all about it," said Donati with that eagerness of manner and warmth of interest which made him so devotedly loved by thousands. "I am leaving England tomorrow; can't you come back and have supper with me now, and let me hear this just as it all happened?"

Even if he had wished to refuse, Frithiof could hardly have done so; and, as it was, he was so miserable that he would have caught at much less hearty sympathy. They walked along the crowded pavement towards Sackville Street, and had almost reached the carriage when a conversation immediately behind them became distinctly audible.

"They make such a fuss over this Donati," said the speaker. "But I happen to know that he's a most disreputable character. I

was hearing all about him the other day from some one who used to know him intimately. They say you know that——"

Here the conversation died away in the distance, and what that curse of modern society—the almighty "THEY"—said as to Donati's private affairs remained unknown to him.

Frithiof glanced at the singer's face. Apparently he had not yet reached those sublime heights where insults cease from troubling and slanders fail to sting. He was still young, and naturally had the disadvantages as well as the immense gains of a sensitive artistic temperament. A gleam of fierce anger swept over his face, and was quickly succeeded by a pained look that made Frithiof's heart hot within him; in silence the Italian opened the door of the carriage, signed to Frithiof to get in, and they drove off together.

"No matter," said Donati in a minute, speaking reflectively, and as if he were alone. "I do not sing for a gossiping public. I sing for Christ."

"But that they should dare to say such a thing as that!" exclaimed Frithiof, growing more and more indignant as his companion's serenity returned.

"For oneself," said Donati, "it is—well—not much; but for the sake of those belonging to one it certainly does carry a sting. But every one who serves the public in a public capacity is in the same boat. Statesmen, artists, authors, actors, all must endure this plague of tongues. And, after all, it merely affects one's reputation, not one's character. It doesn't make one immoral to be considered immoral, and it doesn't make you a thief to be considered dishonest. But now I want to hear about this accusation of Mr. Horner's. When did it all happen?"

In the dim light Frithiof told his story; it was a relief to tell it to sympathetic ears; Donati's faith in him seemed to fill him with new life, and though the strange events of that miserable Monday did not grow any clearer in the telling, yet somehow a hope began to dawn in his heart.

"It certainly is most unaccountable," said Donati as the carriage drew up before a pretty little villa in Avenue Road. He paused to speak to the coachman. "We shall want the carriage in time to go to the 9.40 train at Charing Cross, Wilson; good-night."

"But if you start so early," said Frithiof, "I had better not hinder you any longer."

"You do not hinder me; I am very much interested. You must certainly come in to supper, and afterwards I want to hear more

about this. How unlucky it was that the five-pound note should have been changed that day by Sardonio!"

At this moment the door was opened; Frithiof caught a vision of a slim figure in a pale rose-coloured tea-gown, and the loveliest face he had ever seen was raised to kiss Donati as he entered.

"How nice and early you are!" exclaimed a fresh, merry voice. Then, catching sight of a stranger, and blushing a little, she added, "I fancied it was Jack and Domenica you were bringing back with you."

"Let me introduce you to my wife, Herr Falck," said Donati, and Frithiof instantly understood that here lay the explanation of the Italian's faultless English, since, despite her foreign name, it was impossible for a moment to mistake Francesca Donati's nationality.

The house was prettily, but very simply, furnished, and about it there was that indefinable air of home that Frithiof had so often noticed in Rowan-Tree House.

"You must forgive a very unceremonious supper, Herr Falck," said Francesca, herself making ready the extra place that was needed at table. "But the fact is, I have sent all the servants to bed, for I knew they would have to be up early to-morrow, and they feel the travelling a good deal."

"Much more than you and I do," said Donati. "We have grown quite hardened to it."

"Then this is not your regular home?" asked Frithiof.

"Yes, it is our English home. We generally have five months here and five at Naples, with the rest of the time either at Paris, or Berlin, or Vienna. After all, a wandering life makes very little difference when you can carry about your home with you."

"And baby is the best traveller in the world," said Donati, "and in every way the most model baby. I think," glancing at his wife, "that she is as true a gipsy as Gigi himself."

"Poor Gigi! he can't bear being left behind! By-the-bye, had you time to take him back to school before the concert, or did he go alone?"

"I had just time to take him," said Donati waiting upon Frithiof as he talked. "He was rather doleful, poor old man; but cheered up when I told him that he was to spend the summer holidays at Merlebank, and to come to Naples at Christmas. It is a nephew of mine of whom we speak," he explained to Frithiof; "and, of course, his education has

to be thought of, and cannot always fit in with my engagements. You go in very much for education in Norway, I understand?"

Frithiof found himself talking quite naturally and composedly about Norwegian customs and his former life, and it was not until afterwards that it struck him as a strange thing that on the very day after his disgrace, when, but for Mr. Boniface's kindness, he might actually have been in prison, he should be quietly, and even for the time happily, talking of the old days. Nor was it until afterwards that he realised how much his interview with the great baritone would have been coveted by many in a very different position; for Donati would not go into London society though it was longing to lionize him. His wife did not care for it, and he himself said that with his art, his home, and his own intimate friends, no time was left for the wearing gaieties of the season. The world grumbled, but he remained resolute, for, though always ready to help anyone who was in trouble, and without the least touch of exclusiveness about him, he could not endure the emptiness and wastefulness of the fashionable world. Moreover, while applause that was genuinely called forth by his singing never failed to give him great pleasure, the flatteries of celebrity-hunters were intolerable to him, so that he lost nothing and gained much by the quiet life which he elected to lead. It was said of the great actor Phelps that "His theatre and his home were alike sacred to him as the Temple of God." And the same might well have been said of Donati, while something of the calm of the Temple seemed to lurk about the quiet little villa, where refinement and comfort reigned supreme, but where no luxuries were admitted. Francesca had truly said that the wandering life made very little difference to them, for wherever they went they made for themselves that ideal home which has been beautifully described as

"A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in."

They did not linger long over the supper-table, for Frithiof was suffering too much to eat, and Donati, like most of his countrymen, had a very small appetite. Francesca with a kindly good-night to the Norwegian went upstairs to her baby, and the two men drew their chairs up to the open French window at the back of the room looking on to the little garden to which the moonlight gave a certain mysterious charm.

"I have thought over it," said Donati almost abruptly, and as if the matter might

naturally engross his thoughts as much as those of his companion. "But I can't find the very slightest clue. It is certainly a mystery."

"And must always remain so," said Frithiof despairingly.

"I do not think that at all. Some day all will probably be explained. And be sure to let me hear when it is, for I shall be anxious to know."

A momentary gleam of hope crossed Frithiof's face, but the gloom quickly returned.

"It will never be explained," he said. "I was born under an unlucky star; at the very moment when all seems well something has always interfered to spoil my life; and with my father it was exactly the same—it was an undeserved disgrace that actually killed him."

And then, to his own astonishment, he found himself telling Donati, bit by bit, the whole of his own story. The Italian said very little, but he listened intently, and in truth possessed exactly the right characteristics for a confidant—rare sympathy, tact, and absolute faithfulness. To speak out freely to such a man was the best thing in the world for Frithiof, and Donati, who had himself had to battle with a sea of troubles, understood him as a man who had suffered less could not possibly have done.

"It is to this injustice," said Frithiof, as he ended his tale, "to this unrighteous success of the mercenary and scheming, and failure of the honourable, that Christianity tells one to be resigned. It is that which sets me against religion—which makes it all seem false and illogical—actually immoral."

Probably Donati would not even have alluded to religion had not his companion himself introduced the subject. It was not his way to say much on such topics, but when he did speak his words came with most wonderful directness and force. It was not so much that he said anything noteworthy or novel, but that his manner had about it such an intensity of conviction, such rare unconsciousness, and such absolute freedom from all conventionality. "Pardon me, if I venture to show you a flaw in your argument," he said quietly. "You say we are told to be resigned. Very well. But what is resignation? It was well defined once by a noble Russian writer who said that it is 'placing God between ourselves and our trouble.' There is nothing illogical in that. It is the merest common-sense. When finite things worry and perplex you, turn to the

Infinite from which they may be safely and peacefully viewed."

Frithiof thought of those words which had involuntarily escaped his companion after the remark of the passer-by in Piccadilly—"No matter!—I do not sing for a gossiping world." He began to understand Donati better—he longed with an intensity of longing to be able to look at life with such eyes as his.

"These things are so real to you," he said quickly. "But to me they are only a hope—or, if for an hour or two real, they fade away again. It may be all very well for you in your successful happy life, but it is impossible for me with everything against me."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Donati, his eyes flashing, and with something in his tone which conveyed volumes to the Norwegian.

"If not impossible at any rate very difficult," he replied.

"Yes, yes," said Donati, his eyes full of sympathy. "It is that to all of us. Don't think I make light of your difficulties. It is hard to seek God in uncongenial surroundings, in a life harassed and misunderstood, and in apparent failure. But—don't let the hardness daunt you—just go on."

The words were commonplace enough, but they were full of a wonderful power because there lurked beneath them the assurance—

"I have been through where ye must go;
I have seen past the agony."

"Do you know," said Frithiof smiling, "that is almost what you said to me the first time I saw you. You have forgotten it, but a year ago you said a few words to me which kept me from making an end of myself in a fit of despair. Do you remember coming to the shop about a song of Knight's?"

"Why, yes," said Donati. "Was that really you? It all comes back to me now—I remember you found the song for me though I had only the merest scrap of it, without the composer's name."

"It was just before my illness," said Frithiof. "I never forgot you, and recognised you the moment I saw you to-night. Somehow you saved my life then just by giving me a hope."

Perhaps no greater contrast could have been found than these two men who, by what seemed a mere chance, had been thrown together so strangely. But Donati almost always attracted to himself men of an opposite type; as a rule it was not the religious public that understood him or ap-

preciated him best, it was the men of the world, and those with whom he came in contact in his professional life. To them his character appealed in a wonderful way, and many who would have been ashamed to show any enthusiasm as a rule, made an exception in favour of this man, who had somehow fascinated them and compelled them into a belief in goodness little in accord with the cynical creed they professed.

To Frithiof in his wretchedness, in his despairing rebellion against a fate which seemed relentlessly to pursue him, the Italian's faith came with all the force of a new revelation. He saw that the success, for which but a few hours ago he had cordially hated the great singer, came from no caprice of fortune, but from the way in which Donati had used his gifts; nor had the Italian all at once leapt into fame, he had gone through a cruelly hard apprenticeship, and had suffered so much that not even the severe test of extreme popularity, wealth, and personal happiness could narrow his sympathies, for all his life he would carry with him the marks of a past conflict—a conflict which had won for him the name of the "Knight-errant."

The same single-hearted, generous nature which had fitted him for that past work, fitted him now to be Frithiof's friend. For men like Donati are knights-errant all their life long, they do not need a picturesque cause, or seek a paying subject, but just travel through the world, succouring those with whom they come in contact. The troubles of the Norwegian in his prosaic shop-life were as much to Donati as the troubles of any other man would have been; position and occupation were, to him, very insignificant details; he did not expend the whole of his sympathies on the sorrows of East London, and shut his heart against the griefs of the rich man at the West End; nor was he so engrossed with his poor Neapolitans that he could not enter into the difficulties of a London shopman. He saw that Frithiof was one of that great multitude who, through the harshness and injustice of the world, find it almost impossible to retain their faith in God, and, through the perfidy of one woman, are robbed of the best safeguard that can be had in life. His heart went out to the man, and the very contrast of his present life with its intense happiness quickened his sympathies. But what he said Frithiof never repeated to any one, he could not have done it even had he cared to try. When at length he rose to go Donati

had, as it were, saved him from moral death, had drawn him out of the slough of despond, and started him with renewed hope on his way.

"Wait just one moment," he said as they stood by the door; "I will give you one of my cards and write on it the Italian address. There! *Villa Valentino, Napoli*. Don't forget to write and tell me when this affair is all cleared up."

Frithiof grasped his hand, and, again thanking him, passed out into the quiet, moonlit street.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE events of Monday had cast a shadow over Rowan-Tree House. Cecil no longer sang as she went to and fro, Mr. Boniface was paying the penalty of a stormy interview late on Monday evening with his partner, and was not well enough to leave his room, and Mrs. Boniface looked grave and sad, for she foresaw the difficulties in which Frithiof's disgrace would involve others.

"I wish Roy had been at home," she said to her daughter as, on the Wednesday afternoon, they sat together in the verandah.

Cecil looked up for a moment from the little frock which she was making for Gwen.

"If he had been at home, I can't help thinking that this never would have happened," she said. "And I have a sort of hope that he will find out some explanation of it all."

"My dear, what explanation can there be but the one that satisfies your father?" said Mrs. Boniface. "Frithiof must have taken it in a fit of momentary aberration. But the whole affair shows that he is not so strong yet as we fancied, and I fear is a sign that all his life he will feel the effects of his illness. It is that which makes me so sorry for them all."

"I do not believe that he took it," said Cecil. "Nothing will ever make me believe that."

She stitched away fast at the little frock, in a sudden panic, lest the tears which burned in her eyes should attract her mother's notice. Great regret and sympathy she might allow herself to show, for Frithiof was a friend and a favourite of every one in the house; but of the grief that filled her heart she must allow no trace to be seen, for it would make her mother miserable to guess at the extent of her unhappiness.

"Did you see him last night at the concert?" asked Mrs. Boniface.

"Yes," said Cecil, choking back her tears;

"just when he arranged the platform. He was looking very ill and worn."

"That is what I am so afraid of. He will go worrying over this affair, and it is the very worst thing in the world for him. I wish your father were better, and I would go and have a talk with Sigrid; but I hardly like to leave the house. How would it be, dearie, if you went up and saw them?"

"I should like to go," said Cecil quickly. "But it is no use being there before seven, for Madame Lechertier has her classes so much later in this hot weather."

"Well, go up at seven, then, and have a good talk with her; make her understand that we none of us think a bit the worse of him for it, and that we are vexed with Cousin James for having been so disagreeable and harsh. You might, if you like, go to meet Roy; he comes back at half-past eight, and he will bring you home again."

Cecil cheered up a good deal at this idea; she took Lance round the garden with her, that he might help her to gather flowers for Sigrid, and even smiled a little when of his own accord the little fellow brought her a beautiful passion-flower which he had gathered from the house wall.

"This one's for my dear Herr Frithiof!" he exclaimed, panting a little with the exertions he had made to reach it. "It's all for his own self, and I picked it for him, 'cause it's his very favourite."

"You know, Cecil," said her mother as she returned to the seat under the verandah and began to arrange the flowers in a basket, "I have another theory as to this affair. It happened exactly a week after that day at the seaside when we all had such a terrible fright about Roy and Sigrid. Frithiof had a long run in the sun, which you remember was very hot that day; then he had all the excitement of rowing out and rescuing them, and though at the time it seemed no strain on him at all, yet I think it is quite possible that the shock may have brought back a slight touch of the old trouble."

"And yet it seemed to do him good at the time," said Cecil. "He looked so bright and fresh when he came back. Besides, to a man accustomed as he once was to a very active life, the rescue was, after all, no such great exertion."

Mrs. Boniface sighed.

"It would grieve me to think that it was really caused by that, but if it is so, there is all the more reason that they should clearly understand that the affair makes no difference at all in our opinion of him. It is

just possible that it may be his meeting with Lady Romiaux which is the cause. Sigrid told me they had accidentally come across her again, and that it had tried him very much."

Cecil turned away to gather some ferns from the rockery; she could not bear to discuss that last suggestion. Later on in the afternoon it was with a very heavy heart that she reached the model lodgings and knocked at the door that had now become so familiar to her.

Swanhild flew to greet her with her usual warmth. It was easy to see that the child knew nothing of the trouble hanging over the house. "What lovely flowers! How good of you!" she cried.

But Sigrid could not speak; she only kissed her, then turned to Swanhild and the flowers once more.

"They are beautiful," she said. "Don't you think we might spare some for Mrs. Hallfield? Run and take her some, dear."

When the child ran off she drew Cecil into their bedroom. The two girls sat down together on the bed, but Sigrid, usually the one to do most of the talking, was silent and dejected. Cecil saw at once that she must take the initiative.

"I have been longing to come and see you," she said. "But yesterday was so filled up. Father and mother are so sorry for all this trouble, and are very much vexed that Mr. Horner has behaved badly about it."

"They are very kind," said Sigrid wearily. "Of course most employers would have prosecuted Frithiof, or, at any rate, discharged him."

"But, Sigrid, what can be the explanation of it? Oh, surely we can manage to find out somehow! Who can have put the note in his pocket?"

"What!" cried Sigrid. "Do not you, too, hold Mr. Boniface's opinion, and think that he himself did it unintentionally?"

"I!" cried Cecil passionately. "Never! never! I am quite sure he had nothing whatever to do with it."

Sigrid flung her arms round her.

"Oh, how I love you for saying that!" she exclaimed.

It was the first real comfort that had come to her since their trouble, and, although before Frithiof she was brave and cheerful, in his absence she became terribly anxious and depressed. But with the comfort there came a fresh care, for something at that moment revealed to her Cecil's secret. Perhaps it was the burning cheek that was pressed to

hers, or perhaps a sort of thrill in her companion's voice as she spoke those vehement words, and declared her perfect faith in Frithiof.

The thought filled her with hot indignation against Blanche. "Has she not only spoilt Frithiof's life, but Cecil's too?" she said to herself. And in despair she looked on into the future, and back into the sad past. "If it had not been for Blanche he might have loved her—I think he would have loved her. And oh! how happy she would have made him! how different his whole life would have been! But now, with disgrace, and debt, and broken health, all that is impossible for him. Blanche has robbed him, too, of the very power of loving; she has cheated him out of his heart. Her hateful flirting has ruined the happiness of two people, probably of many more, for Frithiof was not the only man whom she deceived. Oh! why does God give women the power to bring such misery into the world?"

She was recalled from her angry thoughts by Cecil's voice; it was sweet and gentle again now, and no longer vehement.

"Do you know, Sigrid," she said, "I have great hopes in Roy. He will be home to-night, and he will come to it all like an outsider, and I think, perhaps, he will throw some light on the mystery. I shall meet him at Charing Cross, and as we drive home, will tell him just what happened."

"Is it to-night he comes home?" said Sigrid with a depth of relief in her tone. "Oh, how glad I am! But there is Swanhild back again. You won't say anything before her, for we have not mentioned it to her; there seemed no reason why she should be made unhappy, and Frithiof likes to feel that one person is unharmed by his trouble."

"Yes, one can understand that," said Cecil. "And Swanhild is such a child, one would like to shelter her from all unhappiness. Are you sure that you don't mind my staying? Would you not rather be alone to-night?"

"Oh, no, no," said Sigrid. "Do stay to supper. It will show Frithiof that you do not think any the worse of him for this—it will please him so much."

They went back to the sitting-room and began to prepare the evening meal; and when, presently, Frithiof returned from his work, the first thing he caught sight of on entering the room was Cecil's sweet open-looking face. She was standing by the table

arranging flowers, but came forward quickly to greet him. Her colour was a little deeper than usual, her handclasp a little closer, but otherwise she behaved exactly as if nothing unusual had happened.

"I have most unceremoniously asked myself to supper," she said, "for I have to meet Roy at half-past eight."

"It is very good of you to come," said Frithiof gratefully.

His interview with Carlo Donati had done much for him, and had helped him through a very trying day at the shop, but though he had made a good start and had begun his new life bravely, and borne many disagreeables patiently, yet he was now miserably tired and depressed, just in the mood which craves most for human sympathy.

"Lance sent you this," she said, handing him the passion-flower and making him smile by repeating the child's words.

He seemed touched and pleased; and the conversation at supper-time turned a good deal on the children. He asked anxiously after Mr. Boniface, and then they discussed the concert of the previous night, and he spoke a little of Donati's kindness to him. Then, while Sigrid and Swanhild were busy in the kitchen, she told him what she knew of Donati's previous life, and how it was that he had gained this extraordinary power of sympathy and insight.

"I never met any one like him," said Frithiof. "He is a hero and a saint, if ever there was one, yet without one touch of the asceticism which annoys one in most good people. That the idol of the operatic stage should be such a man as that seems to me wonderful."

"You mean because the life is a trying one?"

"Yes; because such very great popularity might be supposed to make a man conceited, and such an out-of-the-way voice might make him selfish and heedless of others, and to be so much run after might make him consider himself above ordinary mortals, instead of being ready, as he evidently is, to be the friend of any one who is in need."

"I am so glad you like him, and that you saw so much of him," said Cecil. "I wonder if you would just see me into a cab now, for I ought to be going."

He was pleased that she had asked him to do this; and when she had said good-bye to Sigrid and Swanhild, and was once more alone with him, walking through the big court-yard, he could not resist alluding to it.

"It is good of you," he said, "to treat me as though I were under no cloud. You have cheered me wonderfully."

"Oh," she said, "it is not good of me—you must not think that I believe you under a cloud at all. Nothing would ever make me believe that you had anything whatever to do with that five-pound note. It is a mystery that will some day be cleared up."

"That is what Signor Donati said. He, too, believed in me in spite of appearances being against me. And Sigrid says the same. With three people on my side I can wait more patiently."

Cecil had spoken very quietly, and quite without the passionate vehemence which had betrayed her secret to Sigrid, for now she was on her guard; but her tone conveyed to Frithiof just the trust and friendliness which she wished it to convey; and he went home again with a fresh stock of hope and courage in his heart.

Meanwhile Cecil paced gravely up and down the arrival platform at Charing Cross. She, too, had been cheered by their interview, but, nevertheless, the baffling mystery haunted her continually, and in vain she racked her mind for any solution of the affair. Perhaps the anxiety had already left its traces on her face, for Roy at once noticed a change in her.

"Why, Cecil, what has come over you? You are not looking well," he said, as they got into a hansom and set off on their long drive.

"Father has not been well," she said in explanation. "And I think we have all been rather upset by something that happened on Monday afternoon in the shop."

Then she told him exactly what had passed, and waited hopefully for his comments on the story. He knitted his brows in perplexity.

"I wish I had been at home," he said. "If only James Horner had not gone ferreting into it all this would never have happened. Frithiof would have discovered his mistake, and all would have been well."

"But you don't imagine that Frithiof put the note in his pocket?" said Cecil, her heart sinking down in deep disappointment.

"Why, who else could have put it there? Of course he must have done it in absence of mind. Probably the excitement and strain of that unlucky afternoon at Britling Gap affected his brain in some way."

"I cannot think that," she said in a low

voice. "And, even if it were so, that is the last sort of thing he would do."

"But that is just the way when people's brains are affected, they do the most unnatural things; it is a known fact that young innocent girls will often in delirium use the most horrible language such as in real life they cannot possibly have heard. Your honest man is quite likely under the circumstances to become a thief. Is not this the view that my father takes?"

"Yes," said Cecil. "But somehow—I thought—I hoped—that you would have trusted him."

"It doesn't in the least affect my opinion of his character. He was simply not himself when he did it. But one can't doubt such evidence as that. The thing was missed from the till and found pinned into his pocket, how can any reasonable being doubt that he himself put it there?"

"It may be unreasonable to refuse to believe it—I cannot help that," said Cecil.

"But how can it possibly be explained on any other supposition?" he urged, a little impatiently.

"I don't know," said Cecil; "at present it is a mystery. But I am as sure that he did not put it there as that I did not put it there."

"Women believe what they wish to believe, and utterly disregard logic," said Roy.

"It is not only women who believe in him. Carlo Donati has gone most carefully into every detail, and he believes in him."

"Then I wish he would give me his recipe," said Roy, with a sigh. "I am but a matter-of-fact, prosaic man of business, and cannot make myself believe that black is white, however much I wish it. Have you seen Miss Falck? Is she very much troubled about it?"

"Yes, she is so afraid that he will worry himself ill; but, of course, she too believes in him. I think she suspects the other man in the shop—Darnell, but I don't see how he can have anything to do with it, I must own."

There was a silence. Cecil looked sadly at the passers-by, lovers strolling along happily in the cool of the evening, workers just set free from the long day's toil, children revelling in the fresh sweet air. How very brief was the happiness and rest as compared to the hard, wearing drudgery of most of those lives! Love perhaps brightened a few minutes of each day, but in the outside

world there was no love, no justice, nothing but a hard, grinding competition, while Sorrow and Sin, Sickness and Death hovered round, ever ready to pounce upon their victims. It was unlike her to look so entirely on the dark side of things, but Frithiof's persistent ill-luck had depressed her, and she was disappointed by Roy's words. Perhaps it was unreasonable of her to expect him to share her view of the affair, but somehow she had expected it, and now there stole into her heart a dreary sense that everything was against the man she loved. In her sheltered happy home, where a bitter word was never heard, where the family love glowed so brightly that all the outside world was seen through its cheering rays, sad thoughts of the strength of evil seldom came, there was ever present so strong a witness for the infinitely greater power of love. But driving now along these rather melancholy roads, weighed down by Frithiof's trouble, a sort of hopelessness seized her, the thought of the miles and miles of houses all round, each one representing several troubled, struggling lives, made her miserable. Personal trouble helps us afterwards to face the sorrows of humanity, and shows us how we may all in our infinitesimal way help to brighten other lives—take something from the world's great load of pain and evil. But at first there must be times of deadly depression, and in these it is perhaps impossible not to yield a little for the moment to the despairing thought that evil is rampant and all-powerful. Poverty, and sin, and temptation are so easily visible everywhere, and to be ever conscious of the great unseen world encompassing us, and of Him who makes both seen and unseen to work together for good, is not easy.

Cecil Boniface, like every one else in this world, had, in spite of her ideal home, in spite of all the comforts that love and money could give her, to "dree her weird."

CHAPTER XXVIII

If Roy had seemed unsympathetic as they drove home it was not because he did not feel keenly. He was indeed afraid to show how keenly he felt, and he would have given almost anything to have been able honestly to say that he, too, believed in some unexplained mystery which should entirely free his friend from reproach. But he could not honestly believe in such a thing—it would have been as easy to him to believe in the existence of fairies and hobgoblins. Since no such thing as magic existed, and since

Darnell had never been an assistant of Maske-lyne and Cooke, he could not believe that he had anything to do with the five-pound note. Assuredly no one but Frithiof could have taken it out of the till and carefully pinned it to the lining of his waistcoat pocket. The more he thought over the details of the story, the more irrational seemed his sister's blind faith. And yet his longing to share in her views chafed and irritated him as he realised the impossibility.

His mind was far too much engrossed to notice Cecil much, and that, perhaps, was a good thing, for just then in her great dejection any ordinarily acute observer could not have failed to read her story. But Roy, full of passionate love for Sigrid, and of hot indignation with James Horner for having been the instrument of bringing about all this trouble, was little likely to observe other people.

Why had he ever gone to Paris? he wondered angrily, when his father or James Horner could have seen to the business there quite as well. He had gone partly because he liked the change, and partly because he was thankful for anything that would fill up the wretched time while he waited for Sigrid's definite reply to his proposal. But now he blamed himself for his restlessness, and was made miserable by the perception that had he chosen differently all would have now been well.

He slept little that night, and went up to business the next morning in anything but a pleasant frame of mind, for he could hardly resist his longing to go straight to Sigrid, and see how things were with her. When he entered the shop Darnell was in his usual place at the left-hand counter, but Frithiof was arranging some songs on a stand in the centre, and Roy was at once struck by a change that had come over him; he could not define it, but he felt that it was not in this way that he had expected to find the Norwegian after a trouble which must have been so specially galling to his pride. "How are you?" he said, grasping his hand; but it was impossible before others to say what was really in his heart, and it was not till an hour or two later that they had any opportunity of really speaking together. Then it chanced that Frithiof came into his room with a message.

"There is a Mr. Carruthers waiting to speak to you," he said, handing him a card; "he has two manuscript songs which he wishes to submit to you."

"Tell him I am engaged," said Roy.

"And that as for songs, we have enough to last us for the next two years."

"They are rather good; he has shown them to me. You might just glance through them," suggested Frithiof.

"I shall write a book some day on the sorrows of a music-publisher!" said Roy. "How many thousands of composers do you think there can be in this overcrowded country? No, I'll not see the man; I'm in too bad a temper; but you can just bring in the songs, and I will look at them and talk to you at the same time."

Frithiof returned in a minute, carrying the neat manuscripts which meant so much to the composer and so little, alas! to the publisher. Roy glanced through the first.

"The usual style of thing," he said. "Moon, man, and maid, rill and hill, quarrel, kisses—all based on 'So the Story Goes.' I don't think this is worth sending to the reader. What's the other? Words by Swinburne: 'If Love were what the Rose is.' Yes, you are right; this one is original; I rather like that refrain. We will send it to Martino and see what he thinks of it. Tell Mr. Carruthers that he shall hear about it in a month or two. And take him back this moonlight affair. Don't go yet; he can wait on tenter-hooks a little longer. Of course they have told me at home about all this fuss on Monday, and I want you to promise me one thing."

"What is that?" said Frithiof.

"That you won't worry about this miserable five-pound note. That, if you ever think of it again, you will remember that my father and I both regard the accident as if it had never happened."

"Then you too take his view of the affair?" said Frithiof.

"Yes, it seems to me the only reasonable one; but don't let us talk of a thing that is blotted out and done away. It makes no difference whatever to me, and you must promise that you won't let it come between us."

"You are very good," said Frithiof sadly; and, remembering the hopelessness of arguing with one who took this view of his trouble, he said no more, but went back to the poor composer, whose face lengthened when he saw that his hands were not empty, but brightened into radiant hope as Frithiof explained that one song would really have the rare privilege of being actually looked at. Being behind the scenes, he happened to know that the vast majority of songs sent to the firm remained for a few

weeks in the house, and were then wrapped up again and returned without even being glanced at. His intervention had, at any rate, saved Mr. Carruthers from that hard fate.

"And yet, poor fellow," he reflected, "even if he does get his song published it is a hundred to one that it will fall flat and never do him any good at all; where one succeeds a thousand fail; that seems the law of the world, and I am one of the thousand. I wonder what is the use of it all!"

Some lines that Donati had quoted to him returned to his mind:—

"Glorious it is to wear the crown
Of a deserved and pure success;
He that knows how to fail has won
A crown whose lustre is not less."

His reflections were interrupted by the entrance of two customers, evidently a very recently married couple, who had come to choose a piano. Once again he had to summon Roy, who stood patiently discoursing on the various merits of different makers until at last the purchase had been made. Then, unable any longer to resist the feverish impatience which had been consuming him for so long, he snatched up his hat, left word with Frithiof that he should be absent for an hour, and getting into a hansom drove straight to the model lodgings.

He felt a curious sense of incongruity as he walked across the court-yard; this great business-like place was, as Sigrid had once said, very much like a hive. An air of industry and orderliness pervaded it, and Roy, in his eager impatience, felt as if he had no right there at all. This feeling cast a sort of chill over his happiness as he knocked at the familiar door. A voice within bade him enter, and, emerging from behind the Japanese screen, he found Sigrid hard at work ironing. She wore a large brown holland apron and bib over her black dress, her sleeves were turned back, revealing her round, white arms up to the elbow, and the table was strewn with collars and cuffs.

"I thought it was Mrs. Hallifield come to scrub the kitchen," she exclaimed, "or I should not have cried 'Come in!'" so unceremoniously. Cecil told us you were expected last night."

"Will you forgive me for coming at this hour?" he began eagerly. "I knew it was the only time I was sure to find you at home, and I couldn't rest till I had seen you."

"It was very good of you to come," she said, colouring a little; "you won't mind if I just finish my work while we talk?"

The ironing might, in truth, have waited

very well; but somehow it relieved her embarrassment to sprinkle and arrange and iron the "fine things" which, from motives of economy, she washed herself.

"I have seen Frithiof," he said rather nervously. "He is looking better than I had expected after such an annoyance."

"You have spoken to him about it?"

"Only for a minute or two. After all, what is there to say but that the whole affair must be forgotten, and never again mentioned by a soul. I want so to make you understand that it is to us nothing at all, that it is ridiculous to suppose that it can affect our thoughts of him. It was the sort of thing that might happen to any one after such an illness."

Sigrid looked up at him. There was the same depth of disappointment in her expression as there had been in Cecil's.

"You take that view of it," she said slowly. "Somehow I had hoped you would have been able to find the true explanation."

"If there were any other you surely know that I would seek for it with all my might," said Roy. "But I do not see how any other explanation can possibly exist."

She sighed.

"You are disappointed," he said. "You thought I should have taken the view that Carlo Donati takes. I only wish I could. But, you see, my nature is more prosaic. I can't make myself believe a thing when all the evidences are against it."

"I am not blaming you," said Sigrid. "It is quite natural, and of course most employers would have taken a far harder view of the matter, and turned Frithiof off at a moment's notice. You and Mr. Boniface have been very kind."

"Don't speak like that," he exclaimed. "How can you speak of kindness as between us? You know that Frithiof is like a brother to me."

"No," she said; "you are mistaken. I know that you are fond of him; but, if he were like a brother to you, then you would understand him; you would trust him through everything as I do."

Perhaps she was unreasonable. But then she was very unhappy and very much agitated; and women are not always reasonable, or men either, for that matter.

"Sigrid," he said passionately, "you are not going to let this come between us? You know that I love you with all my heart, you know that I would do anything in the world for you, but even for love of you I cannot make myself believe that black is white."

"I am not reproaching you because you do not think as we think," she said quickly. "But in one way this must come between us."

"Hush!" he said imploringly; "wait a little longer. I will not to-day ask you for your answer; I will wait as long as you please; but don't speak now while your mind is full of this trouble."

"If I do not speak now, when do you think I shall be more at leisure?" she asked coldly. "Oh! it seems a light thing to you, and you are kind, and pass it over, and hush it up, but you don't realise how bitter it is to a Norwegian to have such a shadow cast on his honesty. Do you think that even if you forget it we can forget? Do you think that the other men in the shop hold your view? Do you think that Mr. Horner agrees with you?"

"Perhaps not. What do I care for them?" said Roy.

"No; that is just it. To you it is a matter of indifference, but to Frithiof it is just a daily torture. And you would have me think of happiness while he is miserable! You would have me go and leave him when at any moment he may break down again!"

"I would never ask you to leave him," said Roy. "Our marriage would not at all involve that. It would be a proof to him of how little this wretched business affects my opinion of him; it would prove to all the world that we don't regard it as anything but the merest accident."

"Do you think the world would be convinced?" said Sigrid, very bitterly. "I will tell you what it would say. It would say that I had so entangled you that you could not free yourself, and that, in spite of Frithiof's disgrace, you were obliged to marry me. And that shall never be said."

"For heaven's sake don't let the miserable gossip, the worthless opinion of outsiders, make our lives miserable. What do we care for the world? It is nothing to us. Let them say what they will; so long as they only say lies what difference does it make to us?"

"You don't know what you are talking about," she said, and for the first time the tears rushed to her eyes. "Your life has been all sheltered and happy. But out there in Bergen I have had to bear coldness and contempt, and the knowledge that even death did not shield my father from the poisonous tongues of the slanderers. Lies can't make the things they say true, but do you think that lies have no power to harm you? no

power to torture you? Oh! before you say that you should just try."

Her words pierced his heart; the more he realised the difficulties of her life the more intolerable grew the longing to help her, to shield her, to defy the opinion of outsiders for her sake.

"But don't you see," he urged, "that it is only a form of pride which you are giving way to? It is only that which is keeping us apart."

"And what if it is," she replied, her eyes flashing. "A woman has a right to be proud in such matters. Besides, it is not only pride. It is that I can't think of happiness while Frithiof is miserable. My first duty is to him; and how could I flaunt my happiness in his face? how could I now bring back to him the remembrance of all his past troubles?"

"At least wait," pleaded Roy once more; "at least let me once more ask your final answer a few months hence."

"I will wait until Frithiof's name is cleared," she said passionately. "You may ask me again then, not before."

Then seeing the despair in his face her strength all at once gave way, she turned aside trying to hide her tears. He stood up and came towards her, her grief gave him fresh hope and courage.

"Sigrid," he said, "I will not urge you any more. It shall be as you wish. Other men have had to wait. I suppose I, too, can bear it. I only ask one thing, tell me this once that you love me."

He saw the lovely colour flood her cheek, she turned towards him silently but with all her soul in her eyes. For a minute he held her closely, and just then it was impossible that he could realise the hopelessness of the case. Strong with the rapture of the confession she had made, it was not then, nor indeed for many hours after, that cold despair gripped his heart once more. She loved him—he loved her with the whole strength of his being. Was it likely that a miserable five-pound note could for ever divide them? Poor Roy! as Sigrid had said, he had lived such a sheltered life. He knew so little of the world.

CHAPTER XXIX.

It is of course a truism that we never fully appreciate what we have, until some trouble or some other loss shows us all that has grown familiar in a fresh light. Our life-long friends are only perhaps valued at their true worth when some friendship of

recent growth has proved fleeting and full of disappointment. And though many may love their homes, yet a home can only be properly appreciated by one who has had to bear from the outside world contempt and misunderstanding and harsh judgment. Fond as he had been of his home before, Frithiof had never until now quite realised what it meant to him. But as each evening he returned from work, and from the severe trial of an atmosphere of suspicion and dislike, he felt much as the sailor feels when, after tossing about all day in stormy seas he anchors at night in some harbour of refuge. Sigrid knew that he felt this, and she was determined that he should not even guess at her trouble. Luckily she had plenty to do, so that it was impossible for her to sit and look her sorrow in the face, or brood over it in idleness. It was with her certainly as she went about her household work, with her as she and Swanhild walked through the hot and crowded streets, and with her as she played at Madame Lechertier's Academy. But there was something in the work that prevented the trouble from really preying on her mind, she was sad indeed yet not in despair.

Nevertheless Madame Lechertier's quick eyes noted at once the change in her favourite.

"You are not well, *chérie*," she said, "your face looks worn. Why, my dear, I can actually see lines in your forehead. At your age that is inexcusable."

Sigrid laughed.

"I have a bad habit of wrinkling it up when I am worried about anything," she said. "To-day, perhaps, I am a little tired. It is so hot and sultry, and besides I am anxious about Frithiof, it is a trying time for him."

"Yes, this heat is trying to the strongest," said Madame Lechertier, fanning herself. "Swanhild, my angel, there are some new bonbons in that box, help yourself."

This afternoon it happened to be a children's class, and Madame Lechertier invariably regaled them in the intervals of rest with the most delicious French sweetmeats. It was a pretty sight to see the groups of little ones, and Swanhild in her dainty Norwegian costume, handing the bonbons to each in turn. Sigrid always liked to watch this part of the performance, and perhaps the most comforting thought to her just then was, that as far as Swanhild was concerned, the new life, in spite of its restrictions and economies, seemed to answer so well. The

child was never happier than when hard at work at the academy, even on this hot summer day she never complained; and in truth the afternoons just brought the right amount of variety into what would otherwise have been a very monotonous life.

"Sigrid," said the little girl, as they walked home together, "is it true what you said to Madame Lechertier about Frithiof feeling the heat? Is it really that which has made him so grave the last few days?"

"It is partly that," replied Sigrid. "But he has a good deal to trouble him that you are too young to understand, things that will not bear talking about. You must try to make it bright and cheerful at home."

Swanhild sighed. It was not so easy to be bright and cheerful all by one's self, and of late Frithiof and Sigrid had been—as she expressed it in the quaint Norse idiom—silent as lighted candles. People talk a great deal about the happy freedom from care which children can enjoy, but as a matter of fact many a child feels the exact state of the home atmosphere, and puzzles its head over the unknown troubles which are grieving the elders, often magnifying trifles into most alarming and menacing sources of danger. But Frithiof never guessed either little Swanhild's perplexities, or Sigrid's trouble; when he returned all seemed to him natural and homelike; and perhaps it was as much with the desire to be still with them as from any recollection of Donati's words, that on the following Sunday he set off with them to the service held during the summer evenings at Westminster Abbey.

What impression the beautiful service made on him Sigrid could not tell, but the sermon was unluckily the very last he ought to have heard. The learned Oxford professor who preached to the great throng of people that night could have understood very little how his words would affect many of his hearers; he preached as a pessimist, he drew a miserable picture of the iniquity and injustice of the world, all things were going wrong, the times were out of joint, but he suggested no remedy, he did not even indicate that there was another side to the picture. The congregation dispersed. In profound depression, Frithiof walked down the nave, and passed out into the cool evening air. Miserable as life had seemed to him before, it now seemed doubly miserable, it was all a great wretched problem to which there was no solution, a purposeless whirl of buying and selling, a selfish struggle for existence. They walked past the Aquarium,

the dingy side streets looked unlovely enough on that summer night, and the dreary words he had heard haunted him persistently, harmonizing only too well with the *cui bono* that at all times was apt to suggest itself to his mind. A wretched, clouded life in a miserable world, misfortunes which he had never deserved eternally dogging his steps, his own case merely one of a million similar or worse cases. Where was the use of it all?

A voice close beside him made him start. They were passing a corner where two streets crossed each other, and the words that fell upon his ear, spoken with a strange fervour yet with deep reverence, were just these,

"Jesus, blessed Jesus!"

He glanced sharply round and saw a little crowd of people gathered together; the words had been read from a hymn-book by a man whose whole heart had been thrown into what he read. They broke into Frithiof's reverie very strangely. Then, immediately the people began to sing the well-known hymn, "The Great Physician now is near," and the familiar tune, which had long ago penetrated to Norway, brought to Frithiof's mind a host of old memories. Was it after all true that the problem had been solved? Was it true that in spite of suffering and sin and misery the pledge of ultimate victory had already been given? Was it true that he whose uncongenial work seemed chiefly to consist of passive endurance had yet a share in helping to bring about the final triumph of good?

From the words read by the street preacher his mind involuntarily turned to the words spoken to him a few days before by a stage-singer. Donati had spoken of living the life of the crucified. He had said very little, but what he said had the marvellous power of all essentially true things. He had spoken not as a conventional utterer of platitudes, but as one man who has fought and agonized and overcome, may speak to another man who, bewildered by the confusion of the battle-field, begins to doubt his own cause. And far more than anything actually said there came to him the thought of Donati's own life, what he had himself observed of it, and what he had heard of his story from Cecil. A wonderfully great admission was made lately by a celebrated agnostic writer when he said that, "The true Christian saint, though a rare phenomenon, is one of the most wonderful to be witnessed in the moral world." Nor was the admission much qualified by the closing remark—"So lofty, so pure, so attractive that he ravishes men's

souls into oblivion of the patent and general fact that he is an exception among thousands of millions of professing Christians."

Frithiof's soul was not in the least ravished into oblivion of this fact, he was as ready as before, perhaps more ready, to admit the general selfishness of mankind, certainly he was more than ever conscious of his own shortcomings, and daily found pride and selfishness and ungraciousness in his own life and character. But his love for Donati, his great admiration for him, had changed his whole view of the possibilities of human life. The Italian had doubtless been specially fortunate in his parentage, but his life had been one of unusual temptation, his extremely rapid change from great misery to the height of popularity and success had alone been a very severe trial, though perhaps it was what Frithiof had heard of his three years in the travelling opera company that appealed to him most. Donati was certainly saint and hero in one: but it was not only men of natural nobility who were called to live this life of the crucified. All men were called to it. Deep down in his heart he knew that even for him it was no impossibility. And something of Donati's incredulous scorn as he flung back the word "impossible" in his face, returned to him now and nerved him to a fresh attack on the uncongenial life, and the faulty character with which he had to work. The week passed by pretty well, and the following Sunday found him tired indeed, but less down-hearted, and better able to keep at arm's length his old foe depression. For that foe, though chiefly due to physical causes, can, as all doctors will bear witness, be to a great extent held in check by spiritual energy.

The morning was so bright that Sigrid persuaded him to take a walk, and fully intending to return in an hour's time to his translating, he paced along the embankment. But either the fine day, or the mere pleasure of exercise, or some sort of curiosity to see a part of London of which he had heard a great deal, lured him on. He crossed Blackfriars Bridge and walked farther and farther, following the course of the river eastward into a region, dreary indeed, yet at times picturesque, with the river gleaming in the sunshine, and on the farther bank the Tower—solid and grim, as befitted the guardian of so many secrets of the past. Even here there was a quiet Sunday feeling, while something familiar in the sight of the water and the shipping carried him back in

imagination to Norway, and there came over him an intense longing for his own country. It was a feeling that often took possession of him, nor could he any more account for its sudden seizures than the Swiss can account for that sick longing for his native mountains to which he is often liable.

"It's no use," he thought to himself. "It will take me the best part of my life to pay off the debts, and till they are paid I can't go."

He turned his eyes from the river, as though by doing so he could drag his thoughts from Norway, when to his astonishment he all at once caught sight of his own national flag—the well-known blue and white cross on the red ground. His breath came fast, he walked on quickly to get a nearer view of the building from which the flag floated. Hurriedly pushing open the door, he entered the place, and found himself in a church, which presented the most curious contrast to churches in general, for it was almost full of men, and the seven or eight women who were there made little impression, their voices being drowned in the hearty singing of the great bulk of the congregation.

They began to sing just as he entered; the tune was one which he had known all his life, and a host of memories came back to him as he heard once more the slow and not too melodious singing, rendered striking, however, because of the fervour of the honest Norsemen. Tears, which all his troubles had not called forth, started now to his eyes as he listened to the words which carried him right out of the foreign land back to his childhood at Bergen.

Sörg o kjære fader du, Jeg vil ik - ke

sör - ge, Ik - ke med be kym-ret du,

Om min frem - tid spør - ge. Sörg du for mig

al min tid, Sörg for mig og mi-ne; Gud al-mæg-tig

Om min frem - tid spør - ge. Sörg du for mig

al min tid, Sörg for mig og mi-ne; Gud al-mæg-tig

naa-dig, blid, Sörg for al - le di - ne!

Translation.

"Care, oh, dear Father, Thou,
I will not care;
Not with troubled mind
About my future ask.
Care Thou for me all my life,
Care for me and mine;
God Almighty, gracious, good,
Care for all Thine!"

An onlooker, even a foreigner not understanding the language, could not fail to have been touched by the mere sight of this strange gathering in the heart of London,—the unpretentious building, the antique look of the clergyman in his gown and Elizabethan ruff, the ranks of men—numbering nearly four hundred—with their grave, weather-beaten faces, the greater number of them sailors, but with a sprinkling of business men living in the neighbourhood, and the young Norseman who had just entered, with his pride broken down by memories of an old home, his love of Norway leading him to the realisation that he was also a citizen of another country, and his stern face softened to that expression which is always so full of pathos—the expression of intent listening.

In the Norwegian church the subject of the sermon is arranged throughout the year. On this second Sunday after Trinity it was on the Gospel for the day, the parable of the

Master of the House who made a great supper, and of the guests who "all with one consent began to make excuse." There was nothing new in what Frithiof heard; he had heard it all in the old times, and, entirely satisfied with the happiness of self-pleasing, had been among the rich who had been sent empty away. Now he came, poor and in need, and found that after all it is the hungry who are "filled with good things."

Very gradually, and helped by many flashes of light which had from time to time come to him in his darkest hours, he had during the last two years groped his way from the vague and somewhat flippant belief in a good providence, which he had once announced to Blanche as his creed, and had learnt to believe in the All-Father. His meeting with Donati had exercised, and still continued to exercise, an extraordinary influence over him; but it was not until this Sunday morning, in his own national church, not until in his own language he once more heard the entreaty, "Come, for all things are now ready!" that he fully realised how he had neglected the life of Sonship.

With an Infinite Love belonging to him by right, he had allowed himself to be miserable, isolated, and bitter. To many distinct commands he had turned a deaf ear. To One who needed him and asked his love he had replied in the jargon of the nineteenth century, but in the spirit of the old Bible story, that practical matters needed him and that he could not come.

When the preacher went on to speak of the Lord's Supper, and the distinct command that all should come to it, Frithiof began to perceive for the first time that he had regarded this service merely as the incomprehensible communication of a great gift—whereas this was in truth only one side of it, and he, also, had to give himself up to One who actually needed him. It was characteristic of his honest nature that when he at last perceived this truth he no longer made excuse but promptly obeyed, not waiting for full understanding, not troubling at all about controversial points, but simply doing what he recognised as his duty.

And when in a rapid survey of the past there came recollections of Blanche and the wrong she had done him, he was almost startled to find how quietly he could think of her, how possible it had become to blot out all the resentful memories, all the reproachful thoughts that for so long had haunted him. For the first time he entirely forgave her, and in the very act of forgiving he seemed to regain something of the brightness which she had driven from his life, and to gain something better and truer than had as yet been his.

All the selfish element had died out of his love for her, there remained only the sadness of thinking of her disgrace, and a longing that, even yet, the good might prevail in her life. Was there no recovery from such a fall? Was no allowance to be made for her youth and her great temptations? If she really repented ought not her husband once more to receive her, and give her the protection which he alone could give?

Kneeling there in the quiet he faced that great problem, and with eyes cleared by love, with his pride altogether laid low, and knowing what it was both to forgive and to be forgiven, he saw beyond the conventional view taken by the world. There was no escaping the great law of forgiveness laid down by Christ, "If he repent, forgive him." "Forgive even as also ye are forgiven." And if marriage was taken as a symbol of the union between Christ and the Church, how was it possible to exclude the idea of forgiveness for faithlessness truly repented of? Had he been in Lord Romiaux's place he knew that he must have forgiven her, that if necessary he must have set the whole world at defiance, in order once more to shelter her from the deadly peril to which, alone, she must always be exposed.

And so it happened that love turned to good even the early passion that had apparently made such havoc of his life, and used it now to raise him out of the thought of his own trouble and undeserved disgrace, used it to lift him out of the selfishness and hardness that for so long had been cramping an otherwise fine nature.



WASHED BY THE BALTIC.

Sketches of Life in Courland.

By MRS. PEREIRA.

PART I.



Courland Peasant.

THE Baltic provinces, of which Courland is the chief, have of late, in their political relations to the Russian Empire, furnished the subject of sundry announcements, comments, and items of news in the daily papers. Increasingly frequent intimations of the progress of Russian aggression and tyranny are becoming more and more conspicuous in the columns of official telegrams from the Continent, and fresh plans for Russification are continually being proclaimed. It seems hardly improbable, indeed, that these fertile territories, annexed some century and a half ago, and ranking among the most valuable tributaries of the Imperial crown, may at no very distant period serve as the basis for serious disagreements between Russia and Germany, owing to the strong

German feeling which has long and widely prevailed among the nobles and higher *bourgeoisie* of these provinces. It may therefore awaken a passing interest if we cast a glance over these Baltic dependencies and obtain some little insight into their social condition and customs. It would be out of place in a sketch of this kind to enter into any political disquisition, either in the character of Russophobe or Russophile; the writer's intention is simply to offer a picture, necessarily imperfect, but drawn from personal experience and observation during a somewhat protracted residence in those regions, of a most interesting but little known corner of Europe.

The Baltic provinces consist of Courland, Esthonia, and Livonia; the first of these is the richest and most important, and will therefore best repay description.

The past two decades have wrought rapid changes in the internal condition of Courland. It is now close upon twenty years since the first railway, from Riga to Mitau, was opened; since then lines have been laid in various directions, and many characteristic features of the province are speedily disappearing. The plan of Russification, a long-cherished purpose of Alexander II., is making rapid strides towards accomplishment under the present Czar; the use of the Russian language as the medium of all instruction in the university of Dorpat and in the public schools, and as the means of intercourse in every government bureau, has now been made compulsory; while the deprival of Lutheran pastors for political offences (forty were so deprived about the beginning of last year) is, without doubt, but the prelude to the suppression of Lutheranism, the established religion of the Baltic provinces, and the substitution for it of the Greek Church.

Regarded from a bird's-eye point of view, Courland, up to a very recent period, presented to the foreign, superficial observer the model of an ideal community, or set of communities. It suggested to the imagination some features of the feudal times (but without the chivalric element), masked with

a thin veneering, so far as the upper classes were concerned, of modern civilisation and refinement. To begin with the country itself, which occupies an area about equal in extent to that of Ireland, it displays for the most part one vast, grand, level monotony of meadow, corn-field, and forest, forest, corn-field, and meadow, intersected by roads of the very roughest description. We may fairly speak in the present tense, for the iron network has not yet had time to materially alter, by its closeness and extent, the aspect of the landscape. In winter the monotony is increased by the covering of snow, which lies thick and soft upon field and pasture, filling up the deep, wide trenches which take the place of dyke or hedge, and leaving no landmark visible, save the gaunt posts that line the highways and are painted with the Russian colours of black, white, and red. Then the only breaks in the wild, white landscape are formed by the pine forests; those forests, lovely as a dream of fairy-land when first spangled by the early snow-fall, and glittering in the dazzling sunshine, but gloomy as a vision from the "Purgatorio" when standing out against the inky sky of sunless mid-day, deprived by many a winter storm of their snowy mantle, or dimly descried as black, mysterious shadows, still and silent, beneath the brilliant star-beams of a cloudless midnight; yet, whether seen in radiance or in gloom, in the crimson sunset or the solemn moonlight, ever stately, always beautiful.

There are no villages in Courland. A few little towns dot its surface at long intervals, headed by Mitau, that tiniest and quaintest of European capitals, with its ancient castle, the official residence of the governor, its ornamental park, its Boulevard-like *Bachstrasse*, each house of which is a nobleman's stately mansion, its green-roofed Greek church, its severe-looking Lutheran fane, its many alms-

houses, its narrow streets, wooden colonnades, and its general air of being unlike any other town known to civilisation.

This absence of villages gives to the country at large the appearance of being one series of great private domains; and in the days of Courland's prosperity this appearance was not very far from fact, hence the feudal air of the greater part of the province. Even at the present day each nobleman dwells, as did the Norman baron of old, in his castle, surrounded by dependants who furnish their lord with the common necessities of life, and who are housed in the immediate neighbourhood of the mansion in dwellings suited to their respective grades and stations. In close proximity to the



Lutheran Church, Mitau.

Schloss are seen the blacksmith's shop and farrier's forge. The saddler and wheelwright are not far off; the long, low roof of the distillery is sure to be a prominent object in the home landscape; while on the nearest eminence stands the windmill, which supplies the entire community with flour of rye, barley, or wheat; very little of this latter variety falls to the share of any below the rank of bailiff or storekeeper, who, with other similar functionaries, swell the number of immediate retainers. The well-stocked *basse-cour* is surrounded by large, well-built barns, to which is sometimes, though rarely, added a vast sheepfold of substantial structure.

Thus, then, the daily wants of the count's or baron's family are provided for at his very threshold. The outlying hamlets, where congregate the small tenant-farmers (serfs, some thirty years ago), foresters, and farm-labourers, supply spinners and weavers, who flock to the castle in winter-time, or when crops have failed, to beg employment in making up the flax and hemp, which are plentifully grown upon every estate. Excellent "home-spun" woollen fabrics are also produced on the few estates where sheep are kept. A tavern is an indispensable institution for the refreshment and accommodation of travellers; and posting-stations are no less necessary on such roads as are still remote from railways. A good school is to be found on most estates; a plain, German-looking Lutheran church upon every one. But the days of Lutheran schools and Lutheran churches in the Baltic Provinces are probably numbered.

It has been remarked above that, upon a first view, Courland seems to present to the eye of a stranger the phenomenon of an ideal community; and, it may be added, a community of the patrician-patriarchal order. It is only when initiated into the affairs of its internal economy that the foreigner discovers his mistake. Courland's deadliest bane lies, not in Russia's tyranny, but in the intensity of class-feeling which prevails within her borders.

The population of the province may be roughly divided into three great classes—patricians, professional men (pastors and doctors), and peasants; the latter subdivided into farmers and labourers. Of course, this classification does not include the more varied callings of the town populations, among which Jew traders hold so conspicuous a place. A conscription for the Russian army is held each year; but as the men thus drawn are at once absorbed into the

ranks of the great national forces, the soldiery cannot be said to form a part of the provincial community. There is no great enthusiasm for the army among the peasants; and voluntary mutilation (the cutting off a single finger-joint is sufficient) is often resorted to in order to procure disqualification for military service.

It may be said of these three classes, as some one has affirmed of marbles in a bag, that they may mingle, but will never amalgamate. Each class for itself is the order of society; thence result coldness, jealousy, disdain, suspicion, hostility, disunion of interests. The nobles date the decline of provincial prosperity from the emancipation of the serfs; a noble and righteous act in itself, but premature in its operation, and consequently injurious in its immediate effects upon both master and servant; yet there can be no doubt that the good results are steadily working up towards the surface.

Although the titled class naturally holds the foremost place, it does not present the most interesting features to the traveller who desires to gain an insight into the peculiarities of the province. It must be borne in mind that, so far as the nobles, pastors, doctors, and, in short, all but the peasants are concerned, the population is Russian in name, but German, or, in some cases, Scandinavian, in fact; and German manners and customs prevail. The count or baron hunts, personally superintends the tillage of his home-farm, sits in the local court of justice, and varies the routine of these pursuits by a winter visit to Mitau, or perhaps to Berlin, and a summer excursion to Kissingen, or some other favourite resort; sometimes even to Paris. It is a significant fact that St. Petersburg is rarely the goal of a holiday flight; but this circumstance is accounted for by the stringent rule that no Russian subject can be received at court who does not directly serve the State. Some Courlanders have served the State, and with high distinction; but such are in the minority. It was a Courlander, a Pahlen, who stood so high in the favour of the unhappy Czar Paul, who allayed the Emperor's fears as to the existence of a treasonable conspiracy, and who, nevertheless, with his own hand, thrust the handkerchief down the monarch's throat to stifle his cries, while the other conspirators despatched their victim. This fatal event has cast no permanent blight, however, upon the Pahlen family; for a descendant of the traitor held an honourable place among the statesmen of Alexander II.



Greek Church, Mitau.

We have been rendered sufficiently familiar with the style of life and occupation in vogue among German ladies of all classes, through the medium of such works as "German Home Life," and the same description might, with a few modifications, be applied to the ladies of Courland. Yet, as compared with the women of rank of such sparsely populated territories as Pomerania, for example, the fair Courlanders have a distinct advantage in point of superficial culture and intellectual attainments. French, though spoken with a decidedly Teutonic accent, is as familiar to the tongues of these latter as the maternal German, while few are to be found who cannot and do not enjoy the best works of English fiction and poetry without the medium of translation. Wonderously methodical are these high-born *châtelaines*. No meanest detail of domestic craft escapes their Argus eyes; linen-press, store-room, and pantry are all subject to their minutest inspection; and when, each morning, the

man-cook appears in the dining-room to submit the *menu*, he receives from his lady's own hands, and carefully weighed out, the supplies of sugar, spices, dried fruits, &c., necessary for its confection. The lady's maid assists her mistress largely in these household cares, and in fact plays the part of first lieutenant in the feminine departments of household administration. In all these particulars, then, strong resemblance can be traced to German customs in a corresponding rank of life. But one great distinguishing feature is to be found in the boundless hospitality exercised among the Courlanders, not only by the nobles but by the professional class also. It is true that intermarriages have been contracted to so great an extent—this proud little aristocracy, like that of Spain, deeming no other nationality so fit to mate with as its own—that all the titled families are more or less related to each other. Visiting is practised on a ponderous scale, which in any other region would be thought intolerable. Invitations are rarely issued save for some formal banquet,

given in honour of a betrothal, a christening, or other occasion of family rejoicing. Visits are made spontaneously, and it is no uncommon thing for the post or a mounted messenger to announce the imminent incursion for a few days' stay of an entire family, attended by governess, nurse, coachman and valet. Children, though as a rule fairly well disciplined, are far more prominent objects in the society of Courland than elsewhere. When a hunting party is convened it is usual for wives and daughters to accompany the sportsmen to the place of rendezvous, spend the day at the *château*, and so be in readiness to join the evening dinner-party. As the duties of a hostess oblige her to be in unceasing attendance upon her guests, the onus of entertaining is no light one. These feminine conclaves give

rise to much sarcastic comment in view of the gossip, or *Kaffee-klatsch*, which is supposed to form their chief attraction; but though much chit-chat is exchanged, it is a question whether the style of conversation differs greatly, save in the peculiar stamp conferred by nationality, from that of the average "afternoon tea" of English drawing-rooms.

The professional class, bitterly jealous of the nobles, prides itself upon its intellectual superiority; "We are the aristocracy of mind," say the members of this confraternity. Nor is this claim an unjust one. Many causes contribute to the strengthening and nourishing of this jealousy. The most conspicuous of these is the position of direct dependence which the most prominent and numerous members of this class, namely, pastors and physicians, occupy in relation to the lords of the soil. (Be it here mentioned, *par parenthèse*, that up to a comparatively recent period none but noblemen were allowed by law to possess landed estates. It was Alexander II. who had this law repealed). Take, for example, the position of a country pastor. Every estate, or group of estates, according to size, maintains its pastor; a commodious dwelling, in the prevailing German style, is provided for his accommodation, and the value of the living greatly depends upon the extent of the orchard and fields which adjoin the *pastorat*, and form the pastor's domain. Money stipends vary in amount; but the maximum reaches only a very modest sum. The highest rank to which a pastor can attain is that of *Oberconsistorialrath*, or member of the Consistory, which sits at St. Petersburg for six weeks, twice in the year. Another title of dignity is that of *Probst*, the functions of which office combine duties analogous to those of archdeacon and rural dean in England. But whether *oberconsistorialrath*, *probst*, or simple pastor, all have alike to depend in the main upon the same humiliating form of payment, namely, that in *kind*. Supplies of flour, meal, and other commodities for domestic consumption, wood for the stoves, fodder for the horses, are sent in at stated times by the patron or patrons of the living; and it would require a higher degree of tact and courteous consideration than that usually possessed by the lords of the soil to render this mode of remuneration agreeable to the recipients. By way of illustration of the spirit in which the supplies are provided, the writer may quote the following conversation. English sojourner to wealthy countess, *loq.* :—

"I think, madam, I should like to drive to the *Pastorat* this afternoon, and drink coffee with the *Frau Probstin*."

"You had better not do so, for if you go you will find nothing to eat."

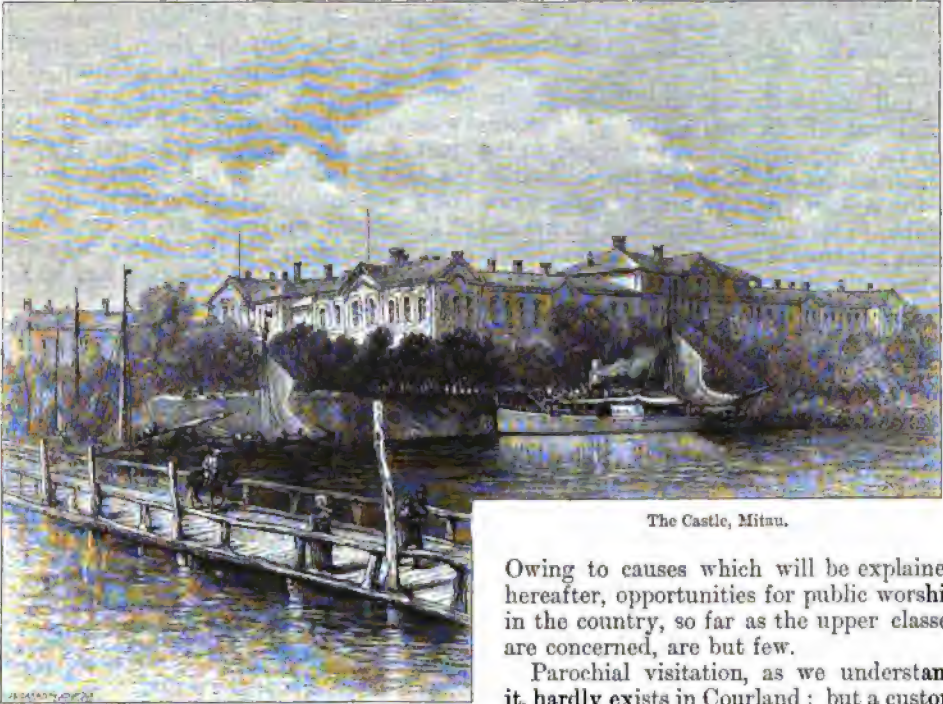
"Nothing to eat? What can have happened to bring famine into that hospitable dwelling?"

"Nothing has happened," is the reply of the countess with a laugh, half-malicious, half-scornful; "but my husband is gone to *Mitau* for two days, and forgot, before he went, to send in flour and meal for the *Probst*."

The countess in question well knew that no danger of temporary famine would actually accrue in consequence of the count's neglect; but she liked to exaggerate the situation in order to accentuate the *Probst's* position of dependence.

Other sources of revenue are still more to be deprecated, though from a different standpoint. These are derived from direct payments received by the pastor for the special ordinances of religion. The scale of these payments varies according to the status of the worshipper. The tariff fixed by custom and unwritten prescription exacts a fee of five roubles from the noble who wishes to communicate, to return thanks for recovery from sickness, or to have a special prayer offered publicly when under stress of some private affliction or anxiety. In the case of the communion, it is customary to send the fee the day before, with an intimation of the sender's intention to communicate. A few kopecks are deemed sufficient in the case of a worshipper of the peasant class. Among the higher orders the rites of baptism and marriage are celebrated within the mansion, and on these occasions a handsome honorarium is bestowed upon the officiating pastor.

The Sunday duties of a Lutheran minister in Courland are, as will be seen hereafter, of a very onerous nature; but they are often succeeded in the evening, not by the appropriate refreshment of a few hours' quiet reading and meditation in the study, by way of preparation for spiritual ministrations to individual members of the flock throughout the coming week, but by the recreation of social gatherings at the *Pastorat*, where secular music, cards, and sometimes dancing form the leading features of the entertainment. The pastors are noted for their hospitality, and the *Pastorat* is the place of general rendezvous for members of very various classes of society. Dancing is, however, eschewed by the reverend hosts themselves if they have,



The Castle, Mitau.

during the preceding day, "stood before the altar;" that is, administered the rite of Holy Communion.

It would be uncalled for here, and perhaps uncharitable, to express any very decided opinion as to the actual state of religion among pastors and their flocks in Courland. The writer can call to mind bright examples of true, devoted piety among the former class, but the general impression received by the stranger is *not* that of saintliness and whole-hearted devotion to the Master's work on the part of ministers of religion in these provinces. Among the nobles a kind of pietism in the privacy of the domestic circle prevails to an almost universal extent, and finds vent in the perusal of "daily portions" of Scripture, to which short devotional commentaries and meditations are appended; and in the reading, on Sundays, of a sermon and a hymn, or metrical prayer, by the count or baron, if he can find time amid his manifold pre-occupations connected with the affairs of his estate, or if guests do not happen to absorb his attention. In either of these cases the *lecture pieuse* is conducted by his consort. The servants are not usually admitted to these exercises, and nothing approaching to the practice of family prayer has a place in the routine of either Sunday or week day

Owing to causes which will be explained hereafter, opportunities for public worship in the country, so far as the upper classes are concerned, are but few.

Parochial visitation, as we understand it, hardly exists in Courland; but a custom identical with that which prevails in the country districts of Scotland is also observed in these northern wilds. The pastor of a widely-extended and scattered parish makes ministerial journeys at stated times, generally in the winter when the peasants cannot pursue field-work, for the purpose of catechising the young, exhorting the old, praying with all, and making a general inquiry into the spiritual condition of every member of the flock, whom a distance of many versts hinders from availing himself of the public services in the church. The largest room in each hamlet is placed at the pastor's disposal, and there the neighbours gather themselves together. In return for his ministrations, the pastor receives gifts of meal, potatoes, salt meat, and other household stores, according to the means and opportunities of his people.

It might be tedious to dilate at length upon the form of ritual practised in the Lutheran Church of Courland. Suffice it to say that High Lutheranism is dominant, and its ceremonies strikingly illustrate the imperfect and anomalous character of this phase of German Protestantism. High Lutheranism is, throughout Germany at large, decidedly on the wane; Reformed Lutheranism, one of the simplest types of Protestantism, being the prevailing creed. High Lutheran-

ism has retained various shadows and relics of Roman ritual and practice; chief among them, that of Confession, though in a modified form.

Until late in the last century, the confessional was still in use; and it was compulsory for every communicant to repair to the church on the Friday before the celebration of the solemn rite, in order to make a confession, in prescribed form and in general terms, it is true, to the pastor, who was bound to be in attendance on that day for the purpose of hearing these confessions and giving absolution. The writer has seen a confessional-box in the fine Lutheran church of Libau, that little seaport so soon to become, if rumour speak truly, one of the most strongly fortified positions on the Baltic. In the present day this general confession is said aloud and simultaneously by all intending communicants, in the presence of the whole congregation, before the communion is administered; and it is further confirmed by a loud and unanimous "Yes," in answer to a question from the pastor as to the sincerity of each individual's declaration. The communicants then approach the sanctuary rails and receive absolution, the pastor laying his hands upon the head of each person in turn. The pastor himself does not communicate, unless a second ecclesiastic be present to administer absolution to him. Wafer is the form of bread in use.

The Communion Service is fully choral, or at least *musical*, for the writer has often been present in a certain country church where the congregation numbered seven or eight, and the Liturgy was sung, antiphonally, throughout by the pastor and the sacristan. This latter functionary almost rivalled the achievements of Sir Boyle

Roche's famous bird in the performance of his manifold and conflicting duties. He personated in turn the choir, the organist, the organ-blower, and the collector of the offerings. The noiselessness and celerity with which he transported himself from one part of the church to another was deserving of high admiration; and when it is taken into account that German versions of the "Benedictus qui venit" and of the "Agnus Dei" are included in the service, it must be admitted that Küster G.'s task was no light one.

The ordinary morning, or ante-communion, service is simple, consisting of a *choral* or two, prayers, the recital of the Apostles' Creed, and the reading of portions of Scripture. The use of the crucifix, as a symbol, is universal in High Lutheran churches, and the sign of the cross is made by the pastor with the full sweep of his arm as he blesses the congregation ere dismissing them. The vestments of the pastor are also a curious compromise between those of the old faith and the new; for the long black gown, or *talar*, is often surmounted by a biretta, and a golden crucifix, suspended by a red ribbon, forms the badge of the probst.

Though Sunday in domestic circles is so scantily observed, the great fasts and feasts, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Whitsuntide, and Ascension Day are held in high honour. Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide are each celebrated with great solemnity and strict church-going for three consecutive days. All Souls' Day, the 2nd of November, is also observed as one for solemn commemoration of the dead; services are held in the churches, and graves are visited by mourning relatives, bearing wreaths and crosses of flowers.

A PIONEER IN THE EAST.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

PERHAPS we have heard almost too much of the East End of London. For years past it has been made the happy hunting ground of theorists of all sorts, whose acquaintance with it is too often of the sensational type caricatured by *Punch* in the group of ladies, goloshed and waterproofed, hurrying away from a ball because "Lord Algeron has promised to take them to a dreadful delicious alum where the dear people live by twenty in a room!"

Yet the East End exists, and as it brings into focus most of the great social problems which agitate all thoughtful minds in these days, it may not be unprofitable to hear something of the inner and outer life and convictions of a thoughtful man, who was certainly one of the pioneers of those good works there which have now grown to such an extent as to have a sort of fashion and social significance of their own. After all, it is generally the "day of small things" which

determines the future; just as the little sailing vessel which carried Columbus to America, or the Pilgrim Fathers' *Mayflower*, is more historically significant than all the great liners which now ply regularly between the Mersey and the Hudson.

The Rev. Alexander Johnstone Ross was of Scottish birth, and though he became a clergyman of the Anglican communion, and is best known to the general public as the biographer of Bishop Ewing, yet he was of Presbyterian breeding. He was born in Lanark in 1819, the son of a parish minister. He got his earliest education at the village school of Crawford, but was put to the High School of Edinburgh when ten years old, at which period his father died, and the whole family were obliged to quit the manse. His schooldays seem to have been highly creditable to himself, and in after-life he took a wholesome delight in recounting the hardy and thrifty habits of those orphaned days, his long trudges to and fro, and the glories of the pie-shop where he got his mid-day meal.

Some years ago it was quite usual for Scottish lads to enter university life at an age when English boys are still plodding away at school. Alexander Ross entered Edinburgh University at fourteen, and it appears that his zeal for learning put him under a strain, the result of which he felt severely in after-life. Among his professors was John Wilson, the famous "Christopher North," whose genial "Noctes Ambrosianæ" have carried his name through the world. The great man was somehow attracted to his young student, and sometimes took him as his companion in his wanderings about Edinburgh. We can imagine how such a person, who looked "at once a son of Thor and Balder," who "could clear the Cherwell—twenty-three feet—with a running leap," and who

had very characteristic nomadic or "Bohemian" tendencies, was likely to attract and impress an enthusiastic boy. And possibly in the turn of young Ross's after-life we may trace some influence from this beloved master, who could affirm in his favourite Doric:

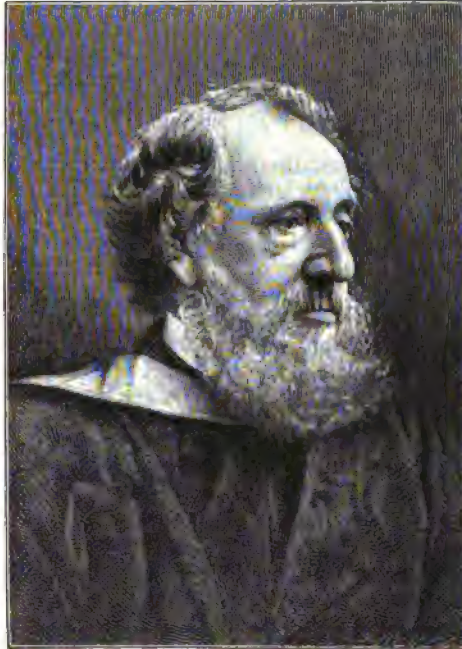
"A' the knowledge which the puir can ever acquire in schools or mechanical institutions can be nae mair than subsidiary to a far higher knowledge, an' if *that* be neglectit, or undervalued, a' that they can ever learn will either be useless or pernicious, for isna the chief end o' man 'to fear God and keep His commandments?'"

By dint of bur-saries, teaching, &c., Mr. Ross was enabled to boast, "From the age of sixteen I never cost my mother a penny!" When nineteen years of age he went as a tutor to Madeira, and seems to have been thoroughly happy in this appointment, where, also, he won golden opinions. His home letters show that, despite his accounts of mountain scrambles and sea-shore rambles, and his diligent work with his pupils, he got through an immense amount of varied reading.

It was at this time that he first heard the name of John Sterling, Carlyle's friend, whose daughter he subsequently married. The young tutor was his mother's faithful correspondent all her life long. He always contrived that his letters should reach her on Sunday morning, and she playfully called it her "epistle for the day." For her he copied an epitaph which Sterling had written for the grave of a stranger buried in Madeira:—

"Looking still to his Eternal Home
He found his children's God in foreign skies;"

and also some noble words from one of Sterling's letters: "That every one who in any corner works more honestly, and fearlessly,



Alexander J. Ross.

(From a photograph by S. A. Walker, 230, Regent Street, W.)

and earnestly than those about him, is a centre of new good, and becomes a prophet by natural succession, though no mantle fall on him, and he rides in no fiery chariot."

From the beginning, Alexander Ross's own inclination had been towards taking orders in the English Church; but just as his tutorship was ended, and his decision required to be made, the Disruption rent the Presbyterian Church in two, and all the young man's patriotism and religious enthusiasm led him to the side where there then seemed least to win and most to suffer. Accordingly, in 1843, he was ordained by Dr. Candlish in the charge of the Free Church of Langholm, near Carlisle. Three years later he was transferred to a Presbyterian chapel at Brighton, in which he ministered with great success until his separation from the Presbyterian body in 1853.

It is needless to dwell on the disputations and differences in dogmatic theology which led to this end. Creeds were stiffer then than now, and the darker mysteries of faith were often allowed to veil that brightness of the Father's love which must shine behind them all. It is more profitable to dwell on the spirit in which his ministerial work had been always undertaken. His journals of this period show traces "of a practice, continued through life, of individual prayer for every member of his congregation." He regretted that there were "no poor in his Brighton church," but there is not a single mention, in the records, of the large and influential congregation which gathered there. His communion roll gathered members from every evangelical sect.

On leaving the Presbyterian Church he migrated to the Pavilion Chapel, Brighton. At this time one of his most helpful friends was Lady Byron, widow of the great, ill-starred poet. In her he found "an impulse, an auxiliary, a deepening of hope, and a response to his aspirations." We find that she chid him—and very daintily and sweetly—for diffidence regarding the pecuniary difficulties sure to accompany such a change as he had made. She asked the pertinent question, "Is not 'time' undervalued as property in comparison with the 'vile trash'?" and went on to say, "They who ask what it is right for another to give, should ask it as they would a piece of bread and butter." On her side, she consulted him in her private affairs, and trusted him concerning the education of her grandson.

In his casual references to similar experience in others, one can constantly trace his

own pain under the conflict and antagonism he had passed through at this time of severance from old ways and some old friends.

In 1856, in a time full of preachings and lecturings, he married Sterling's daughter, and the union, though destined to be brief, was singularly happy, and coloured all his emotional life afterwards. From the beginning, Alexander Ross, the son of the homely parish minister, seems to have fallen among notable folk. Besides Professor Wilson, the Sterlings, and Lady Byron, he enjoyed the personal acquaintance of Baron Bunsen, of whom he said that "to stand by him while he found heart and soul in singing Luther's glorious hymn was an experience not to be forgotten," the Hares, George MacDonald, Dr. John Brown, Henry Crabbe Robinson, Bishop Ewing, Erskine of Linlathen, Dean Stanley, and other celebrated people, too numerous to mention.

It was not till he had been through the great sorrow of his young wife's death that he finally resolved to enter the English Church. His ordination was, however, through many circumstances, delayed for fully five years, and took place within a week of the date of his second marriage to the lady who still survives him.

His first appointment in the Establishment was as curate of St. Andrew's, Holborn. His duties there were very heavy and onerous, and brought him at once face to face with the London working-class. In becoming "a priest," Alexander Ross certainly did not become "priestly." The great attraction which a National Church had for him was his aspiration that "it shall embrace by its ministrations the whole range of the spiritual sympathies, tastes, and susceptibilities of the nation." Noting that "at present no let or hindrance is imposed by any authority, lay or clerical, as to the hymns which any congregation may adopt, or the number of hymns which any congregation may sing at a given time," he adds, "I should like to witness a similar liberty of prayer. As Bunsen suggested years ago, why should there not be allowance for formal, extempore, and silent outpourings of the heart's deepest aspirations whenever two or three are gathered together? . . . Indeed, one grand utterance in our Prayer Book, 'O Lord, open Thou our lips,' seems specially fitted to be the prelude to an extempore prayer after an interval during which the whole congregation has been *silently* holding converse with the indwelling Spirit of God."

But we must hasten on to 1869, when

Mr. Ross received that call to the East End living of St. Philip's, Stepney, which was, in a way, the culmination of his career.

Two years earlier, a young gentleman of birth and fortune, the son of a bishop, had taken up his abode in Philpott Street, in this remote and then obscure parish. This was Mr. Edward Denison, who became the forerunner of the great army of gently-bred men and women now to be found in East End mission work, who have proved it the best condition of their success to live among their people. The "East End" was already a problem, and Edward Denison desired to see with his own eyes how matters stood. He had studied the state of the poor in various foreign countries, and he had acted as one of the almoners of the Society for the Relief of Distress during the great East End troubles of 1866. So he was no mere excitable or amateur theorist. And he approached his great problem from the highest standpoint. His one hope was that the young should be made to see practically and sympathetically the living idea of Christianity. That it, in itself, is sufficient for all the needs of men he had no doubt whatever. He smiled quietly on those who say, "Christianity won't do now, it does not satisfy the instincts of humanity," and his reply was, "It is not Christianity, but Christians, who are wanting." He was painfully aware of the gulf yawning between the Church and the people, questioning, "What is the use of asking people to come to church when they know of no rational reason why they should; when, if they go, they find themselves among people using a form of words which has never been explained to them; ceremonies performed which to them are entirely without meaning; sermons preached which as often as not have no meaning, or when they have, a meaning intelligible only to those who have studied theology all their lives?" Side by side with the small seeds of many new schemes to promote thrift, education, and material comfort, which have since grown and elaborated to a prodigious extent, he worked diligently on the old lines of visiting the sick, and teaching the children, regarding an evening class for working-men's systematic Scripture study as, "if it should succeed, the crown and glory of his labours."

In his East End life and labour Mr. Denison had found a sympathetic fellow-labourer in John Richard Green, the well-known historian, who was incumbent of St. Philip's before Mr. Ross. When Mr. Green was appointed librarian at Lambeth Palace he per-

sonally besought Mr. Ross to be his successor, because he desired to leave behind him a man of culture and enlightened thought who would continue to co-operate with Mr. Denison in studying the problem of the elevation of the masses. The inducement had great weight with Mr. Ross. But he and Edward Denison were destined not to work together. Mr. Ross entered on the incumbency of St. Philip's in the spring of 1869, and in the October of that year failing health drove Edward Denison into foreign exile. He voyaged to Australia and never returned, dying at Melbourne in January, 1870, leaving the memory of his work not only to the parish where he had lived, but to the world at large.

It was about three years later, when Mr. Ross had got into the full swing of his East End work, that the writer of the present paper had the privilege of making his acquaintance and joining in one of his minor plans. By that time he had gathered about him a band of enthusiastic workers of his own, and had made acquaintance with such workers in neighbouring fields. In the writer's memory the period lies under a broad sunbeam of hopeful energy and joyful comradeship. What mattered that the scene was that which has been described by a popular novelist as "the favoured spot which exhibits in perfection all the leading features which characterize the great joyless city"—that "its streets are mean and without individuality or beauty . . . a double row of little two-storied houses all alike, apparently all furnished alike, in each ground-floor front the red curtains and white blind of respectability with the little table bearing something, either a basket of artificial flowers, or a big Bible, or a vase, or a case of stuffed birds"—where "even the street which begins with some breadth, a church (St. Philip's) and a few trees on one side and almshouses (the Brewers') with a few trees on the other, does not keep its promise; but presently closes up, narrow and like unto the rest." We, the band of workers who made duties which enabled us to penetrate those little houses, were certainly not struck by the "hopeless dulness" which the fashionable novelist, from whom we have quoted, attributes to them. We found grinding toil, we found oppression, neglect, tragedy, pain, vice; but we found also indomitable hope, lively independence and quiet dutifulness, and over all the play of a rough, natural humour, and under all the vitality of strong and real human interests, which made some

of us, passing to and fro between the life of these mean little houses and that of spacious drawing-rooms, whisper to each other that the life in these latter was vapid and artificial by comparison! Some of the young men among us, not quite able to dispense with the gain of "filthy lucre," were ready to work as agents of the Charity Organization Society, then a new growth from the labours of Edward Denison and his earliest friends. They made the lines of "inquiry" and household visitation into an unostentatious vehicle for brotherly help and cheer and counsel. One lady, the daughter of a famous professor, spent an evening weekly holding "a mothers' meeting" in a rough schoolroom in one of those worst East End streets down which it is conventionally considered "unsafe to go alone." It was observed that this evening meeting attracted chiefly elderly women and widows, and not the class most desired, the mothers of growing children. "And indeed," said Mr. Ross, with his wise comprehension, "at that hour it is best they should be at home with their families." Accordingly, at his instigation, another of us, herself a young married woman, started an afternoon meeting, inviting the working women by house to house visitation, with the expressed explanation. "That is the best hour for us all, that we may be at home to meet our husbands when their work is done." It was Mr. Ross's wish that the "mission women" hired to do the collecting and general beating up of recruits for these lady superintendents, should live in rooms in which the meetings could be held, and which might be made models of what working homes should be. But want of funds prevented this dream from being carried into execution—and indeed in those days funds were not largely forthcoming, one mission woman, "expected to hold herself day and night at the service of the poor," receiving a pittance so scanty that she could scarcely have existed upon it had she not found shelter with her old mother in the Brewers' Almshouses. The "mothers' meeting" was an opportunity of personal intercourse, for putting before the women methods of household comfort and decency, and helping them to attain these, besides opening up many chances for varied service, in which the help was generally that of giving information or tendering counsel. The work rose to such magnitude that, when the original superintendents were forced to retire, their places were taken by a lady who went to live on the

spot, and gave her whole time to it. Mr. Ross himself always visited these little gatherings, welcome alike to superintendents and to women, with his bright face, his "few calm words of faith and prayer," and his kindly remembrance and interest in every person who had ever come before him.

It is true that Mr. Ross's own sympathies and methods were rather too broad and elastic to suit those of most "committees," however well-intentioned. He was very vexed when a committee refused the services of one whom he judged peculiarly suited for a mission woman. She was young, bright, energetic, and pious, and generally set free from all household cares by the regular absence of her sailor husband. But she was a Plymouthist. Mr. Ross pleaded that spiritual help and leading had chanced to come to her from that direction—that naturally she clung to it—and that dogmatic and doctrinal difficulties were little likely to come into her mission duties. But the committee was inexorable. Again, he thought a similar committee mistaken in keeping its workers in leading-strings of red tape, when a little more latitude of action, and even of purse, would often have enabled them to act with promptitude and efficacy. Yet nobody knew better than he that it is not gold which is most needed in the East End. "We want you and your work," he used to say, "not your money." But he could be stirred to a quite warm resentment when he felt that the cold officialism of a mere "professional philanthropy" tended to blight or chill the energies of those prepared to give their best, their very selves, to serve those poor, "whose characteristics, wants, sins and goodness, remote honorary secretaries may sometimes little apprehend!"

How could we find those Stepney streets dull and dreary, when at any moment we might come upon him, wandering along with that rapt expression which told that, amid all the greyness and monotony, his spirit was free to gaze on untold loveliness open to its inner vision? At that time he was writing the biography of Bishop Ewing, and it was much in his mind, and when we met him some beautiful thought generally started at once to his lips—thoughts appropriate to the occasion and responsive to our own words, and yet such as we find among his recorded words:

"Enshrine your happiest moments; they will give you your truest thoughts of God."

"If your house is set on the sunny side of the hill, do not go and sit in the shade."

"As sunshine is stored up in the coal measures, so past joy and gladness may be stored up in the soul as a light-giver in darker days."

"If each man has his own load to carry, woe to the man who adds to his brother's burden!"

"The poor are almost as bad as the rich."

"Pain is but joy in the making."

"Do not stretch out a long arm; all good things come to him who waits."

"God is infinitely better than the best thought the best man ever had of Him."

We used to resort to the pretty little vicarage to relate any special cases on which we required counsel, and we were always sure they would receive exactly the same sort of kindly human attention and interest which affectionate members of one household may give to each other's affairs.

The vicarage itself, like all true homes, was a presentment of the range and width of its master's sympathies. If there was a portrait of Milton in the dining-room, there was one of Darwin on the staircase. The Vicar's household were in perfect touch with himself. At that time Sir Richard Wallace's noble collection of pictures was on loan at the Bethnal Green Museum, and Mrs. Ross utilised her artistic powers in copying some of them, to bring in money to forward her husband's objects. For, of course, money was required for the schools and classes, for the aged and sick, and for the aid of young emigrants; though Mr. Ross never lost sight of his oft-repeated opinion that "the great desideratum is the personal services of men and women who have leisure," leading "to an intimate knowledge of a few families in a street," and that all agencies should be regarded chiefly as a means to this end.

It must have been an unconscious sense of this loyal "friendliness" of his nature which made a sailor, after hearing Mr. Ross preach, bid his young wife, "if he was drowned at sea, go straight to the Vicar"—a counsel which, singularly enough, she required to follow very shortly afterwards.

But while thus living with his eye ever on that divine and human love which dwells at the heart of things, Mr. Ross was diligent in all those public functions which tended in the same direction. For six years he was chairman of the Whitechapel branch of the Charity Organization Society. He was a guardian of the poor for Mile End Old Town. He maintained close intercourse with the local sanitary officers. He took an active

interest in the East London Nursing Society. The first London branch of the Association for the Care of Friendless Girls was formed under his auspices. He was an ardent promoter of emigration schemes—especially those paying attention to family emigration. In his district were great numbers of Jews. He felt that the best way to approach these was to first break down the unjust barriers which have been erected between them and Christianity—to convince them that Christianity was capable of "brotherly-kindness" towards them. He sought to find our common standpoints—certainly the best method for those who wish to lead any on to their own goal. The child of a Jewish neighbour was burnt to death. The Vicar called and read the Psalms of David with the parents. Ever after, the elder brother was ready to blow the organ in church for the Vicar's daughters. "Should I be intruding," asked another Jew, "if I came to see the child of one of my workmen baptized in your church?" He was assured he would be heartily welcome. When he came he pointed to the "Holy, holy, holy," inscribed on the church wall. "We have that also," he said. Mr. Ross insisted on a just treatment of the Jewish element in the Board schools where he was manager. Finding that the better class of Jews were anxious for some other resort than the streets for their boys and girls on the Christian Sunday, he even managed to obtain for them the use for that day of the large schoolrooms in Settle Street. Such was the influence he gained among the ancient people, that when he was interesting himself in the election of Mr. Bryce for the Tower Hamlets, a Jew came to him to ask if the Vicar required any more votes for his friend. "If you do," he said, "I will bring you another thousand to-morrow morning." *Justice* was the key to this influence. A parishioner once said to Mrs. Ross: "Your husband is the justest man we have ever had in this parish"—an encomium worthy of those who are princes among men!

Mr. Ross was always ready to declare that "the curse of the district is drink, which slays with an outstretched arm in every street and alley . . . a gigantic evil, which, unless inexorably met by serious and persistent endeavour, will draw our country into perdition."

He was a man of sixty-three before he lost the dear mother whom he had always cherished so tenderly. She passed away in extreme old age, holding his hand and bidding him repeat "The Rock of Ages," the

hymn he had sung at family prayers on the first morning after his father's death, half a century before. The very last words she addressed to him were—

"You have always been a good boy, Sandy."

Her death was a great shock to him. At that date he was first seized with those attacks of the heart from which he ever afterwards suffered, and this, combined with sickness in his own household, convinced him that the days of his East End sojourn were numbered. Accordingly he migrated to Snelston, a living in Derbyshire. He made the change reluctantly, but it was an absolute necessity, for the many and varied interests into which his ardent spirit had thrown itself had terribly reduced his strength. Yet, ere he finally quitted Stepney, another great sorrow befell him in the death of his eldest daughter.

But he knew how to bear sorrow. He had had his own great lesson in the loss of his first wife—a wound ever reopened by the sight of kindred grief in others. He was ever a rare sympathiser, not so much by what he said, as by the way he said it, by the feeling which mourners had that he knew all about it! And now God himself comforted him. Later on he could say, "I have never enjoyed

so much continuous intercourse with God as at Snelston." He could think of the vanished faces and say, "God himself is our home, and we are ever together there."

He adapted himself readily to his new and simpler duties among the quiet country folk, though at first, amid outward appearances so different from those to which he had grown accustomed, he found it hard to realise "that backbiting, lying, and drunkenness had by no means disappeared from Snelston." But it was plain that his life's work was really ended. He aged rapidly, was unfit for exertion, and shrank from any outward changes. Only the old bright spirit survived the breaking up of the physical forces, so that at the end—shortly before the walk with God closed and he "was not"—he could write—

"An eternal newness of life and all that is best is God's gift and promise in one, and should we not wait patiently for the fulfilment of His purpose?"

"The sleep of the beloved" fell on him somewhat suddenly during a brief visit to London, in February, 1887. And the closing scene was in every sense a fulfilment of his own words—

"The Christian comes to his last battle-field, and he finds the enemy is not there."

AUTUMN STORM.

THE swift cloud scuds along the sky,
And o'er the field the shadow flies;
The rains that on the pasture lie
A mighty wind of heaven dries.
Blow, wind of heaven, with shout and strife;
Dry up these floods of foolish tears—
The hoarded sorrows of long years—
Blow back the early joy and life.

O'er all the land the storm is borne;
The meadows toss in golden seas;
The willow winds his silver horn
To heaven, complaining of the breeze.
Blow sweeping wind, rise cleansing flood,
Rush thro' the nerves, the veins, the will,
The sluggish heart, and once more fill
The life with April in the blood.

Soft falls the sunlight on the lakes;
On every wave a peak of snow
Curls in white music, runs, and breaks
In foam upon the underflow.

Steal ray of heaven, steal lightly down
Thro' fitful rifts of gloom and night,
Dark Doubt transform to Hope's delight;
Swoll'n tears with rippling laughter crown.

Now all the rushes by the bend,
As thro' their ranks the salvos pass,
Droop low their stately heads and lend
Their hurried kisses to the grass.
And thou, Misfortune, to our door
Hail! with thy wand so withering,
If from a common sorrow spring
A sweeter love 'twixt rich and poor.

Fell screams the fowl; the city quakes;
The thunder rattles on the pane;
O'er all the land the tempest shakes;
But on the morrow calm shall reign.
And thou, O blast of Righteousness,
Blow on each tower of sin, nor cease,
Till from the crash of doom come peace,
And long repose the nations bless.

WILL FOSTER.

A DAY AMONG THE CAIRNGORM MOUNTAINS.

By JAMES BROWN, D.D.

THE day—at least the expedition which made it memorable—began the night before. There had been a week of broken weather, during which we had been anxiously studying the barometer, and consulting the almanac anent the changes of the moon. It was now September; our holiday at Grantown-on-Spey was drawing to a close, and we had not yet climbed the Cairngorm. Our more immediate surroundings had been explored. The approaches to Castle Grant, with their glimpses of the blue Cromdale Hills seen through the many-pillared, purple-carpeted pine woods; the lime-tree avenue; the path to Cromdale, with its charming succession of grassy lane, heathery woodland, breezy height, green glade, and brook that curves and flows

“To join the brimming river;”

these had been our daily resorts. We had become familiar with the sudden contrast between the sombre gloom of the pines in the Gaich Wood and the sunny gladness of the birches in Glen Beg. And we had gone farther afield. We had driven to Loch-an-Eilan and seen the Osprey's Nest, halting by the way to look at Loch Vaa—the Loch of the Drowning—and listening to the weird legend linked to its name. We had seen in passing that Craigellachie still “stands fast.” We had returned by way of Carr Bridge and Duthil, and had marked where the Earls of Seafield sleep. We had crossed the moor to Loch-in-Dhorb, and come home through the great heather fields at Dava and by way of Huntley's Cave. Peter Grant's horses had pulled us up General Wade's Road to the Dirrdhu—not without maledictions from Peter on the head of him who had told us that this is the finest drive in Strathspey. But all this availed us nothing so long as we could see, in sunny intervals, the Cairngorm heaving high his shining shoulder, with the snow drifts that had survived the summer gleaming in the light. That was the Mordesai in the king's gate that marred our content, and we could not go south in peace till we had set our foot upon his neck.

At last the aneroid was rising, and there was hopeful coincidence of an anticipated change in the moon; and therefore, though

it was still raining, we retained Peter and his horses and ordered our sandwiches. There were six of us—a minister, a doctor, an advocate, a youth of still doubtful destination, and two young ladies. It was because of these young ladies that the day began the night before. Their mother had decreed that if they climbed the Cairngorm it must be on horseback; but there was only one side-saddle and no suitable horses in Grantown, and so it was necessary that we should go, the evening before our start, to Nethy-bridge—a distance of six miles—to see if horses and another saddle could be got there. The men walked; the ladies went by train. We met at the station in pouring rain; but the glass was rising and the moon was going to change, so, nothing daunted, we went to the inn and secured a side-saddle, and two horses well-accustomed to carry peats from the hill, arranging that they should await our arrival at the foot of the mountain next morning. By that time the rain had ceased, and we started to walk to Grantown, intending to go by way of Auchernack and Spey Bridge. But when we had passed Abernethy Kirk and Castle Roy, somebody suggested the Boat of Ballifurth; and though none of us knew exactly where the boat was to be found, and though it was already dusk, we made a bee-line across country to the point on the river where we hurriedly concluded the boat ought to be. The bee-line led us over a railway embankment, half-a-dozen wire fences, and a stone dyke, right into the midst of an extensive turnip-field, where we wandered about, like Bunyan's blind men among the tombs, becoming every moment hazier and hazier as to the direction in which the boat could be most hopefully sought. It was, I think, the doctor whose scientific instincts led him to the right corner of the field, and presently his shout served at once to waken the boatman and to tell us the direction in which we were to follow. We were soon safely across, and were able to find the path on the other side through the lower Gaich Wood up to the high road which leads to Grantown. Our exhilarating little night adventure was quite worthy to be reckoned the beginning of our “day.”

When the real day dawned it more than redeemed the promise of the aneroid and the

almanac. It was one of those days that come only in September, after rain, when the moon has changed—a shining day, a day among a thousand, with bracing air, cloudless light, and an atmosphere perfectly clear, for the rain had washed out of it every trail of mist or haze. We were up betimes; and sharp at six Peter was at the door, high on his box, with a face as solemn as if he were drawing a hearse; for it is only a practised eye that, at that hour of the morning, can detect in Peter's face the presence of the humour which will reveal itself before the day is done. Grantown was still asleep as we drove up the street and turned down the New Road. The woods on either side, with the graceful stems of the pines and the rich bloom of the heather, and the view of the river opening up before us, had never seemed so beautiful as when we saw them in the first freshness of the morning; and when we had crossed the river and were driving through the birches at Auchnagonlain, their delicious scent made the air fragrant. Soon we had passed the Cairn, the Haunted Wood, and the clachan of Nethybridge—where we received assurance that the horses and the side-saddle had gone on before us. We drove past the pine-tree nursery, and thus entered Abernethy Forest, with its roads that cross and recross, seeming to come from nowhere and to lead no-whither; but skirted by many branched pines that grow, and have grown for a hundred years or more, on green knolls that rise from among richest heather. We had occasional glimpses of red deer bounding beneath the shadows as we drove onward into the open. Everybody was at his best: the doctor gave us snatches of song; the minister "tauld his queerest stories;" and the advocate, who is a rising young Tory, quoted Lord Beaconsfield's best things against Mr. Gladstone. This roused Peter, for Peter is a Radical, with an earth-hunger that could by no means be satisfied with three acres and a cow; and as we were driving through a tract of more than twenty-five miles square where men have had to yield to deer, and in which no human being except such as attend on the lordly stag has a dwelling, and as we were passing the broken remnants of swing-gates which had been put up to stop an ancient right of way, the circumstances were congenial to the utterances of a disciple of Mr. Chamberlain's "gospel of humanity." At length we passed the Green Loch—its shores strewn with the white trunks and arms of pines, tempest-riven from the great mountain walls that rise on either side—

and drove merrily down towards Glenmore shooting-lodge. Here we found the peat-horses and the side-saddle from Nethybridge, the Grantown saddle was produced from the boot of Peter's carriage, the young ladies were mounted, and the ascent began.

It is first a descent by a grassy slope to the stream that feeds Loch Morlich, and then the path leads up a picturesque defile on the left bank. At the head of the defile there is a rugged wooden bridge by which the torrent is crossed, and you are on the mountain-side. It is only at first that there is anything which deserves to be called climbing, and even that is made comparatively easy by a well-engineered path. The gradient, however, is sufficiently steep soon to lift you clear of the defile and let you breathe freer air. At the first shoulder the path ceases, but it is no longer needed. You go onward toward the still distant summit by a gentle slope. The footing is firm, and for the most part smooth. The hard crisp grass is shorn by the wind, as by a lawnmower. The very granite seems to have owned the power of the blast, for the stones are flat and level, only an occasional boulder occupying one great and defiant altitude. The ease of the ascent nearly led us into trouble. We were tempted to relax the watchfulness with which at the outset we had guided the horses, and the man in charge of them, William by name, seemed to forget that they were carrying something different from their accustomed load of peats. Anyhow, one of them had been allowed to wander with its rider too far from the track we were following, and a signal of distress apprised us that it had chosen a steep place with ugly-looking rocks. This at once awakened the doctor's slumbering gallantry, and he was content for the rest of the ascent to be withdrawn from the discussion of politics that he might act the part of a squire of dames.

Even in these solitudes occasion for political discussion is not far to seek. The utter silence provokes debate, for it suggests the wrongs of the crofter, whose blue smoke no longer rises from the smiling glens, and whose cattle have now no place on the mountains. Walking on the green holms by the burn-sides below, you stumble on the foundations of his once-happy dwelling. Even as we talked of him a great herd of deer, some hundreds strong, crossed before us. We were to leeward, and they were not disturbed. It was a sight to be remembered to see their graceful forms when they reached

the sky-line and stood like an army of antlered giants against the light. But when one muses on the cost at which this picturesque feature of the mountain scenery has been introduced one's heart is apt to burn; and so it came about that we talked politics, and found that on the question of the land-laws the advocate was the wildest radical of us all.

As you near the topmost cairn the ascent becomes steeper and more rugged. Vegetation has all but disappeared, and you find your way upward as by a loosely-jointed staircase. If the whole ascent is easy it is of course proportionately long, and when we reached the summit we all felt that we had earned well our rest and our luncheon. The Cairngorm affords unusual facility for the refreshment of weary climbers. Within a hundred yards of the summit there is an abundant spring that sends a sparkling little stream full born down the mountain-side. Within easy reach of its crystal basin we sat in comparative shelter from the wind, and looked across the awful rocks encircling Loch Avon, which form the most striking feature of the famous view we had come to see. The giant does not, however, offer on his stronghold as kindly refreshment for horses as for men. Unless he is sorely maligned he is a cruel giant. We had been solemnly warned that no horse ever ate his scanty herbage and lived. The doctor, who, in his day, won some distinction in the botany class, would not venture to say whether or not the flora of the mountain is as poisonous as the tradition of the neighbourhood asserts it is. We therefore thought it safer to keep our horses' heads tightly bound to their saddles when their mouths were not busied in their corn bags.

On returning to the cairn, that, before descending to Loch Avon and the Shelter Stone, we might take in the feature of the grand landscape, we were seized with a great longing to go higher up into the blue, and to rise above certain obstacles on one side, which alone, on that day among a thousand, prevented us from seeing the whole highlands of Scotland. We were standing at a height of 4,084 feet above the sea, but we were not content, for there, across a valley which seemed to our enthusiasm only a gentle depression, lay Ben Muich Dhui. We knew that he had long contended with Ben Nevis for the supremacy among Scottish mountains, and that even the rigid accuracy of the Ordnance Survey, which had given the crown to his rival, had left him the

honour of 4,296 feet. We had triumphed over one Mordecai, but here was another sitting in the king's gate. Nay, there were others there, for the Cairngorm is only the fourth in the range that bears his name. But if we could gain the vantage ground these 212 added feet would give, we should rise above and see the goodly land beyond Braeriach and Cairntoul, which, meanwhile, by reason of their superior height, blocked the view to the south-west. Watches were looked at, the map was studied, and William was consulted. But there are no peaks on or near the summit of Ben Muich Dhui, and William had never visited it. He thought we might accomplish the intervening distance in something like an hour. It was then one o'clock. Peter was to be in waiting at five, there was surely ample time; and so, having taken a hurried survey and fixed on what seemed the easiest way by which to return, we set boldly forward.

The "gentle depression" proved to be a descent of more than 800 feet, and thus when we had accomplished it a climb of fully 1,000 had to be faced. It was at no point fatiguing, and we thoroughly enjoyed it. We passed one of the drifts, which look in the distance like a table-cloth spread out to dry, but in reality are great snow-fields, and the parents of considerable streams. It was a new experience in Scotland to walk early in September on firm, consolidated snow. Long before we reached the cairn we had to leave the horses behind us, as the approach from the northern side is rugged in the extreme. The summit of Ben Muich Dhui is simply a great heap of granite boulders, and never since we stood on the highest peak of Mount Serbal had we seen such utter desolation, and never since had we enjoyed a view so far-reaching and so glorious. Across the Moray Firth to the north-west we could see Ben Wyvis; far away to the westward the serrated peaks of the Cuchullin hills rose in perfect clearness; in the same direction, but a little to the southward, the rival giant Ben Nevis stood in his pride; still farther southward we could make out dimly the Paps of Jura, and were able, as we turned the eye eastward, to recognise the familiar forms of the south-western Grampians. The nearer view was no less striking. We looked westward across the Pass of Larig Rue to Braeriach on the right, and Cairntoul on the left, with the valley between them, down which the Garrachorry Burn—the chief feeder of the Dee—winds like a serpent. We turned to the southward and saw the

frowning glories of dark Lochnagar, surrounded by the lower heights that overlook Deeside. It is only on a day among a thousand that all the Scottish Highlands thus lay aside their well-worn mantle of mist and reveal their glories to reward the mountain-climber.

When we had made our survey and read some of the specimens of traveller's wit stored in a soda-water bottle on the Cairn, which were for the most part lamentations over the sinking level of the spirits in the travellers' flasks, we were startled by the discovery that the day was declining, and that in half an hour Peter would be in waiting at Glenmore. We turned northward, to follow on the ridge the line of the Larig Rue Pass beneath us on the west, intending to descend by the way we had marked from the summit of Cairngorm. William had brought the horses to meet us on our line of march, and all seemed to promise well, if only the daylight would hold. But as we had lingered on the summit we had forgotten that our shining day was in September and not in June. We were unpleasantly reminded of the fact when the sun disappeared behind Cairntoul, and the shadow of that mountain fell athwart our path. The doctor and the advocate, with the more adventurous of the girls, had gone on to prospect, while the rest of us followed with William and the horses. The last we saw of our advance guard for the time was their making what we understood to be signs to us to turn eastward. We obeyed, expecting that they would follow, and resolved to make for the western slope of the Cairngorm, which we would cross, and then strike the easy gradients, and then the well-defined path by which we had gone up in the morning. But in following the line of the pass, in accordance with our original plan, we had gone far round, and it seemed as if we would never reach Cairngorm. When we did reach it we found that the slope we were to cross was much steeper than we had dreamed it would be. This would have presented no difficulty had we not been encumbered with the horses. But it was a bad half-hour in which we led the horses close by the edge of the snow which fills up the head of the valley, separating the summit of Cairngorm from the great precipices of its western ridge. The footing was of shingle, which fell away from the horses' feet and went tumbling into the depths below. The slope seemed to become steeper as we advanced, and now the daylight was gone, and we had to depend on the moon, which, how-

ever, had entered the third quarter, and was shining on us from an unclouded sky.

The anxiety of the descent did not prevent us realising the wonder of the scene. The weird whiteness of the great snow-drift, the roar of the torrent in the depth, the vast mountain on the one side, the towering precipices on the other, and all in the silent moonlight, combined to produce an impression that can never be effaced. We startled some deer that had gone to rest for the night near the burn; and startled they well might be by the cavalcade that invaded their solitude, for surely mortal horseman never crossed that slope before. They bounded up the valley, and I preserve in my mind a most vivid picture of the graceful forms of the does and the antlered majesty of the stags; having reached a place of safety they turned to gaze, standing on the skyline in the moonlight.

But if moonlight is a favourable medium through which to see deer standing on a skyline, it is not quite so favourable for lighting the path of belated travellers who have left the beaten track and are finding their way uncertainly down a great mountain-side. We, therefore, did not linger, but hurried with the hurrying stream, that we might find safer levels. William's knowledge of peats here served us in good stead. Our inexperience would have led us still to follow the stream when the steeper part of the descent had been accomplished, but he warned us of broken ground, in which the horses would have floundered hopelessly, and guided us along the side of the Cairngorm by a track which brought us at last to the path by which we had gone up in the morning. When we had reached that path we felt that our difficulties were at an end, and we had leisure to speculate, not without anxiety, as to what had become of our friends, from whom we had been parted so many hours before. It was, therefore, a great relief to hear, as we approached the shooting lodge, their cheery halloo and to take our places beside them in the waggonette, to which Peter, not in the most angelic mood after four hours' weary waiting, was attaching the horses. Our long absence on the mountain had created some anxiety among the people about Glenmore, and we had reason to think better of the tenants of shootings than their natural enemies, the mountain-climbers, usually do. We had no sooner arrived than a courteous message came, inviting us to go to the lodge to get some refreshment. We pleaded our dragged and bemired condition

[From a photo.]

CAIRNGORM.

[By G. W. Wilson.]



in excuse, and sent our warmest thanks. The messenger returned with a liberal supply of new milk, which tasted like nectar as we drained tumbler after tumbler.

At nine o'clock we started for Grantown. It was soon revealed that Peter's unangelic mood was not wholly due to waiting for our return. He proceeded to deal with the writer as soon as he had taken his place beside him on the box for having made him, as he supposed, the victim of a practical joke. The luncheon-basket which had been provided for Peter was furnished with a goodly quart bottle duly labelled Bass's Beer. Though Peter would have preferred the wine of the country, he did not despise the milder beverage, which he kept before him while he ate his luncheon, as a stimulant to appetite. At the close of the feast he drew the cork and put the bottle to his lips, but nothing came. He thought our goodness had provided some specially rich liquid, which refused all at once to impart its sweetness. Repeated attempts, equally unsuccessful, led to investigation, which resulted in the discovery that the bottle contained clotted milk in an advanced stage of fermentation. Peter tossed it contemptuously into South Morlich, and nursed his wrath. When he had told his tale it was remembered that a bottle which had been filled with milk for our picnic to Loch-an-Eilan a fortnight before had been forgotten, and it was this bottle which had been sent, by mistake, for Peter's refreshment. The hearty laugh which followed the discovery, and a little medicine administered by the doctor from a small medicine bottle which, with professional forethought, he always carries with him to mountainous regions, thoroughly restored Peter's good-humour, and there seemed nothing to mar the mirth of our night drive through the wild.

But one of the horses, which had been stung to madness by the *clegs* during the long waiting on the banks of the loch, was not so easily pacified. The doctor's medicine bottle did not contain a specific for equine disquiet, and the horse bolted and plunged most vigorously. At last a sudden bolt, while climbing a hill in which the wheels dragged heavily through loose sand, broke the traces, and made our prospect of reaching home that night somewhat dim. Peter's harness and other appointments are usually so satisfactory that the stock of rope he carried in the boot in case of emergencies

had lain there long, and did not bear the strain when it was used to replace the broken traces. Even though we walked all the steepest hills, breakage followed breakage, and stoppage followed stoppage, as the hours slipped away, and midnight found us with only some five miles of our journey accomplished. Fortunately we were then near a gamekeeper's house, the only dwelling between Glenmore and Nethybridge. A deputation was appointed to rouse the gamekeeper, who, when he was fairly awakened, received us graciously—as if a bird of the air had carried the tidings of his master's kindness to the ruthless invaders of the solitude which deer-stalkers love. He furnished us with a sufficient quantity of new rope, of which traces were made; and, though the temper of the fly-bitten horse had not sensibly improved, no further accident impeded our progress. We were able thoroughly to enjoy our drive under the sombre shadows of the forest, through the sleeping clachan of Nethybridge, past Abernethy Kirk, with sleepers in yet profounder slumber lying round it, and the ruined castle on the knoll beside it. As we drove along to Ballifurth we could trace the course of the Spey by the white serpent-like mist that lay over it, till it was hidden as we entered the wood, where a wreath of mist might easily have been mistaken, at that witching hour, for the ghost which is said to flit about the cairn that marks the scene of some half-forgotten tragedy. But our enjoyment did not hinder our gladness when we plunged for a few moments into the mist and rattled over Spey Bridge, and then more slowly ascended the bank on the other side. Peter's father was on the outlook for us at the head of the new road—a circumstance which in a few days Grantown gossip developed into groups of anxious fathers, and mothers, and wives, in night-dresses and slippers, gazing and listening, with tear-filled eyes and dishevelled hair. Happily parental and conjugal affection and anxiety took more practical direction, and was found keeping its wrath and our supper warm over cozy fires, in the glow of which our adventures were recounted merrily. It was two o'clock when we reached home, and so it befell that the day which began the night before did not come to an end till the next morning—and since it proved, and is still remembered as, a day among a thousand, this was surely well.

FAITH AND CHARACTER.

By THE EDITOR.

FEW statements run more directly counter to that modern spirit which prides itself on the indifference with which it regards all shades of religious belief than the words, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." "How arbitrary, how narrow and absurd," might an objector say, "to suppose that a man is to be condemned for want of faith! Were it for lying or stealing we could understand it; but is it conceivable that there should be condemnation attached to a thing so shadowy as unbelief? Nay, is it not questionable whether we are responsible for faith at all?"

But in whatever light the answer may be viewed, no candid reader of the New Testament can have the slightest doubt that, rightly or wrongly, faith was what Christ and the apostles did hold men specially responsible for, and that it was regarded by them as a determining element in character. The demand for faith meets us on every page of the Gospels and Epistles. If we are to deal fairly with the teaching of Jesus, we must assign to this a central and vital position.

The reason why many fail to perceive the moral character of saving faith is because they confound it with an act of intellectual assent to reasoning. For example, when proof is led for the truth of Christ from His miracles, then the question depends on the cogency of the argument. But this process is quite different from the conviction that is reached through perceiving the inherent glory of His life and teaching. The conclusion that is gained through weighing the external evidences for the truth of Christianity stands on different ground from that which arises from spiritual vision, which, gazing at the divine grace that is in Jesus, constrains us to call Him Lord. In the former case it would be outrageous to hold a man guilty of moral fault because the reasoning of the Christian advocate had failed to convince him. Intellectual liberty becomes a moral duty, and its honest exercise merits praise.

But faith in Christ, however much it may in a secondary sense be connected with questions of evidence and criticism, is primarily independent of both, and is strictly an act of the highest moral, or we should perhaps say spiritual, character. We may illustrate this by a parallel.

In matters which belong to the sphere of morals we assume that there is in man a conscience which ought to recognise the value of right and wrong, and that, too, without argument. There may be secondary considerations which show the advantage of truth over falsehood; but we do not rest the superiority of truth upon these. We assume that every sane and healthy man ought to know that love is better than selfishness, and honesty nobler than dishonesty. If one should ask us to give reasons why he should prefer honour to dishonour, we may or may not have various utilitarian considerations to urge; but primarily we have but one reply, and need none other. We assert that, because we are addressing a human being endowed with conscience, goodness ought to be its own witness.

Of a similar nature is the demand which Christ makes for faith in Himself, or in other words for our acknowledgment of His glory and consequent self-surrender to His claims. It is in this sense that He speaks of Himself as "Light," and assumes that man as a spiritual being ought to appreciate that light.

We have but to reflect on the nature of the light which shone in Christ to perceive how it must bring with it its own evidence. Light and revelation go together, for light always reveals. Christ as the true light, (1) revealed man, and (2) revealed God.

(1.) He has thrown light upon our humanity, and by His perfect sonship He has made manifest our rebellion and the evils which spring from lawless self-will. He has displayed the truth of our humanity. He has unfolded, not by words alone, but by the variety and richness of a life lived under ordinary conditions, what man should be as a son towards God, and as a brother towards his fellow-men. What proof, then, can be required to give authority to this light? Must we, like the Jews, demand a sign from heaven to give supernatural sanction to this glory before we accept it? Do we need

miracles to lend force to goodness, or ought it not to claim our homage for its own sake? Must we have fire from heaven to testify to the value of holiness? Must we first settle all the questions of criticism which have to do with the date of a book or the genuineness of a reading before we acknowledge the beauty of the portrait which actually stands before us in the Gospel, and which must remain for us inherently valuable, let textual criticism say what it may? The majesty of Christ's patience and obedience does not depend upon external proof. It is a revelation because of what it intrinsically is. Once we confess that Jesus has unveiled the most perfect type of human character, we may leave, as far as that is concerned, all other questions for settlement afterwards. He becomes His own witness to our spirits. When we feel that what we see in Him is right, no other argument is required to commend Him.

(2.) In like manner, when we reflect upon Christ as revealing God, we are led into a similar attitude of mind. By its very terms we can see how decisive is the demand which the revealing of God necessarily makes. For if Christ has really made manifest what God is, then assuredly that glory ought to be its own witness, and should be recognised and appreciated for its own sake. As the splendour of its rays is the best evidence that the sun is shining, so the highest and only real proof that the light which is in Christ is divine must be its inherent glory, and the issue between Christ and man must resolve itself into the practical question whether, if there be a God at all, He can be aught else than the holy, loving, merciful, and righteous Father Who was set forth by Jesus Christ, whose nature He declared and Whose will it was His own meat to obey? If what God is fails to convince us, then it may be questioned whether any argument borrowed from external evidences can be of much avail. And when once we reach the truth and know for ourselves that whatever else is true this glory shining on the face of Christ is eternally right and is indeed divine, then other matters which touch on miracle or criticism may have their own special value, but they fall back from a primary evidential position to one which at the best is secondary. The vital region of Christian evidence, and the field on which the decisive battle must be fought, lies in the confession or denial of the worthiness of what Christ has revealed. Is it true or false? Is it right or wrong? Are His de-

clarations regarding God and His own life in its relationship to that God the highest conceivable, or, if not, where is that to be found which is more divine? This is the crucial test which is applied in the words, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil." It is assumed that the men thus condemned have gazed on the light. Christ would perhaps make the revelation through Himself wider than what was limited by the incarnation. As being the "light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," He would perhaps apply the same principle to every demand of conscience or of duty experienced by those we call heathen, as well as to the measure of light vouchsafed under earlier dispensations, and to many also in Christendom who by force of circumstance have scarcely ever had the fuller revelation presented in its clearness to their souls. But in every instance it is a choice between light and darkness that is set forth, and Christ attaches the highest moral responsibility to the decision that is made. He implicitly asserts that because men have been formed in the image of God they ought to recognise the God-like, and the act of faith towards the light which reveals the God-like becomes one of appropriate self-surrender to the all-mastering glory which has captivated the love and homage of the soul.

This may help us to understand why Christ should assign a moral reason for men not receiving Him. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. He that doeth truth cometh to the light, but he that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." It is assumed that there is not entire spiritual blindness, but that each man is capable of distinguishing between the ways of God that have been revealed and the ways of darkness and ungodliness. A choice must be made. The light is come; is it to be received or rejected? This is the issue, and upon it He stamps the greatest responsibility. If a man gazes upon what God is, and practically says "I love it not," then his choice is not a mere matter of assent or non-assent to the cogency of an argument: it is an actual going forth

of character, and of necessity it implies consequences of the most vital importance. The sentence which follows, "He is condemned already," is no arbitrary sentence. It arises out of the very nature of the case. If we do not love what God is when He is revealed, we are thereby already excluded from that which is the inheritance of the saints.

For suppose, by way of illustration, an attempt made to civilise a race of barbarians. The end in view is to make them partakers of the blessings which belong to an educated and civilised people. They are found to be degraded, and their tastes and habits morally depraved. It is yours to train them to righteousness, truth, purity, and mercy. You deal with them on the ground of a common humanity, and assume that because they are men they ought to learn the excellence of virtue. But if, after every endeavour, they do not come to prefer truth to falsehood, and peace to ferocity, and instead of accepting the light which you have brought them they insist on keeping the darkness of barbarism, then in no arbitrary sense, but in the strictest possible, they are "condemned already," and it must be asserted that as long as they are in that state they cannot share the heritage of civilised men.

In a similar and equally strict sense must we regard the decision on which depends our entrance on the enjoyment of God. If upon the light of His glory being presented to us we turn aside from it to the darkness, then by no arbitrary decree, but by the very nature of the case, we cannot possess the heritage of those of whom God is the light and everlasting joy. Would we share "the unsearchable riches of Christ," and of every saint, then must the decision be made on this narrow ground—do we or do we not love what God is? If gazing on that we prefer darkness we become self-condemned, and for that decision we are justly responsible.

Some persons may perchance feel that the ground of evidence when thus identified with the intrinsic glory of the light that is in Christ is too vague and "*spirituel*," and that an external authority is required to lend security to faith, such as may be afforded by an infallible Church, or an infallible book, or by the compulsion of the intellect through the cogency of external evidence. But whatever value may be attached to any or all of these, surely the great end of them all must be to lead each man to appreciate for himself the glory of God, and to find his joy in what God is. If that is not in some measure at-

tained, then all else may well appear worthless. "Oh, taste and see how good the Lord is!" is the simplest and the surest of all methods of proof.

Others, again, may be tempted to sneer at conclusions which rest on spiritual convictions, and would relegate all such to mysticism or fanaticism. There are those to whom the physical sciences alone appear to be dealing with realities, and who regard religious intuitions but as so many gaseous sentimentalisms. To all such I would respectfully make reply, That is surely a poor and limited acquisition which, while giving us information respecting the relationship of man to inferior races, debars our launching forth on regions of faith which claim our purest aspirations, and are founded on convictions that belong to what is highest in our spirits. It may well appear anything but ennobling to say, "Show me a bone or dissect a tissue and I can reason on these; give me an object that I can observe and then I know that I am in the land of realities; but as for human hopes and fears, the instinctive cry for God and the affections, which death cannot quench; as for the sense of sin and the longing for forgiving mercy; as for the devotion which bends before incarnate love, and which clings to the cross where divine holiness hangs pierced with sorrow over the sin of the world; such matters as these I treat as I would hobgoblin fancies or the dreams of the nursery."

May God deliver us from such a base abnegation of the spiritual in man! The noblest aspirations and the most precious achievements of the greatest in every age, culminating in the experience of the apostles and prophets and saints of the Christian Church, not to speak of what He was who was greater than they, are surely facts quite as worthy to be received and studied as are the shapes of skulls or the growth of habits.

But if it is asked how are we to experience the fulness of the light that is in Christ, the most direct answer is the one He Himself has given, "He that willeth to do my will shall know of my doctrine." When we really *will* to become loving towards all men, and to be as children towards God our Father in the glad obedience of sons, we will, through the very attempt, be brought to recognise the excellency of the glory which once tabernacled among men full of grace and truth. As we try to live out the highest life we will discover how all that is best in us—nay, even our failures, as we endeavour to be in harmony with what is loftiest—must lead us to Jesus Christ. We will find

that He not only interprets to us what we are seeking, but that he goes ever before us, our guide and our ideal, an ideal which admits of no rival. When we thus seek to obey Him every word of His becomes fraught with new meaning, and His every sorrow as well as joy is invested with new significance, so that in the strictest sense He becomes to us the light of our lives. Our own feeble gropings after a full assent to the will of the Father will speak to us of the Only Begotten, who lived out, without a flaw, the life which we are but dimly aiming after. One earnest

struggle after Christ's charity and self-sacrifice will convey to the heart a sense of His glory more convincing than a thousand arguments borrowed from the circumference rather than from this centre of all faith. The path of obedience will bring with it the experiences which convey highest conviction. The two go together, and Christ so joins them. "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

THE PASTOR'S POOL.

[The Pastor of the following poem is the Rev. John Donaldson, of Kirkcounnel, a scholar of broad and varied culture, of wide sympathies, and, like his Master, always kindly with his kind. The author considers it a great pleasure to connect this gentleman's name with the poem, and he trusts that he may be excused for this liberty. His high regard for Mr. Donaldson's friendship must be the only apology he can offer.]

I STOOD in the summer evening
By the side of the Pastor's Pool;
Above, the manse in the woodland
Lay hid in the shadows cool.

The Nith ran on with a murmur
That was soft and sweet to the ear,
For the streams that we heard in childhood
Are the streams that we always hear.

Beside me the grey-hair'd pastor
Stood; and the light from the west
Fell down on his head like a blessing
Ere the sun sank into his rest.

His voice was low and gentle,
And the light in his kindly eye
Was that which was touching the river,
The field, the wood, and the sky.

And round by the dear old churchyard,
Where the dead sleep night and day,
From the single street of the village
Came the voices of children at play.

We heard their shouts of laughter
Take the air so sweet and still,
And ever above in the sunlight
Was the churchyard on the hill.

Then a sadness came over the pastor,
And a silence between us lay;
For he, too, was busy thinking
As he heard the children play.

Was he thinking of one who had vanished
And gone to his early rest,
When life and the dreams of manhood
Were stirring within his breast;

Who full of the promise and eager
For the life that lay before,
Grew weary, and voice and footsteps
Were heard in the manse no more?

Ah, yes; for the mists of a sorrow
Rose up in his kindly eyes,
And their glance grew dim, as the twilight
Takes the light from out the skies.

Then his voice grew softer and softer,
For his talk was of solemn things,—
Of this life with its lights and shadows,
And death with dust on his wings;

Of the struggle and battle onward
With weary stumbling tread,
Our eyes on the dim sad future,
And our feet on the graves of the dead;

Of the thoughts that rise upward within us
And fly to the dim to be,
As the rivers that rising inland
Forever rush to the sea.

But over all, in his converse,
In his voice's rise and fall,
Was the light that Hope has kindled
Round the shores of death for us all.

And still as he talked that evening,
The sunset sank away,
While round by the dear old churchyard
Came the voices of children at play.

Ah, often here in the city,
When weary of all the street,
My thoughts fly back to the woodland
And the manse in its shadows sweet.

Then again I stand for a moment,
In the light of a waking dream;
The grey-hair'd pastor beside me,
And at our feet the stream:

All just as we stood that evening,
When the west was soft and red;
And again I see the sunshine
Like a blessing upon his head.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.



At the foot of the Trans-Alai.

TRAVELLING IN CENTRAL ASIA.

M. Bonvallet's Journey across the Pamir, or Roof-tree of the World.

By DR. C. J. WILLS, AUTHOR OF "THE LAND OF THE LION AND SUN," "PERSIA AS IT IS," ETC.

SECOND PAPER.

NOWADAYS it is necessary to undergo a certain amount of risk in order to obtain celebrity as a traveller. The Alpine climber courts difficulty and danger in order to "take" some hitherto impregnable peak; the Arctic voyager risks his life that he may get a few miles nearer the pole than his predecessors, and so beat the record; other men carry their lives in their hands and traverse the Dark Continent with the desire of converting the heathen, opening new trade routes, or founding kingdoms; while others seek fresh fields and pastures new in little-known corners of the globe for the mere sake

of describing them, or for the undoubted attractions of the free wild life. M. Bonvallet, who had travelled before in Central Asia, had been told that it was impossible to cross the Pamir, or Roof-tree of the World, in winter-time. Rather than traverse the comparatively well-known Karakorum Pass, which he knew to be practicable even in winter, and subject himself to the risk of being stopped and turned back by over-zealous Chinese officials, the traveller determined to attempt the hitherto unsolved problem of crossing the vast snow desert which lay between him and India. "The

Roof-tree of the World had never been traversed from north to south, nobody had ever taken that route to India, and it has always been considered impossible to travel there in winter. Immense natural walls, the ranges of the Alai and the Trans-Alai, which stretch in parallel lines from east to west, bar the way. The passes are closed by snow. Once upon the Roof-tree of the World we should have to struggle against polar cold, storms of wind, tempests of snow, and the rarefaction of the air, which is very great at the altitude in which we should find ourselves during many weeks, a height of about five thousand metres above the sea-level. We had been told that the thing was impossible, that we should perish there, and it had been declared that we were rushing to a certain death. Besides this, we ran the chance of encountering bands of Kara-Kirghese robbers, or Afghans, the warriors of Kanjut, and the semi-savage tribes of the Hindu-Koosh." These considerations were sufficient to tempt the traveller, and to cause him to make the attempt, in which he ultimately succeeded, though they would have been quite sufficient to deter any but the most resolute.

The preparations for the journey, it must be remembered, had to be made in Central Asia; this added considerably to the difficulty of the task. The traveller and his companions knew that upon the Pamir neither fuel nor food for man or beast was to be found, and that they would have to cross a desert of snow. It was possible that they might chance to come upon winter encampments where fresh meats might be obtained; but it was by no means certain. So the travellers took with them rations for two months, consisting of flour, parched millet, smoked fish, and mutton, tea, sugar, and salt. Petroleum and spirits of wine were added for obtaining rapidly some sort of fire upon an iron plate, which could be placed upon the snow. A large armoury of weapons was, of course, a necessity. Hatchets, pick-

axes, and crowbars were carried; a blacksmith's kit and appliances for the mending of harness, with a whole horse-load of ropes. Clothing of the warmest description had to be provided, and a vast store of rugs. Then presents had to be taken for the border tribesmen—a rifle, very gay with plating, silk sashes, toys, ornaments and jewellery for the women, and a large supply of small mirrors; robes of honour of silk and fur, and cotton cloth for barter; also money and a pair of scales to weigh it in—for here, in the heart of Asia, bars of Chinese silver, stamped with the seal of Kashgar, are the currency. You chop a bit off and weigh it.

Coins are of no value in these vast wastes. Tinned provisions were not within the travellers' reach; they got great store of slabs of native bread mixed with fat, and then rebaked them; mutton was boiled down, salted, and placed in bladders; but this was for emergencies, for they reckoned on occasionally obtaining sheep, and, of course, the carcasses will keep any time in the intense cold. Cakes, bread, and dried apricots for munching are carried, "for there will be no halts for meals during the day." Oil is to be used instead of butter on state occasions; but

mutton fat will be ordinarily eaten with the bread. The rations were calculated at two pounds weight per man per diem; candles and portable Persian lanterns are taken, for, at nights, notes have to be made, temperatures have to be registered, and the journal written up.

A double tent for the use of the three Europeans is carried, the servants preferring to lie down with the horses. It may be wondered how horses will manage to exist in such a climate without shelter; the fact is, that throughout Central Asia all horses are warmly clad, and are accustomed to being picketed in the open air. A thin woollen garment covering the whole of the animal's trunk is surmounted by a similar piece of clothing of stout carpeting lined with felt; over this is placed a huge sheet of felt three-quarters of

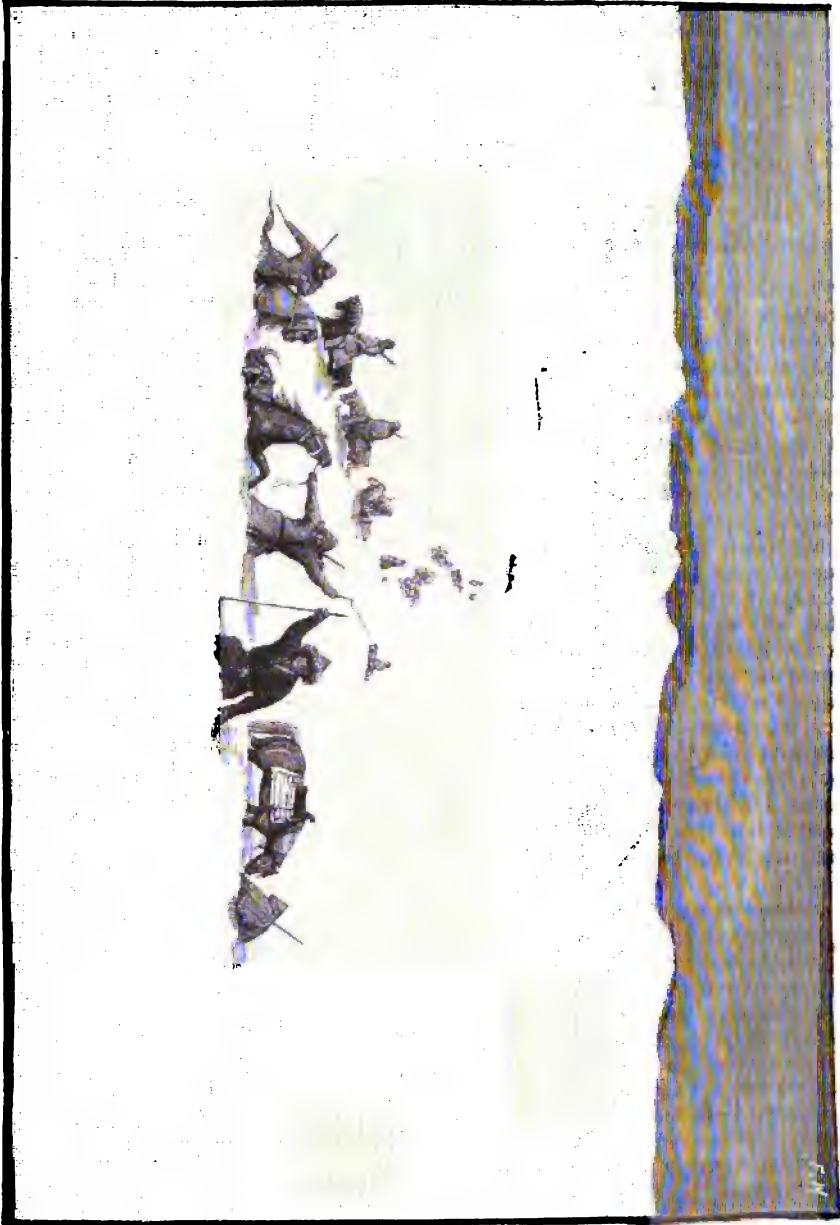


A Chitrali.

an inch thick, perfectly impervious to air, ten feet long and five feet wide ; it is held in position by a surcingle, the front portion of about four feet is flung back during the day

over the withers, but at night is turned forward above the horse's ears, and so the animal is sufficiently protected against the most intense cold.

In the Snow Valley of the Alt.



The clothing worn by the travellers themselves consisted of the very thickest of woollen garments, and over these double felt boots, the seams protected by strips of leather ; stockings of the felt of Kashgar

reaching up to the thigh ; lined and wadded trousers ; over these loose leather breeches. Two pelisses, one of sheepskin with long wool worn inwards ; sheepskin cap, and over that a sheepskin hood, leaving but a small

slit through which the eyes looked out, these being of course protected against the glare of the snow by coloured glass goggles.

These extraordinary precautions against cold were more than justified by the climate of the Pamir, which may be best seen by a glance of observations of temperature made during a single day :

Time.	Shade.	Sun.
10.0 a.m.	4° below zero (Fahrenheit)	55°
10.15 a.m.	2° below zero	61°
11.15 a.m.	4° above zero	68°
5.0 p.m.	30° above zero	36°
9.0 p.m.	4° above zero	
1.45 a.m.	18° below zero	
2.20 a.m.	The mercury was frozen hard and the thermometer ceased to register.	

Thirty horses have to be taken, for even the barley for the animals has to be carried. The illustration which concluded our first paper showed the actual scene of departure from Ak Basoga, all preparations having been completed. The moon is shining above the mountains, the party are comfortably seated for the last time before the great fires in their Kirghese tents, those warm portable felt houses commonly used among the Turkomans and among the whole population of Central Asia. The baggage horses get their last good meal of barley and a plentiful feed of hay ; everything has been cleared out of the tents with the exception of the weapons which still hang upon the wall ; accounts are settled with the villagers and the local Khans, and the labourers who have beaten down the snow in advance are paid ; there is a farewell chat, a last cup of tea, and the three adventurous Europeans buckle on their revolvers and mount their horses ; the usual pious ejaculations are made by the bystanders. "May

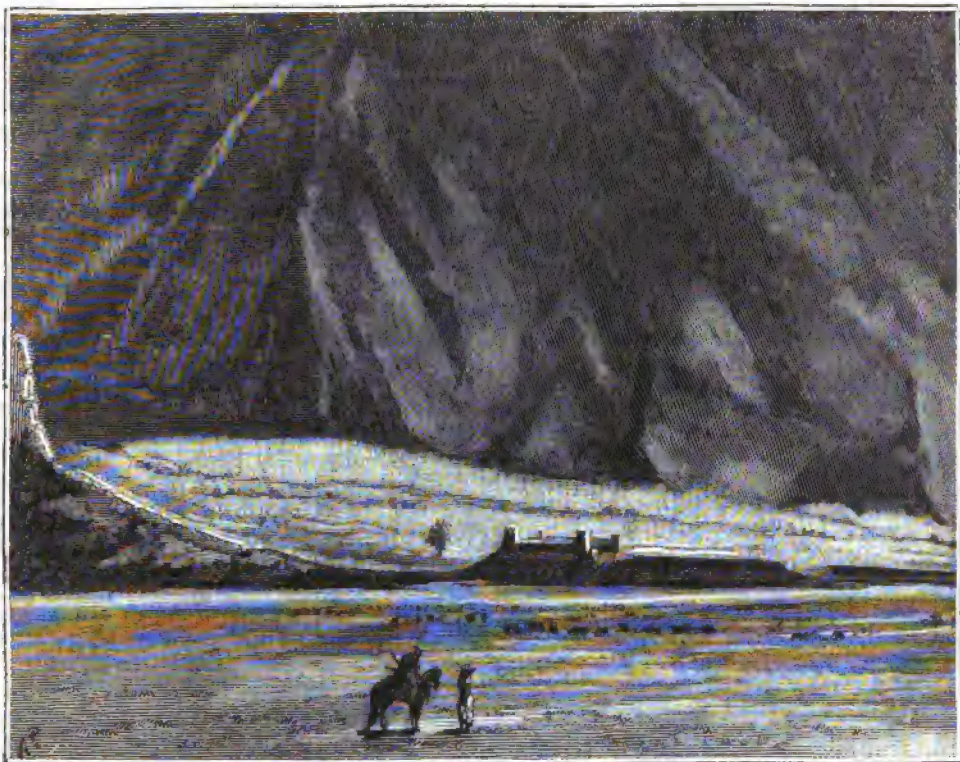
Heaven help you !" cried the two Khans as they bid farewell to their European guests ; the caravan slowly and silently turns the spur of the hill and enters the Taldik Pass. "We shall see no more tents," says M. Bonvallot, "nothing but mountains, mountains and snow."

It takes the travellers two days to get through the Taldik Pass, two days more bring the party to the valley of the Alai, where M. Pepin represents the expedition forcing a passage through the snow-covered and trackless plain. Men and horses slip about in the deep snow, the heat of the sun during the day is intense, while the cold during the night is terrible to bear. The high elevation causes severe headache and buzzing in the ears. Many of the party suffer from snow-blindness, beards and moustaches become one vast mass of icicles, which also cover the legs, manes, and tails of the horses. Men and horses alike suffer from nasal hæmorrhage, and the travellers frequently sink worn out into the snow by the sides of their exhausted steeds, and when the party halt, for the night the faces of the travellers are swollen out of all recognition, the skin peels from their cheeks, and they suffer from the well-known effects of an arctic temperature. "But we knew beforehand that all this was in the programme of the journey which we were attempting, and so we had nothing to complain about," says brave M. Bonvallot. The barometers mark an altitude of six thousand mètres, but the Roof-tree of the World is crossed in winter, and the travellers' purpose is accomplished.

The discomforts of snow-blindness can hardly be appreciated by those who haven't



Camping in Snow—Kaufman's Peak in the distance.



Mastoudi.

suffered them. In 1869 the writer was travelling in March through Asia Minor. He had four days in deep snow, near Erzeroum. With difficulty he was able to see the courier by whom he was accompanied. The next day his eyes closed for five days, and his head and scalp became swollen. He was a prisoner to the house for five days, at the end of which time he was able to open his eyes; and this enables him to thoroughly appreciate the pluck and endurance of M. Bonvallot and his companions.

Speaking of the people of Central Asia generally, it is interesting to note the opinion of the travellers' trusty servant: "If you are kind to the people of this country, and if they are not afraid of you, they will think you an ass; and will try to find a pack-saddle to fit your back. But beat them and they will cringe to you at once." As a rule it is needful only to be ready to beat, and beating is a game that two can play at. The servant-philosopher finds this out, and is duly beaten by a villager that very day.

One of the servant's horses is cured of colic by an old sorcerer who is consulted.

Old sorcerer.—"You must strip yourself to the skin, take your horse by the tail and kick him three times on the quarters while I recite a prayer."

It is cold, several degrees below zero. Bonvallot remonstrates with his servant, and warns him of the danger of stripping in such a temperature. The servant persuades the sorcerer to allow him to retain his shulwar. The prescription is faithfully carried out, the prayer is recited, and the horse gets well. The Oriental veterinary surgeon's practice is always the same. If a horse, being ill, lies down, kick him or thrash him till he gets up; having got him up, cover him with an immense quantity of horse-clothing, and compel him to take violent exercise till he dies or recovers. The writer, when living in Shirar, had a valuable horse who became suddenly sick. All his neighbours poured into the stable-yard to give their opinion, everybody suggested a different remedy, but the treatment was always to culminate in the tremendous sweating above mentioned. The writer did not take the advice of his many friends, but bled the

horse freely, and directing that the animal was on no account to be disturbed, left his Armenian apothecary seated in a chair in the stable-yard with directions that he should see that no one interfered with the patient. On his return in a couple of hours' time the Armenian apothecary was still sitting in the chair, but the horse had disappeared. The writer questioned the Armenian. "You see, Sahib, it was the universal opinion that he ought to be sweated, and they are rushing him up and down outside in the street with four sets of horse-clothing on him." Needless to say that horse never did another day's work.

To return to M. Bonvallo. On March 17th there were thirty-eight degrees of frost during the night, while next day the thermometer in the sun stood at ninety-five at eleven A.M. At night the baggage is simply dropped into the snow, for there is no one to steal it in the vast white wilderness. Some idea of an ordinary day on the Pamir may be formed from the following. "We are all exhausted and out of breath, devoid of all strength, and nearly blind. All have splitting headaches, and a feeling of suffocation. A horse knocks up, then a man, another man falls asleep standing, a third hangs to his horse's tail and whips it on, many men and horses are bleeding at the nose. Then a horse has to be dragged out of a hole, girths snap and the load falls off; every fallen horse has to be unloaded before he can rise." It must be remembered that loading a horse is three men's work; on this particular day there were nine degrees of frost at noon, the snow everywhere over six feet deep; the march lasted from 8 A.M. till 4.30 P.M. without a halt or rest. Bread is shared with the horses, and dried apricots and roasted millet munched by the riders. Then the tent is pitched at last in the snow, a little fire is made by means of a mixture of spirits of wine, dry grass, and horse-droppings, and tea and milk-porridge are prepared. It is a clear and brilliant night; at 8 P.M. there are sixty-eight degrees of frost, at 6 A.M. seventy-five. Everybody feels very ill indeed; "any feature exposed would be frost-bitten at once, and when covered we are half-suffocated." The natives rub their swollen cheeks with tallow. "Two more horses are missing; we have twenty-two left (out of thirty)." Snow is boiled to get water to make the tea, and the guides nearly mutiny. They start the next morning at 9.15; at 3 P.M. they get into a *good road*, i.e. two feet of loose snow; then more snow-

drifts, through which, bathed in sweat, the travellers struggle. Suddenly they come upon men and sheep, a winter caravan of the natives; the travellers are hospitably entertained in the open air in a sheltered ravine with boiled mutton cooked in a huge coffee-pot; fingers are used in lieu of forks, and the gravy is supplied by turns out of the coffee-pot; no salt is to be had. Their hosts have been snowed up in this ravine. The travellers sleep in the open air, but wisely take refuge among the sheep and goats, and "enjoy the delicious warmth, and go to sleep pleasantly." A stampede of the sheep awakens the tired travellers by running over their bodies. It is twelve degrees below zero; but M. Bonvallo finds time to admire the glorious stars, so large and luminous in the clear sky. M. Pépin, the artist, at 6 A.M. "is swollen and terrible to look at; his lips are an enormous size, his eyes are closed, he is snow-blind, and blood is oozing from his cheeks. My skin is, thank Heaven, thicker!" remarks M. Bonvallo.

After twenty-four days' march the travellers reach the Chitral country, where they are finally stopped at Mastoudfi, where Bonvallo is detained twenty-nine days for permission from the Indian Government to cross the frontier; he leaves his fellow-travellers at the fortress of Chitral, at thirty leagues distance, under the care of the petty king, a patriarch of seventy and the husband of twenty wives. Bonvallo describes the country as barren and mountainous, the people as idle and perfidious. Slavery is common, and the natives sell their children. The people are so poor that the dead are stripped and buried nude; carpets are unknown, reed mats taking their place. The Chitralis are very neat and particular as to their personal appearance; they pass most of their time in combing their long hair, beautifying their eyes with antimony, and extracting superfluous hairs with a pair of tweezers, and looking at themselves in small mirrors. At first they are inclined to be extremely rude to the party; but a severe thrashing administered to one of the most insolent has a good effect. At length the much-desired permission to cross the frontier arrives, and the party enter British India through the earthly paradise of Cashmir.

In conclusion, the writer desires to strongly recommend M. Bonvallo's book as an interesting, unpretending, and unexaggerated account of an exceedingly plucky expedition through an out-of-the-way region of the far East.



"AFTER THE RAIN."

AFTER THE RAIN.

By ARTHUR L. SALMON.

The sunset on the water's breast
Is casting down its mellowed light;
The clouds are floating into rest,
Before the night.

Now that the storm has passed away,
A parable of nature lies
On path and field, for those who say
That they are wise.

Beside the placid mere I stand,
And watch the rainbow's wondrous stain;
A fragrance from the moistened land
Gives thanks for rain.

A twitter from unnumbered birds
That haunt the tangled flowery ways—
What is it but the simple words
Of love and praise?

We thank our father for the light
In which His tenderness appears,
For sunny joys—forgetting quite
To thank for tears;

Forgetting that His testament
Is written on the rainy skies—
That blessed comforters are sent
For tearful eyes;

Forgetting he that goes in tears
To sow upon a field of pain,
Shall come when harvest-season nears
To gather grain.

THE NEW POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES.

By SIR PHILIP MAGNUS.

THERE is reason to believe that, before many years, London will be provided with facilities for the technical training of artisans equal, if not superior, to those possessed by any continental city. As yet we are unable to form any correct idea of what may be the effect of the education to be afforded in the several Polytechnic Institutes to be erected in the metropolis. That our crafts will be improved there cannot be any reasonable doubt; but what is more important is the improvement we may expect to find in our craftsmen, due to the various influences which these new institutions will bring to bear upon them. The Polytechnic is essentially a new feature in our educational machinery. It seeks to exert a directive influence over the entire training and development of the working man. From the moment when the child leaves the elementary school, the Polytechnic is open to him, and he will find therein means of further systematic education, facilities for special instruction in connection with his particular pursuit, opportunities of literary study, athletic amusement, and social intercourse.

The institutions, which, by means of this broad education, have for their object the improvement of the industrial and social habits of our artisans, take their name from the fortuitous circumstance that the

old Regent Street Polytechnic was purchased and equipped by Mr. Quintin Hogg to provide healthy amusement and technical instruction for young men and women belonging to the working classes. If any other equally suitable premises could have been obtained, or if the Regent Street building had not been available, the Polytechnic might have continued to be associated with its old functions, or might have come to denote some altogether different institution. Those who knew the old Polytechnic and recollect the daily exhibitions of dissolving-views, the performance with the diving-bell, and the popular lectures and amusements, can scarcely identify it with a place of serious study for artisans. And equally difficult is it to apply the name Polytechnic, which is associated in the minds of many persons with the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris, and the Polytechnic schools of Germany, to an institution expressly designed for the instruction and recreation of working men and their children. Yet, after all, the name is appropriate to the new institution. The Polytechnic is a school of many arts. But an effort is needed on the part of Londoners to dissociate it from the scene of Pepper's ghost; and to those who are familiar with foreign schools, the name "Polytechnic" naturally suggests such institutions as are

found in Berlin or Zurich, the object of which is to give the most advanced scientific instruction to students who have received a public school training and are preparing to enter some branch of the engineering profession.

The new Polytechnic, which is to be the centre of the intellectual life of the artisan population of every district of London, has two distinct functions, to which a third is in process of being added. It is intended to afford facilities for the technical and commercial education of young men and women engaged in different occupations, and to provide, at the same time, healthy recreation in the form of music, lectures, popular readings, physical exercises, and social gatherings. It is both a school and a club; and whilst the scope of the school is narrowed by a distinct bias toward bread-winning pursuits, the objects of the club are widened so as to include many forms of amusement which are foreign to club life, as understood by the frequenters of Pall Mall and St. James's Street.

Into the history of the growth of the People's Palace it is not necessary to enter. Every one knows how Sir Edmund Hay Currie and the Beaumont Trustees have been assisted by the Drapers' Company and by numerous philanthropic benefactors in their endeavour to establish a centre of light and culture in the heart of the poorest district of London, where the lives of the inhabitants are passed in dull, monotonous toil, unredeemed even by the cheery sights that greet the passengers through the streets of other parts of the Metropolis.

The People's Palace contains a large and beautifully decorated concert hall, a free library and reading-room, a gymnasium, a swimming-bath, and a refreshment-room, and also laboratories, workshops, drawing offices, art studios and class-rooms.

The club-like character of the institution is shown by the fact that members are admitted on payment of a small annual subscription, and that subscribers have the *entrée* to the classes and enjoy other privileges at a less cost than those who are not enrolled as members. The institute has a journal of its own, and is essentially a corporation of working men and women, bound together by the sympathy of kindred occupations, and bent on mutual improvement by all such agencies, other than religious, as are calculated to promote their intellectual, physical, moral and material well-being. The conception of such an institution is excellent;

and no one can question the influence it may exert in elevating the condition of our labouring population, by making them more self-dependent, and by stimulating the taste for higher pleasures and amusements.

The recreative part of these institutes is by no means the least important element in their potential usefulness. The advantage of affording technical education to our artisans has been put in the front as an inducement to the general public to subscribe. But serviceable as these places may be, and, I have no doubt, will be, in improving the technical skill and knowledge of our artisans, and consequently in benefiting our local industries, they certainly fulfil an equally useful function in affording facilities to young people for rational and intellectual amusement, and in this respect they appeal most strongly to the sympathy and support of the richer classes.

To improve the lives and to increase the happiness of the labouring population are, *per se*, objects to be aimed at. Those whose days and evenings are fully occupied with pleasant pursuits can scarcely realise the monotony of the ordinary workman's existence, nor the constant dreariness of his surroundings. It is no more than charitable to infer that many of the lapses into immorality, and sometimes into other forms of vice, are the result, particularly among women, of sheer dullness, of the absence of all legitimate means of mental excitement. The public-house, with its genial warmth, its garish light, its crowded bar, its temporarily cheering drink, and its too frequent thrilling and exciting scenes, is a fascinating focus of attraction. What is wanting is some sort of counter-attraction which shall bring together the workpeople of a district, and provide them with intellectual amusements, and with opportunities of free social intercourse. These wants the new Polytechnic supplies. But it does much more. It draws in the children of the poorer classes, and trains them early, before there has been time for the effects of their elementary education to wear off, to appreciate good music, to enjoy good books, and to take pleasure in healthy recreation. Next in importance, perhaps, to the duty suggested by the precept, "Know thyself," is the duty to know one another; and hitherto the opportunities enjoyed by the working classes have been few of meeting their fellow-workmen engaged in different pursuits, of taking personal interest in the instruction provided for their children, of coming into direct contact with the teachers and

with other persons occupying higher, and also lower, positions in the industrial ladder than themselves. This meeting of old and young, of class and class, all bent on making life, for themselves and others, more useful, more healthful, and more enjoyable, cannot be without influence in breaking down the barriers that have too long separated the rich from the poor, and in creating common interests, irrespective of differences in social position. It may be some time before the effects of these influences will be perceptible in the better tone of our working population. The children who enter these institutions on leaving their elementary schools, and who remain there during the whole period of their apprenticeship, or whilst they are learning their trade, will be the first to be benefited. But there can be no doubt that the creation, in the centre of every district where workmen live and toil, of a focus of light and culture, attracting the youth of both sexes, and radiating its influences over the whole area in which they dwell, cannot fail to prove one of the most powerful means, that have yet been devised, of improving the condition of our working classes, and of promoting their real well-being.

I have referred, in the first place, to the recreative functions of the new Polytechnic, because these functions have scarcely received sufficient prominence in the appeals that have been put forward by the promoters of these institutes. In doing so, I have not intended to detract from the usefulness of these institutes, as schools for the practical training of workpeople in subjects cognate to their several trades and industries.

As regards technical education, the new London Polytechnic may be classed as a tradeschool. Its purpose is the instruction of artisans and clerks in the principles, and, to some extent also, in the practice, of their bread-winning pursuits. In every continental city there are evening technical and commercial classes, with kindred objects; but no exactly similar institution is found in any foreign country. This is not to be regretted, as it is far better that England should work out its own scheme of technical education, with due regard to its own special requirements, than slavishly imitate what has been done abroad. A glance at the catalogue of classes at the Regent Street Polytechnic will show the character of the instruction it provides. Classes are held in elementary mathematics, in practical chemistry, in physics, and geology; in mecha-

nical and electrical engineering; in watch and clock-making, in carpentry, in brick-laying, in plumbing, in carriage-building, in tailoring, in printing, in boot- and shoe-making, in upholstery, and bread-making; in wood- and stone-carving, in art metal-work, in sign-writing, and in etching; in house-decoration, in modelling, in drawing, in book-keeping, in shorthand, and in French and German. There are classes, also, for young women in dress-making, in cooking, in millinery, and in other subjects. Any one who visits the institution will discover that a great part of the instruction is essentially practical. He will find not only the familiar chemical laboratory and drawing-offices, the art-studios and modelling-rooms, but also shops for carpentry, for joinery, for metal-work, for plumbing, and for tailoring; and he will meet eager students, most of whom have already worked ten or eleven hours at their several crafts, busy with the plane, the file, and the chisel. And if his curiosity tempt him to ask what advantage these students hope to reap from spending their evenings in practical work, apparently so similar to that in which they have been employed during the entire day, he will receive the almost uniform reply that they learn, under the artisan teacher, much that they have no opportunity of acquiring in the regular workshop, where no facilities for the explanation of processes are possible, where their work is dominated by the necessity of producing goods at least cost to their employers, and where, day after day, they are engaged on the same small section of work, without the means of acquiring any familiarity with, or practical knowledge of, other portions of their trade.

It appears to be the intention of the Charity Commissioners to supplement the existing institutions by the erection of four in South London, one in Clerkenwell, and three, if possible, in North London, so that, "if the projects under contemplation with regard to these institutes are realised, there will be, on what may be called the southern line from east to west, four polytechnic institutes, one at New Cross, one in the Borough Road (with the Victoria Hall in Waterloo Bridge Road as a semi-independent branch), and one at Chelsea. Along the central line from west to east there will be the Regent Street Polytechnic, the Clerkenwell Institute, the Finsbury College (under the management of, and supported by, the City Guilds Institute), and the People's Palace." The remaining institutes, it is proposed, should be

established in Kentish Town, South Islington, and in the central part of Hackney.*

It is important to indicate that these institutions, the erection and equipment of which will have cost about £400,000, and the maintenance of which will absorb not less than £40,000 a-year from *quasi* public funds and from charitable contributions, are expressly intended for working men and women. The purpose of these institutions should be clearly understood, because an opinion prevails among many manufacturers, that technical instruction, how useful soever it may be for the few experts who are employed in superintending the several departments of any large business concern, is of little or no avail for the mass of the working classes.†

Nation tends so much to weaken our faith in the benefit to be derived from the technical education of the workpeople as to stand amid the buzz and whirr of a great factory, watching the workmen waiting on the different labour-saving appliances, which seem to have intellectually displaced their human rivals, and to have reduced them to the position of mere automata, with no other functions than to supply material to be transformed into things of use, if not of beauty, by iron arms and hands. And yet, if we were to inquire more carefully, we might discover that much of the intelligence which the machine seems to display has been acquired from successful, patient, and observant foremen and overseers, who by carefully watching its laboured movements have been enabled to throw their own thoughts into its work; and by adding here a wheel and there a wheel have made it the seemingly intelligent thing it is. And shall we say that scientific training is wasted upon these workpeople if, apart from its elevating influence in adding dignity to their labour, by affording an explanation of the processes in which they are engaged, it enables some few of them to improve the implements they use, and others to perform more intelligently the several duties committed to their charge?

But it is not my present purpose to demonstrate the advantages which the ordinary workman, engaged in a large manufacturing concern, may derive from technical instruc-

tion. Although London is itself the seat of many important manufactures, the majority of the students who will attend the new Polytechnic Institutions will be engaged in handicrafts; and in these trades manual skill, scientific knowledge, the ability to draw, and such an all-round acquaintance with his work as shall correct the effects of the extreme division of labour, are now recognised as the indispensable equipment of the efficient artisan. Notwithstanding the inroad which machinery has made into what were formerly manual trades, there are still numerous crafts which demand artistic skill, or the direct application of scientific principles in their practice, on the part of the operatives. Among such crafts are cabinet-making, brickwork, plumbing, tailoring, printing, metal-work, carriage-building, and many others. The development of our trade and commerce may not so directly depend upon the technical instruction of artisans engaged in these industries, as in engineering, in weaving and dyeing, and in the chemical trades. Nevertheless, the necessity of providing facilities for technically educating this large class of workmen is very pressing, and it should be remembered that the sole aim of technical education is not, as some manufacturers suppose, to enable them successfully to compete with foreign firms, but to improve the character of every kind of work which our artisans produce, and to create in our workpeople an educated aversion to what is slipshod and false.

It may be open to question whether the workmen engaged in a steel factory or in a dyeing-shed will make better workmen by receiving instruction in metallurgy or in chemistry, but there can be no doubt that the plumber will become a more trustworthy artisan by being shown the errors to avoid in bending a pipe, by knowing the object and purpose of the different sorts of traps, the precautions to be taken to prevent fracture in the apparatus for hot-water supply, and by understanding the principles of science underlying these explanations. Nor can we doubt that the bricklayer and the metal-plate worker, the carpenter and cabinet-maker will become better craftsmen by acquiring some knowledge of geometry, of drawing, and of elementary science in its application to their work.

Perhaps more important in its influence upon the rising generation of working men than the technical instruction given in the evening classes of these institutes, is the day-

* Since the above was written, the Goldsmiths' Company have undertaken to defray the entire cost of the foundation and maintenance of the New Cross Institute, at a capital outlay of £30,000, and by an annual endowment of £5,000.

† This view of the question has met with a very able refutation in an article which appeared in the May number of the *Contemporary Review*, and which contained the opinions of several representative leaders of industry on the importance of technical instruction to workmen as well as to foremen and managers engaged in various trades.

school attached to the Regent Street Polytechnic and to the People's Palace, which, it is to be hoped, will form an essential feature of the Polytechnic of the future. Evening instruction, valuable as it is, can never wholly compensate for that systematic training which a boy receives between the ages of twelve and fifteen in a good day-school. If a boy at the age of fifteen has profited by the instruction afforded him, he has acquired habits of application and familiarity with the methods of obtaining knowledge, which enable him to take full advantage of the experience he gains in the shop or merchant's office, and to profit by the special instruction afforded in evening classes. In the Polytechnic institutions, the laboratories, the drawing rooms and workshops, and many other of the teaching appliances of the evening school, are available for the instruction of day pupils; and the close association of the evening and day work enables these schools to be conducted at a considerably less expenditure than would be required if such schools were independently established. It is the combination of objects in one building and under one management which has rendered these schools possible. None of the efforts that have recently been made to promote technical education will prove more fertile of good results than the establishment, in different parts of London, in connection with the new Polytechnic Institutes, of higher elementary or trade schools, equipped with all necessary appliances for workshop and laboratory teaching, and for other practical instruction.

Let any one interested in popular education visit the People's Palace during the daytime, and he will see there a technical school which, without aiming at teaching any specific trade, provides practical instruction that bears directly upon the future occupations of the children, and is, at the same time, serviceable in developing the intelligence of the pupils, and in improving their capacity for all useful work.

Only recently I inspected the classes of this school. On my arrival at two o'clock, I heard the cheery sounds of boys at play, and found them rushing about in the vacant grounds around the building, careless and happy as boys at their age should be. At 2.15 the gong sounded, and at once their motions assumed a definite direction, and through the big gateway on the east side of the school buildings they hurried to their classes. And then, accompanied by the painstaking head-master, I went through the prin-

cipal rooms, all well arranged and well ventilated. In the chemical laboratory I found about forty boys of twelve or thirteen years of age busily engaged, under the able supervision of Mr. Laurie, in practical work. In another room a class of boys was receiving instruction in the French language, which is wisely made an essential part of the curriculum. In other rooms through which I passed drawing was being taught—to some from outline copies, to others from dimensioned sketches of parts of machines, drawn by the teacher on the black-board; and to others, again, in illustration of their lessons in solid geometry. In a large airy shop in the basement, nimble hands were busy in chipping and filing, and in working machine tools, whilst in an adjoining room several favoured pupils, in continuation of kindergarten exercises, were constructing cardboard models to be used in the lessons on geometry. On the other side of the hall, some boys were equally busy in the wood-working shop; and of all the scholars those seemed happiest and most intent upon their work, who were occupied in constructing something. Partly from economical reasons, and partly to add to the pupils' interest in their work, the boys are allowed to make metal letter-weights, wooden knife-boxes, and other more or less useful articles, which become their own on paying for the cost of the material; and these articles, I was told, are eagerly bought by the parents, who take a deep interest in their children's work, and are proud of their handiness. The boys who attend these schools belong almost exclusively to the poorer working classes. With scarcely an exception, they have all received their earlier education in the neighbouring public elementary schools. Of the four hundred boys in attendance, all of whom have passed the 5th Standard, or its equivalent, nearly three hundred have been admitted without payment of fee, and the others pay a fee of sixpence per week, which covers the cost of books, material, stationery, &c.

It is impossible to forecast the improvement in our artisan population which may be effected when a school of this type shall be found in every district in London. England has been a long time awakening to the great need of such higher elementary technical schools for developing and utilising the brain-power of the children of our working classes. The schools connected with the ten or twelve polytechnic institutions which it is proposed to erect, together with other somewhat simi-

lar existing schools, will go far to satisfy the present needs of London; but it must be remembered that until there is found, at least, one higher school for every ten thousand children attending elementary schools, the wants of the metropolis in this respect will not have been fully supplied.

In order that these institutions when established may realise the expectations of their founders, it is necessary that they should be well administered. It is not only money that is wanted, but thought and experience in direction. The scheme of organization, whilst defining the general objects of the institution, should be sufficiently elastic to enable each separate Polytechnic to develop according to local requirements. It must not be supposed that the duty of the promoters will cease with the provision of the funds. A technical institute to be successful must be constantly advancing, constantly adding to and modifying its curriculum, to adapt it to the changing needs of trade and commerce. The new Polytechnic must continue in close relationship with the industrial and commercial life of the people. There must be no fossilized system of instruction. The "new education" may become as pedantic as the old, unless it be constantly and carefully adapted to changing needs. The necessity of thus adapting the instruction to varying wants throws a grave responsibility upon those who are to direct these institutions. The tendency of teachers to work in the same groove has to be corrected; the influence of examinations to stereotype instruction has to be avoided; and every effort should be made to keep the educational work of the institute in close touch with the newest applications of science to the processes of trade.

Equally important is it that no spirit of rivalry should be suffered to lead to the overlapping of functions, or to the unnecessary duplication of agencies or efforts among the different institutes of the metropolis. It would be a lamentable waste of energy and money if the several schools were found to be struggling to attract the same students. Their aim should be to supplement, rather than to interfere with, one another's functions. The loss of energy and means, due to imperfect organization in our existing educational machinery, is sufficiently regrettable; it is to be hoped that the same system, or want of system, will not be extended to these new institutes. To introduce the necessary harmony of action among the several Polytechnic Institutes to be established in

London, it is desirable that adequate powers should be entrusted to the Central Council, which, without unduly interfering with the freedom of action of the governing bodies of the different institutions, should exert a controlling and general directive influence over all. Too much centralization is to be avoided. The closest union may exist among bodies which are free to develop according to their own laws. Each institute must lead its own life adapted to its own surroundings. But proper organization is indispensable; and the ultimate success of the efforts about to be made to elevate the taste and to improve the technical knowledge and skill of the working classes will greatly depend upon the scheme of organization adopted for the government of these new Polytechnic Institutes, and upon the manner in which it is administered.

In the Report of the Charity Commissioners recently published the importance of proper organization is duly recognised. The Commissioners hope that if their views are adopted "the entire organized system would combine, first, a number of institutes adapted to the ordinary workman; secondly, a higher grade of instruction suited to the more skilful and more advanced pupils; and, thirdly, a provision for instruction in the highest levels of applied science, and for opportunities of pursuing researches and experiments by which the industrial arts may be advanced and perfected." The general administration of these Polytechnic Institutes is to be entrusted to a council to consist of twenty-one members, of whom five are to be appointed by the Crown, four by the Corporation of the City of London, and the remaining twelve by such bodies or persons as the Commissioners may by scheme provide.

It will probably devolve upon the Central Council to determine the means to be adopted for examining the technical classes of the institutes and for certifying competent artisans. Experience shows that artisans attach great value to a certificate of efficiency awarded by a responsible body. The character of the teaching in practical trade classes cannot be tested by written examinations only. The organization of practical examinations, which is at present a part of the work of the City Guilds Institute, is a matter of great complexity and difficulty. Moreover, competent inspectors should be appointed to ascertain that the instruction is in harmony with trade requirements, that the classes are adequately supplied with models and with apparatus, and that the teachers understand their work. No thoroughly satisfactory scheme has as yet

been framed for the training of teachers of trade classes. The City Guilds have done something in this direction; but there is a growing demand for teachers of a special class—for men who know their trade, who have studied the principles of science underlying it, and who have learnt the art of teaching.

These and other matters will claim the careful consideration of the Central Council, if this new departure in industrial education is to meet with the success that is anticipated. No such opportunities of practically solving a great and difficult problem have ever previously occurred, and are not likely to recur

in the present generation. The Commissioners have had to deal with vast sums of money derived from ancient charitable bequests, which have been largely supplemented by the liberality of the City Companies and of private individuals. The springs of metropolitan philanthropy have been tapped, but are not exhausted. Further contributions from various sources may be expected, if only it can be shown that these new institutes serve the great purpose for which they are to be established, and prove to be the means of making our workpeople more skilful and more intelligent, and of adding something to the happiness of their lives.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.—FOR LIBERTY AND LIFE.

NATURALISTS and students of animal life tell us that the hunted deer sheds tears in its agony and fear, and that the hare is ignorant of what is before it, for its eyes are strained back in its dread as it watches the stride of the pursuing hounds.

The reverse of the latter was the case with Harry Vine, who in his horror and shame could only see forward right into the future. For there before him was himself—hand-cuffed, in gaol, before the magistrates, taking his trial, sentenced, and then he, the scion of a good family, inflated by the false hopes placed before him by his aunt, dressed in the broad-arrow convict's suit, drudging on in his debased and weary life—the shame, the disgrace of those who loved him, and whom, in those brief moments of agony, he knew he dearly loved.

"Better death!"

He muttered these words between his teeth, as in a mad fit of cowardice and despair, he turned suddenly at the end of the rock pier and plunged headlong into the eddying tide.

Whatever the will may wish at such a time, instinct always seems to make a frantic effort to combat this mad will, and the struggle for life begins.

It was so here, for the sudden plunge into the cold dark water produced its instantaneous effect. The nerves and muscles grew tense, and after being borne for some distance straight out to sea, Harry Vine rose to the surface, and in obedience to the

natural instinct of a good swimmer, struck out and turned to regain the pier.

But as he turned he hesitated. There were the police waiting for him when he landed, and his people were on the shore waiting to see him disgraced—for he was, of course, in utter ignorance of the efforts that had been made to enable him to escape. And even as he hesitated he knew that such a proceeding was impossible. Had he been tenfold the swimmer he could not have reached that point, for the current, after coming from the west and striking full against the rocks, was bearing him seaward at a tremendous rate. The voices that had been in a clamour of excitement and the shouts and orders were growing distant; the lights that were flashing over the water seemed minute by minute more faint, and as, almost without effort, he floated on he wondered at the feeling of calm, matter-of-fact reasoning which the cold plunge seemed to have aroused.

—Always a clever swimmer from the days when the sturdy fisherman Perrow had tied a stout hake-line about his waist, and bid him leap into the sea from the lugger's side, and taught him to feel confidence in the water, he had never felt so much at home as now. He was clothed, but the strong current bore him along, and the slightest movement of his limbs kept him with his nostrils clear of the golden-spangled water.

What should he do?

He looked seaward, and there, right off the harbour mouth, was a lantern. He could not make out the shape of the boat; but his guilty conscience suggested that it

was one placed there by the police for his capture; shoreward he could see other moving lights, and he knew as well as if he were there that they were boat lanterns, and that people were putting off in pursuit.

It did not seem to occur to him that they would be essaying to save him; he had committed an offence against the law, and in his then frame of mind he could only admit one thought in connection with them into his brain, and that was that any boat's crew which pushed off would have but one idea—to make every effort to capture him, and so he swam, letting the swift tide carry him where it would.

Shouts arose, sounding faint and strange as they came from where the lanterns gleamed faintly; and there was an answering hail from the light off the harbour—the light toward which he was being borne.

"They'll see me," he thought, and he made a few vigorous strokes to turn aside, but gave up directly, as he felt it possible that he might be carried by in the darkness.

To his horror, he found that he would be taken so close, that he could easily swim to and touch the boat. For one moment fear swayed him of another kind, and he felt that he must give up.

"Better be taken aboard to prison than drown," he muttered; and he swam toward the boat.

"Better be drowned than taken off to prison," he said the next moment; and then, "why should I drown?"

His confidence returned as he was borne nearer and nearer to the lugger riding here to its buoy; and he could hear the voices of the men on board talking eagerly as they gazed shoreward.

"Keep a bright look-out," said a rough voice; and Harry ceased swimming after turning over on his back, and let the current bear him swiftly and silently along.

The spangled water seemed hardly disturbed by his presence as he neared the light, then saw it eclipsed by the boat's hull, just as he felt that he must be seen. Then he was past the boat, and in a few seconds the light reappeared from the other side, shining full upon his white face, but the men were looking in the other direction and he was not seen.

Once more the horror of drowning came upon him, and he turned on his face to swim back. It was only a momentary sensation, and as he swam and felt his power in the water he closed the lips firmly that had parted to hail, and swam on.

The shouts came and were answered from time to time, he could hear the regular rattle and beat of an oar, and then the blue light flashed out brilliantly, and as he raised himself at each long steady stroke he could see quite a crowd of figures had gathered on the pier, and he was startled to see how far he was from the shore. And all this time there upon his left was the bright red harbour-light, glaring at him like an eye, which seemed to be watching him and waiting to see him drown. At times it looked to be so lifelike that it appeared to blink at him, and as he swam on he ceased to gaze at the dull yellow light of the moving lanterns, and kept on watching that redder eye-like lamp.

The blue light blazed for a time like a brilliant star and then died out; the shouts of the men in the boat floated to him, and the lights of the town grew farther away as he still swam steadily on with a sea of stars above him, and another concave of stars apparently below; on his right the open sea, and on his left, where the dull land was, arose a jagged black line against the starry sky showing the surface of the cliff.

"What shall I do?" he said to himself, as he looked back at light after light moving slowly on the water, but all far behind him, for he was, as he well knew, in one of the swiftest currents running due east of the quay, and for a distance from that point due south. It was a hard question to answer. He might swim on for an hour—he felt as if he could swim for two—and what then?

He could not tell, but all the time the tide was bearing him beyond the reach of pursuit so fast that the hails grew more faint, and every minute now the roar of the surf grew plainer.

Should he swim ashore—land—and escape?

Where to?

"Hah!"

He uttered a faint cry, for just then his hand touched something cold and slimy, and for the moment he felt paralyzed, as he recalled how often a shark had come in with the tide. For the object he had touched seemed to glide by him, and what felt like a slimy moving fin swept over his hand. He struck out now with all his strength, blindly, and moved solely by one impulse—that of escaping from a death so hideous—a chill of horror ran through him, and for the moment he felt half paralyzed. The sensation was agonising, and the strokes he gave were quick, spasmodic, and of the kind given by a drowning man; but as he swam on and the

moments passed without his being seized, the waning courage began to return strongly once more, he recovered his nerve and ceasing his frantic efforts swam slowly on.

The efforts he had made had exhausted him, however, and he turned over on his back to rest and lie paddling gently, gazing straight up at the glorious stars which burned so brilliantly overhead. The change was restful, and conscious that the current swept him still swiftly along, he turned once more and began to swim.

That fit of excitement, probably from touching some old weed-grown piece of timber, must have lasted longer than he thought, for he had toiled on heedless of which direction he took, and this direction had been shoreward, the current had done the rest; and now that he swam it was into one of the back tidal eddies, and the regular dull roar and rush and the darkness ahead taught him that he was only a few hundred yards from the cliffs. He rose up as he swam and looked sharply from side to side, to see a faint lambent light where the phosphorescent waves broke, and before him the black jagged line which seemed to terminate the golden-spangled heavens, where the stars dipped down behind the shore.

He hesitated for a few moments—not for long. It was madness to strike out again into the swift current, when in a short time he could land or, if not, reach one of the detached masses of rock, and rest there till the tide went down. But what to do then? Those who searched for him would be certain to hunt along the shore, and to land and strike inland was, in his drenched condition, to invite capture.

He shuddered at the thought, and awaking now to the fact that he was rapidly growing exhausted, he swam on into the black band that seemed to stretch beneath the cliffs.

He was weaker than he realised, and, familiar as he was with this part of the coast, it now in the darkness assumed a weird, horrifying aspect; the sounds grew, in his strangely excited state, appalling, and there were moments when he felt as if the end had come. For as he swam on it was every now and then into some moving mass of anchored wrack, whose slimy fronds wrapped round and clung to his limbs, hampering his movements and calling forth a desperate struggle before he could get clear.

Then, as he reached the broken water, in spite of the lambent glare he struck himself

severely again and again upon some piece of jagged rock, once so heavily that he uttered a moan of pain, and floated helplessly and half unnerved listening to the hissing rush and hollow gasping of the waves as they plunged in and out among the cavities and hollows of the rocks. A hundred yards out the sea was perfectly smooth, but here in-shore, as the tidal swell encountered the cliffs, the tide raced in and out through the chaos of fallen blocks like some shoal of mad creatures checked in their career and frightened in their frantic efforts to escape.

Then every now and then came a low hollow moan like a faint and distant explosion, followed by the rattling of stones, and a strange whispering, more than enough to appal the stoutest swimmer cast there in the darkness of the night.

Three times over was the fugitive thrown across a mass of slimy rock, to which, losing heart now, he frantically clung, but only to be swept off again, confused, blinded by the spray and with the water thundering in his ears. Once his feet touched bottom, and he essayed to stand for a moment to try and wade across, but he only stepped directly into a deep chasm, plunging over his head, to rise beating the waves wildly, half strangled; and in the strange numbed feeling of confusion which came over him, his efforts grew more feeble, his strokes more aimless, and as once more he went under and rose with the clinging weeds about his neck the fight seemed to be over, and he threw back his head gasping for breath.

Rush! A wave curled right over, swept him from among the clammy weed, and the next moment his head was driven against a mass of rock.

What followed seemed to take place in a feverish dream. He had some recollection afterwards of trying to clamber up the rough limpet-bossed rock, and of sinking down with the water plunging about his eyes and leaping at intervals right up his chest, but some time elapsed before he thoroughly realised his position, and dazed and half helpless climbed higher up to lie where the rock was dry, listening with a shudder to the strange sounds of the hurrying tide, and gazing up from time to time at the watching stars.

CHAPTER XLIV.—A PLACE OF REFUGE.

IF ever miserable wretch prayed for the light of returning day that wretch was Harry Vine. It seemed hours of agony, during which the water hissed and surged all round him as

if in search of the victim who had escaped, before the faint light in the east began to give promise of the morn.

Two or three times over he had noted a lantern far out toward the distant harbour, but to all appearances the search had ceased for the night, and he was too cold and mentally stunned to heed that now.

He had some idea of where he must be—some three miles from the little harbour, but he could not be sure, and the curve outward of the land hid the distant light.

Once or twice he must have slept and dreamed in a fevered way, for he started into wakefulness with a cry of horror, to sit chilled and helpless for the rest of the night, trying to think out his future, but in a confused, dreamy way that left him where he had started at the first.

As day broke he knew exactly where he was, recollecting the rock as one to which he had before now rowed with one of the fishermen, the deep chasms at its base being a favourite resort of conger. Hard by were the two zorns to which they had made the excursion that day, and searched for specimens for his father's hobby—that day when he had overbalanced himself and fallen in.

Those zorns! either of those caves would form a hiding place.

"That is certain to be seen," he said bitterly; and with the feeling upon him that even then some glass might be directed toward the isolated rock on which he sat, a hundred yards from the cliff, in a part where the shore was never bared even at the lowest tides, he began to lower himself into the deep water to swim ashore and climb up the face of the cliff in search of some hiding place.

He was bitterly cold and longing for the sunshine, so that he might gain a little warmth for his chilled limbs; and under the circumstances it seemed in his half-dried condition painful in the extreme to plunge into the water again.

Half in he held on by the side of the barnacle-covered rock, and scanned the face of the cliff, nearly perpendicular facing there, and seeming to offer poor foothold unless he were daring in the extreme.

He was too weak and weary to attempt it, and he turned his eyes to the right with no better success.

"Better give up," he said bitterly. "I couldn't do it now."

As he gazed to his left the rock, however, seemed more practicable. There was a chasm there, up which it would certainly be

possible to climb, and, feeling more hopeful, he was about to make the attempt, when a flush of excitement ran through him. There in full view, not fifty yards to the left, was the zigzag water-way up which they had sent the boat that day toward the narrow hole at the foot of the cliff, the little entrance to the cavern into which he had swum, and there sat for his own amusement, startling the occupants of the boat.

"The very place!" he thought. "No one would find me there."

His heart began to throb, and a warm glow seemed to run through his chilled limbs as, carefully picking his time, he swam amongst the waving seaweed to the narrow channel, and then in and out, as he had gone on that bright sunny day which seemed to him now as if it was far away in the past, when he was a careless, thoughtless boy, before he had become a wretched, hunted man.

The sun, little by little, rose above the sea and flooded the face of the rocks; the black water became amethystine and golden, and the mysterious gasping and moaning sounds of the current were once more the playful splashings of the waves as they leaped up the empurpled rocks and fell in glittering cascades. It was morning, glorious morning once again, and the black, frowning cliffs of the terrible night were now hope-inspiring in their hanging wreaths of clustering ivy and golden stars.

The swell bore him on, and he rode easily to the mouth of the cave, a low rift now that was nearly hidden when a wave ran up, and when it retired not more than a yard high. And, as he recalled the day when he swam in, his hopes rose higher, for even if careful search were made it was not likely that any one would venture into such a place as that. Then, as he held on by a piece of rock at the mouth, he hesitated, for strange whispering sounds and solemn gurgling came out as he peered in. Where he clung, with his shoulders above the water, all was now bright sunshine; beneath that rough arch all was weird and dark, and it was not until he had felt how possible it was that he might be seen that he gave a frightened glance in the direction of the harbour, and then, drawing a long breath, waited for the coming of a wave, lowering himself down at the right moment, and allowing the water to bear him in.

He must have glided in, riding, as it were, on that wave some twenty or thirty yards, when, after a hissing, splashing, and hollow echoing noise, as a heavy breath of pent-up

air, like the expiration of some creature struck upon his face, he felt that he was being drawn back.

The rugged sides of the place, after his hands had glided over the clinging sea anemones for a few moments, gave him a firm hold, and as the wave passed out he found bottom beneath his feet, and waded on in the darkness with a faint shadow thrown by the light at the mouth before him.

The place opened out right and left, and as his eyes grew more used to the gloom he found himself in a rugged chamber rising many feet above his head and continuing in a narrow rift right on into the darkness. Where he stood the water was about three feet deep, and his feet rested on soft sand, while, as he continually groped along sideways, he found the water shallowed. Then another wave rushed in, darkening the place slightly, and it seemed to pass him, and to go on and on into the depths of the narrow rift onward, and return. The tide he knew was falling, so that some hours must elapse before there was any danger of his being shut in and deprived of air, while there was the possibility of the cavern being secure in that respect, and remaining always sufficiently open for him to breathe. But there were other dangers. There might be enough air, but too much water, and at the next tide he might be shut in and drowned. Then there was starvation staring him in the face. But on the other side there was a balance to counteract all this; he had found sanctuary, and as long as he liked to make this place his refuge he felt that he would be safe.

The waves came and went, always pursuing their way along a rift-like channel inward, while he cautiously groped his way along to the left into the darkness, with the water shallowing, and his hands as he went on, bent nearly double, splashing in the water or feeling the rough, rocky wall, which at times he could not reach, on account of the masses projecting at the foot.

The place was evidently fairly spacious, and minute by minute, as more of the outer sunshine penetrated, and his eyes grew accustomed to the place, it became filled with a dim greenish light, just sufficient to show him the dripping roof about ten feet above him, while all below was black.

All at once, as he waded in with the water now to his knees, his hands touched something wet, cold, and yielding, and he started back in horror, with the splashing noise he made echoing strangely from the roof.

For the moment his imagination conjured up the form of some hideous sea-monster, which must make the zorn its home, but once more sense and experience of the coast told him that the creature he had touched must be a seal, and that the animal, probably more frightened than he was himself, had escaped now out into the open water.

A couple of yards farther and he was on dry sand, while, on feeling about, he found that the side of the cave had been reached, and that he could climb up over piled-up rocks heaped with sand till he could touch the roof.

For some few minutes, as he stood there with the water streaming from him, he could not make out whether the heaped-up sand which filled in the rifts among the rocks was thoroughly dry or only lately left by the tide, but at last, feeling convinced that no water, save such as might have dripped from the roof, could have touched it, he carefully explored it with his hands till he found a suitable place, where he could sit down and rest.

He was so near the roof that the sandy spot he selected seemed to be more suitable for reclining than sitting, and, lying down, chilled to the very marrow, he tried to think, but could only get his thoughts to dwell upon the rushing in of the waves as he watched them coming along what seemed to be a broad beam of light, and go on and on past where he lay right into a dimly-seen rift to his left.

He was cold, hungry, and wretched. A feeling of utter hopelessness and despair seemed to rob him of the power to act and think. His wet clothes clung to him, and it was not till he had lain there some time that the thought occurred to him to try and wring out some of the water. This he at last did, and then lay down to think once more.

He had not so much difficulty in making out the shape of the place now, but it presented few differences from the many rifts in the rocks which he had examined when boating. There were dimly-seen shell-fish on the sides, scarce specimens such as would at one time have gladdened his father's heart, just visible by the opening, which grew brighter and brighter as the tide went down, and the entrance broadened till a new dread assailed him, and that was that the place would be so easy of access that he would be sought for and found.

The bitter, chilled sensation seemed to abate somewhat now, but he was tortured

by hunger and thirst. Every louder lap or splash of the waves made him start and try to make out the shadow of a coming boat, but these frights passed off, leaving him trying still to think of the future and what he should do.

How beautiful the water seemed! That glistening band where the light fell, and was cut on either side by a band of inky blackness, while the light was thrown from the water in curious reflections on the glistening rock, which seemed to be covered with a frosted metal of a dazzling golden green.

He could think of that, and of the amethystine water which ran on through what was evidently a deep channel, into the far depths of the cave, along which, in imagination, he followed it on and on right into the very bowels of the earth, a long, strange journey of curve and zigzag, with the water ever rushing and gurgling on, and the noise growing fainter and fainter till it was just a whisper, then the merest breath, and then utter darkness and utter silence.

The excitement and exhaustion of the past night were playing their part now, and Harry Vine lay utterly unconscious of everything around.

CHAPTER XLV.—THE HORROR IN THE ZORN.

"YES! What is it? Aunt Marguerite ill?"

Harry Vine started up, listening.

"Did any one call?"

There was no reply, and he sat there listening, still with the impression strong upon him that he had heard some one knock at his bedroom door and call him by name.

Then a curious sense of confusion came over him as he tried to make out what it meant. His head was hot, but his hands were cold, and he felt that he ought to know something which constantly eluded his mental grasp.

Land—rock—water running, gurgling, and splashing, and utter darkness. Where was he? What did it all mean?

For a long time the past was a blank. Then, as he sat with his hands pressed to his head, staring wildly before him, it all came back like a flash—his trouble, the escape, the long swim, and his taking refuge in this cave.

Then he must have slept all day, and it was now night, or else the tide had risen above the mouth of the entrance, and the water was slowly rising to strangle him, and Heaven have mercy upon him, there was no escape!

He began to creep down slowly toward the water, determined to swim with the next retiring wave, and try to reach the shore. Even if he drowned in the effort it would be better than sitting there in that horrible cave, waiting for a certain death.

But he found that comparatively he had to descend some distance before he could feel the water, and as he touched it with his extended hand, he fancied that he could detect a gleam of light.

For a long time he could not convince himself that it was not fancy, but at last he was sure that there was a faint reflection as from a star whose light struck obliquely in. Then the mouth of the cave was open still and he could swim out if he wished. But did he wish?

He felt about, and in a short time could distinguish by the sense of touch how high the tide had risen, and that it had not been within a couple of feet of where he had lain, where the sand was quite warm still. He too was dry, and therefore it must be night, and he had been plunged in a state of stupor for many hours. Suddenly a thought struck him.

He had a match-box in his pocket, a little tight-fitting, silver match-box, which held a few cigar lights. That match-box was inside his cigar-case, and both fitted so tightly that the water might have been kept out. A light, if only for a few moments, would convince him of his position, and then there were his cigars. He was ravenously hungry now, and if he smoked that would perhaps dull the sensation.

He drew out his cigar-case and opened it, and took out a cigar. This was dry comparatively; and as with trembling fingers he felt the little silver case, he wondered whether it closed tightly enough to keep out the water.

He took out a match. It felt dry, and the box was quite warm, but when he gave the match one rub on the sand-faced end, he obtained nothing but a faint line of light. He tried again and again, but in vain; and hesitated about testing another match till some hours had passed.

He could not resist the temptation, and taking another of the frail waxen tapers, he struck it sharply, and to his great delight it emitted a sharp, crackling sound. Another stroke and it flashed out, and there beamed steadily a tiny, clear flame which lit up the place, revealing that it was just such a zorn as his touch and imagination had painted,

while the water was about a couple of feet below where he knelt on the sand, and—

The young man uttered a wild cry of horror, the nearly extinct match fell from his fingers, and burned out sputtering on the wet sands at his feet.

His first effort was to crawl right away as high up as possible, and there, shuddering and confused, he sat, or rather crouched, gazing down beyond where the match had fallen.

At times he could see a tiny, wandering point of light in the water, which gradually faded out, and after this seemed to reappear farther away, but otherwise all was black and horrible once more. More than once he was tempted to walk down into the water and swim out, but in his half-delirious, fevered state he shrank from doing this, and waited there in the darkness, suffering agonies till, after what seemed to be an interminable time, there was a faint, pearly light in the place which gradually grew and grew till it became opalescent, then glowing, and he knew that the sun had risen over the sea.

Half frantic with horror, a sudden resolve came upon him. There was so strong a light now in the cavern that he could dimly see the object which had caused him so much dread, an object which he had touched when he first waded in, and imagined to be a seal.

Trembling with excitement, he crept down to the water's edge, waded in to his knees, and in haste, forcing himself now to act, he drew from where it lay entangled among the rocks the body of a drowned man, the remains of one of the brave fellows who had been lost at the wreck of Van Heldre's vessel. The body was but slightly wedged in, just as it had been floated in by a higher tide than usual, and left on the far side of some pieces of rock when the water fell, but had not since risen high enough to float it out.

The horrifying object yielded easily enough as he drew it away along the surface, and he was about to wade and swim with it to the mouth, when he stopped short, for a sudden thought occurred to him.

It was a horrible thought, but in his excitement he did not think of that, for in the dim light he could see enough to show him that it was the body of a young man of about his own physique, still clothed and wearing a rough pea-jacket.

Disguise—a means of evading justice—the opportunity for commencing anew and existing till his crime had been forgotten, and

then some day making himself known to those who thought him dead.

"They think me dead now," he muttered, excitedly. "They must. They shall."

Without pausing for further thought, and without feeling now the loathsome nature of the task, he quickly stripped the pea-jacket and rough vest from the dead form, and trembling with excitement now in place of fear, tore off his own upper garments, pausing for a few moments to take out pocket-book and case and cigars, but only to empty out the latter, thrust the book and case back, and at the end of a few minutes he was standing in shirt and trousers, the rough jacket and vest lying on the sands, and the form of the drowned sailor tightly buttoned in the dry garments just put on.

Harry stood trembling for a few minutes, shrinking from achieving his task. Then with the full knowledge that the body if borne out of the cave would be swept here and there by the current, perhaps for days, and finally cast ashore not many miles away, he softly waded into the water, drew the waif of the sea along after him, right away to the mouth of the cave, where he cautiously peered out, and made well sure that no fishermen were in sight before swimming with his ghastly burden along the zig-zag channel, out beyond the rocks, where, after a final thrust, he saw the current bear it slowly away before he returned shuddering into the cave, and then landed on the dry sand to crawl up and crouch there.

"They think me dead," he said in a husky whisper, "let them find that, and be sure."

He was silent for a time, and then as the thoughts of the past flooded his soul, he burst into a wild fit of sobbing.

"Home—sister—Madelaine," he moaned, "gone, gone for ever! Better that I had died; better that I was dead!"

But the horror was no longer there, and in a short time he roused up from his prostrate condition half wild and faint with hunger.

After a few minutes' search he found a couple of his cigars lying where he had thrown them on the sand, and lighting one, he tried to dull the agony of famine by smoking hard.

The effect was little, and he rose from where he was seated and began to feel about the shelves of the rock for limpets, a few of which he scraped from their conical shells and ate with disgust; but they did something towards alleviating his hunger, and seemed to drive away the strange, half-deli-

rious feeling which came over him from time to time, making him look wildly round and wonder whether this was all some dreadful dream.

About mid-day he heard voices and the beating of oars, when, wading towards the opening, he stood listening, and was not long in convincing himself that the party was in search of him, while a word or two that he heard spoken made him think that the party must have picked up the body of the drowned sailor.

The voices and the sound of the oars died away, and in the midst of the deep silence he crept nearer and peered out to be aware that a couple of boats were passing about a quarter of a mile out, while from their hailing some one, it seemed that a third boat, invisible to the fugitive, was coming along nearer in.

He crept back into the semi-darkness and listened with his ear close to the water till, after a time, as he began to conclude that this last boat must have gone back, and he wondered again and again whether the drifting body had been found, he heard voices once more, every word coming now with marvellous clearness.

"No, sir, only a bit of a crevice."

"Does it go far in?"

"Far in, Mr. Leslie, sir? Oh, no. Should waste time by going up there. You can see right up to the mouth, and there's nothing."

"But the current sets in there."

"Yes, sir, and comes out round that big rock yonder. Deal more likely place for him to have been washed up farther on."

"Leslie, and in search of me," said Harry to himself as the boat passed by. "Yes; they do believe I'm dead."

That day dragged wearily on with the occupant of the cave, tossed by indecision from side to side till the shadow began to deepen, when, unable to bear his sufferings longer, he crept out of the opening with the full intent of climbing the cliff, and throwing himself on the mercy of one of the cottagers, if he could find no other means of getting food.

The tide was low, and he was standing hesitating as to which way to go, when he turned cold with horror, for all at once he became aware of the fact that not fifty yards away there was a figure stooping down with a hand resting on the rock, peering into an opening as if in search of him.

His first instinct was to dart back into the cavern, but in the dread that the slightest movement or sound would attract attention,

he remained fixed to the spot, while the figure waded knee-deep to another place, and seemed to be searching there, for an arm was plunged deeply into the water, a rope raised, and after a good deal of hauling, a dripping basket was drawn out and a door opened at the side, and flapping its tail loudly, a good-sized lobster was brought out and deposited in the basket the figure bore upon her back.

"Mother Perrow!" exclaimed Harry beneath his breath, and then an excited mental debate took place. Dare he trust her, or would she betray him?

Fear was mastering famine, when Poll Perrow, after rebaiting her lobster pot, was about to throw it back into deep water, but dropped it with a splash, and stood staring hard at the shivering man.

"Master Harry!" she exclaimed, and, basket on back, she came through water and over rock toward him with wonderful agility for a woman of her age. "Why, my dear lad," she cried in a voice full of sympathy, "is it you?"

"Yes, Poll," he said tremulously, "it is I."

"And here have I been trying to find you among the rocks while I looked at my crab pots. For I said to myself, 'If Master Harry's washed up anywhere along the coast, there's nobody more like to find him than me.' And you're not dead after all."

"No, Poll Perrow," he said agitatedly, "I'm not dead."

"Come on back home," she cried. "I am glad I found you. Master Vine and Miss Louise, oh, they will be glad!"

"Hush, woman!" he gasped, "not a word. No one must know you have seen me."

"Lor', and I forgot all about that," she said in a whisper. "More I mustn't. There's the police and Master Leslie, and everybody been out in boats trying to find you washed up, you know."

"And now you've found me, and will go and get the reward," he said bitterly.

"I don't know nothing about no reward," said the woman, staring hard at him. "Why, where's your jacket and weskut? Aren't you cold?"

"Cold? I'm starving," he cried.

"You look it. Here, what shall I do? Go and get you something to eat?"

"Yes—no!" he cried bitterly. "You'll go and tell the police."

"Well, I am ashamed o' you, Master Harry, that I am."

"But it was all a misfortune, Poll Perrow,

an accident. I am not guilty. I'm not indeed."

"I warn't talking about that," said the woman surlily, "but 'bout you saying I should tell the police. It's likely, arn't it?"

"Then you will not tell—you will not betray me?"

"Yah! are it likely, Master Harry? Did I tell the pleece 'bout Mark Nackley when he was in trouble over the smuggling and hid away?"

"But I am innocent; I am indeed."

"All right, my lad, all right, Master Harry. If you says so, that's 'nough for me. Here, I'll go and tell Master Vine I've found you."

"No, no; he thinks I'm dead."

"Well, everybody does; and I said it was a pity such a nice, handsome young lad should be drowned like that. I told my Liza so."

"My father must not know."

"Miss Louy then?"

"No, no. You must keep it a secret from everybody, unless you want to see me put in prison."

"Now is that likely, my lad? Here, I've got it. I'll go and tell Master Luke Vine."

"Worst of all. No; not a word to a soul."

"All right, Master Harry; I can keep my mouth shut when I try. But what are you going to do?"

"I don't know yet. I'm hiding yonder."

"What! in the little seal zorn?"

"Yes. Don't betray me, woman, pray!"

"Betray you, Master Harry? You know I won't."

"You will not tell a soul?"

"You tell me not to tell nobody, and I won't say a word even to my Liza. But they're seeking for you everywhere—dead. Oh! my dear lad, shake hands. I am glad you warn't drowned."

The warm grasp of the rough woman's coarse hand and the genuine sympathy in her eyes were too much for Harry Vine. Weak from mental trouble—more weak from hunger—manhood, self-respect, everything passed from him as he sank upon one of the hard pieces of weedy rock; and as the woman bent over him and laid her hands upon his shoulder, he flung his arms about her, let his head sink upon her breast, and cried like a child.

"Why, my poor, poor boy!" she said tenderly, with her hard wooden stay busk creaking in front, and her maund basket creaking behind, "don't—don't cry like that, or—or—or—there, I knew I should," she sobbed,

as her tears came fast, and her voice sounded broken and hoarse. "There, what an old fool I am! Now, look here; you want to hide for a bit, just as if it was brandy or a bit o' lace."

"Yes, Poll; yes."

"Then wait till it's dark, and then come on to my cottage."

"No, no," he groaned; "I dare not."

"And you that cold and hungry?"

"I've tasted nothing but the limpets since that night."

"Limpets!" she cried, with a tone of contempt in her voice, "why they ain't even good for bait. And there are no mussels here. Look here, my dear lad, I've got a lobster. No, no; it's raw. Look here; you go back to where you hide, and I'll go and get you something to eat, and be back as soon as I can."

"You will?" he said pitifully.

"Course I will."

"And you'll keep my secret?"

"Now don't you say that again, my lad, because it aggravates me. There, you go back and wait, and if I don't come again this side of ten o'clock Poll Perrow's dead!"

She bent down, kissed his cold forehead, and hurried back among the rocks, splashing and climbing, till he saw her begin to ascend the narrow rift in the cliff; and in a few minutes the square basket, which looked like some strange crustacean of monstrous size creeping out of the sea and up the rocks, disappeared in the gathering gloom; and Harry Vine, half delirious from hunger, crept slowly back into the cave, half wondering whether it was not all a dream.

CHAPTER XLVI.—THE FRIEND IN ADVERSITY.

It was a dream from which he was aroused three hours later—a wild dream of a banquet served in barbaric splendour, but whose viands seemed to be snatched from his grasp each time he tried to satisfy the pangs which seemed to gnaw him within. He had fallen into a deep sleep, in which he had remained conscious of his hunger, though in perfect ignorance of what had taken place around.

His first thought was of capture, for his head was clear now, and he saw a rough hand as he gazed up wildly at a dim horn lantern.

The dread was but momentary, for a rough voice full of sympathy said:—

"There, that's right. Sit up, my dear, and keep the blankets round you. They're only wet at one corner. I did that bringing them in. There, drink that!"

He snatched at the bottle held to him, and drank with avidity till it was drawn away.

"That'll put some life into you, my dear; it's milk, and brandy too. Now eat that. It's only bread and hake, but it was all I could manage now. To-morrow I'll bring you something better, or I'll know the reason why."

Grilled fish still warm, and pleasant home-made bread. It was a feast to the starving man; and he sat there with a couple of blankets sending warmth into his chilled limbs, while the old fishwoman sat and talked after she had placed the lantern upon the sand.

"Let them go on thinking so," said Harry at last. "Better that I should be dead to every one I know."

"Now, Master Harry, don't you talk like that. You don't know what may happen next. You're talking in the dark now. When you wake up in the sunshine to-morrow morning you'll think quite different to this."

"No," he said, "I must go right away; but I shall stay in hiding here for a few days first. Will you bring me a little food from time to time, unknown to any one?"

"Why of course I will, dear lad. But why don't you put on your pea-jacket and weskit. They is dry now."

Harry shuddered as he glanced at the rough garments the woman was turning over.

"Throw them here on the dry sand," he said hastily. "I don't want them now."

"There you are, then, dear lad," said the old woman, spreading out the drowned man's clothes; "p'raps they are a bit damp yet. And now I must go. There's what's left in the bottle, and there's a fried mackerel and the rest of the loaf. That'll keep you from starving, and to-morrow night I'll see if I can't bring you something better."

"And you'll be true to me?"

"Don't you be afraid of that," said the old woman quietly, as Harry clasped her arm.

"Why, you are quite wet," he said.

"Wet! Well, if you'll tell me how to get in there with the tide pretty high and not be wet I should like to know it. Why, I had hard work to keep the basket out of the water, and one corner did go in."

"And you'll have to wade out," said Harry thoughtfully.

"Well, what of that? How many times have I done the same to get alongside of a lugger after fish? Drop o' salt water won't

hurt me, Master Harry; I'm too well tanned for that."

"I seem to cause trouble and pain to all I know," he said mournfully.

"What's a drop o' water?" said the old woman with a laugh. "Here, you keep that lantern up in the corner, so as nobody sees the light. There's another candle there, and a box o' matches; and now I'm going. Good-bye, dear lad."

"Good-bye," he said, with a shudder; "I trust you, mind."

"Trust me! Why, of course you do. Good-night."

"One moment," said Harry. "What is the time?"

"Lor', how particular people are about the time when they've got naught to do. Getting on for twelve, I should say. There, good-night. Don't you come and get wet too."

She stepped boldly into the water, and waded on with the depth increasing till it was up to her shoulders, and then Harry Vine watched her till she disappeared, and the yellow light of the lantern shone on the softly heaving surface, glittering with bubbles, which broke and flashed. Then, by degrees, the rushing sound made by the water died out, and the lit-up place seemed more terrible than the darkness of the nights before.

The time glided on; now it was day, now it was night; but day or night, that time seemed to Harry Vine one long and terrible punishment. He heard the voices of searchers in boats and along the cliffs overhead, and sat trembling with dread lest he should be discovered; and with but one thought pressing ever—that as soon as Poll Perrow could tell him that the heat of the search was over, he must escape to France, not in search of the family estates, but to live in hiding, an exile, till he could purge his crime.

After a while he got over the terrible repugnance, and put on the rough pea-jacket and vest which had lain upon a dry piece of the rock, for the place was chilly, and in his inert state he was glad of the warmth; while as the days slowly crept by, his sole change was the coming of the old fish-woman with her basket punctually, almost to the moment, night by night.

He asked her no questions as to where she obtained the provender she brought for him, but took everything mechanically, and in a listless fashion, never even wondering how she could find him in delicacies as well as in freshly-cooked fish and home-made bread.

Wine and brandy he had, too, as much as he wished; and when there was none for him, it was Poll Perrow who bemoaned the absence, not he.

"Poor boy!" she said to herself, "he wants it all badly enough, and he shall have what he wants somehow, and if my Liza don't be a bit more lib'ral, I'll go and help myself. It won't be stealing."

Several times over she had so much difficulty in obtaining supplies that she determined to try Madelaine and the Van Heldres; but her success was not great.

"If he'd only let me tell 'em," she said, "it would be as easy as easy." But at the first hint of taking any one into their confidence, Harry broke out so fiercely in opposition that the old woman said no more.

"No," he said; "I'm dead—they believe I'm dead. Let them think so still. Some day I may go to them and tell them the truth, but now let them think I'm dead."

"Which they do now," said the old woman.

"What do you mean?"

She hesitated to tell him what had taken place, but he pressed her fiercely, and at last he sat trembling with horror and with great drops bedewing his brow as she told him of the finding of the body and what had followed.

It was only what he had planned and looked for, but the fruition seemed too horrible to bear, and at last a piteous groan escaped from his breast.

That night, after the old woman had gone, the food she had obtained from his old home remained untouched, and he lay there upon the sand listening to the sighing wind and the moaning and working of the waves, picturing the whole scene vividly—the finding of the body, the inquest, and the funeral.

"Yes," he groaned again and again, "I am dead. I pray God that I may escape now, forgotten and alone, to begin a new life."

He pressed his clasped hands to his rugged brow, and thought over his wasted opportunities, the rejected happiness of his past youth, and there were moments when he was ready to curse the weak old woman who had encouraged him in the chimerical notions of wealth and title. But all that passed off.

"I ought to have known better," he said bitterly. "Poor, weak old piece of vanity! Poor Louise! My sweet, true sister! Father!" he groaned, "my indulgent patient father! Poor old honest, manly Van Heldre! Made-

laine! my lost love!" And then, rising to his knees for the first time since his taking refuge in the cave, he bowed himself down in body and spirit in a genuine heart-felt prayer of repentance, and for the forgiveness of his sin.

One long, long communing in the gloom of that solemn place with his God. The hours glided on, and he still prayed, not in mere words, but in thought, in deep agony of spirit, for help and guidance in the future, and that he might live, and years hence return to those who had loved him and loved his memory, another man.

The soft, pearly light of the dawn was stealing in through the narrow opening, and the faint querulous cry of a gull fell upon his ear, and seemed to arouse him to the knowledge that it was once more day—a day he spent in thinking out what he should do.

Time glided slowly on, and a hundred plans had been conceived and rejected. Poll Perrow came and went, never once complaining of the difficulties she experienced in supplying him and herself, and daily did her best to supply him with everything but money. That was beyond her.

And that was the real necessary now. He must have money to enable him to reach London, and then France. So long a time had elapsed, and there had been so terrible a finale to the episode, that he knew he might endeavour to escape unchallenged; and at last, after a long hesitancy and shrinking, and after feeling that there was only one to whom he could go and confide in, and who would furnish him with help, he finally made up his mind.

It was a long process, a constant fight of many hours of a spirit weakened by suffering, till it was swayed by every coward dread which arose. He tried to start a dozen times, but the heavier beat of a wave, the fall of a stone from the cliff, the splash made by a fish, was sufficient to send him shivering back; but at last he strung himself up to the effort, feeling that if he delayed longer he would grow worse, and that night poor old Poll Perrow reached the hiding-place after endless difficulties, to sit down broken-hearted and ready to sob wildly, as she felt that she must have been watched, and that in spite of all her care and secrecy her "poor boy" had been taken away.

CHAPTER XLVII.—BROTHER—LOVER.

TREMBLING, her eyes dilated with horror, Louise Vine stood watching the dimly seen pleading face for some moments before her

lips could form words, and her reason tell her that it was rank folly and superstition to stand trembling there.

"Harry!" she whispered, "alone? yes."

"Hah!" he ejaculated, and thrusting in his hands he climbed into the room.

Louise gazed wildly at the rough-looking figure in sea-stained old pea-jacket and damaged cap, hair unkempt, and a hollow look in eye and cheek that, joined with the ghastly colourless skin, was quite enough to foster the idea that this was one risen from the grave.

"Don't be scared," he said harshly, "I'm not dead after all."

"Harry! my darling brother."

That was all in words, but with a low, moaning cry Louise had thrown her soft arms about his neck and covered his damp cold face with her kisses, while the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"Then there is some one left to—— My darling sis!" He began in a half-cynical way, but the genuine embrace was contagious, and clasping her to his breast, he had to fight hard to keep back his own tears and sobs as he returned her kisses.

Then the fugitive's dread of the law and of discovery reasserted itself, and pushing her back, he said quickly:—

"Where is father?"

"At Mr. Van Heldre's. Let me——"

"Hush! answer my questions. Where is Aunt Marguerite?"

"Gone to bed, dear."

"And the servants?"

"In the kitchen. They will not come without I ring. But Harry—brother—we thought you dead—we thought you dead."

"Hush! Louy, for heaven's sake! You'll ruin me," he whispered as she burst into a fit of uncontrollable sobbing, so violent at times that he grew alarmed.

"We thought you dead—we thought you dead."

It was all she could say as she clung to him, and looked wildly from door to window and back.

"Louy!" he whispered at last passionately, "I must escape. Be quiet or you will be heard."

By a tremendous effort she mastered her emotion, and tightening her grasp upon him, she set her teeth hard, compressed her lips, and stood with contracted brow gazing in his eyes.

"Now!" he said, "can you listen?"

She nodded her head, and her wild eyes seemed so questioning, that he said quickly—

"I can't tell you much. You know I can swim well."

She nodded silently.

"Well, I rose after my dive and let the current carry me away till I swam ashore three miles away, and I've been in hiding in one of the zorns."

"Oh, my brother!" she answered.

"Waiting till it was safe to come out."

"But Harry!" she paused; "we—my father—we all believed you dead. How could you be so——"

She stopped.

"Cruel?" he said firmly. "Wouldn't it have been more cruel to be dragged off to prison and disgrace you more?"

"But——"

"Hush! I tell you I have been in hiding. They think me dead!"

"Yes; they found you——"

"Hush, I tell you. I have no time to explain. Let them go on thinking me dead."

"But Harry!" she cried; "my poor broken-hearted father—Madelaine."

"Hold your tongue!" he said in a broken voice, "unless you want to drive me mad."

He paused, for his face was working; but at last with a stamp he controlled his emotion.

"Look here," he said hoarsely. "I had no one to come to but you. Will you help me?"

"Harry!" she whispered reproachfully, as she clung to him more firmly.

"Hah! that's better," he said. "Now don't talk, only listen. But are you sure that we shall not be overheard?"

"Quite, dear, we are alone."

"Then listen. I have thought all this out. I've been a blackguard; I did knock old Van Heldre down."

Louise moaned.

"But once more I tell you I'm not a thief. I did not rob him, and I did not go to rob him. I swear it."

"I believe you, Harry," she whispered.

"Well, I'll tell you what I'm going to do."

She nodded again, unable to speak, but clung to him spasmodically, for everything seemed to swim round before her eyes.

"I am penniless. There, that proves to you I did not rob poor old Van. I want money—enough to escape over to France—to get to London first. Then I shall change my name. Don't be alarmed," he said tremblingly, as he felt Louise start. "I shall give

up the name of Vine, but I'm not going to call myself Des Vignes, or any of that cursed folly."

"Harry!"

"All right, dear. It made me mad to think of it all. I've come to my senses now, and I'm going over the Channel to make a fresh start and to try and prove myself a man. Some day when I've done this father shall know that I am alive, and perhaps then he may take me by the hand and forgive me."

"Harry, let me send for him—let me tell him now."

"No," said the young man sternly.

"He loves you! He will forgive you, and bless God for restoring you once more, as I do, my darling. Oh, Harry, Harry! My brother!"

"Hush," he whispered with his voice trembling as he held her to him and stroked her face. "Hush, sis, hush!"

"Then I may send for him?"

"No, no, no!" he cried fiercely. "I am little better than a convict. He must not, he shall not know I am alive."

"But Harry, dearest—"

"Silence!" he whispered angrily, "I came to you, my sister, for help. No, no, dear, I'm not cross; but you talk like a woman. The dear old dad would forgive me, God bless him! I know he would, just as you have, and fall on my neck and kiss me as—as— Ah! Lou, Lou, Lou, my girl," he cried, fighting against his emotion, "the law will not be like your love. You must help me to escape, at all events for a time."

"And may I tell him where you are gone—my father and Maddy?"

"Hush!" he cried, in so wild and strange a voice that she shrank from him. "Do you want to unman me when I have planned my future, and then see me handcuffed and taken to gaol? No: Harry Vine is dead. Some day another man will come and ask the forgiveness he needs."

"Harry!"

"But not this shivering, cowardly cur—a man, a true blameless man, whom it will take years to make. Now, then, once more, will you help me, and keep my secret?"

Louise was silent for a few moments.

"Well, never mind, you must keep my secret, for after I am gone if you said you had seen me, people would tell you that you were mad."

"I will help you, Harry, and keep your secret, dear—even," she added to herself, "if it breaks my heart."

"That's right. We've wasted too much time in talking as it is, and"—

"But Harry—Madelaine—she loves you."

He wrested himself from her violently, and stood with his hands pressed to his head. A few moments before he had been firm and determined, but the agonised thought of Madelaine and of giving her up for ever had ended the fictitious strength which had enabled him to go so far.

It was the result of his long agony shut up in that cave; and though he struggled hard he could do no more, but completely unnerved, trembling violently, and glancing wildly from time to time at the door and window, he sank at his sister's feet and clutched her knees.

"Harry, Harry!" she whispered—she, the stronger now—"for Heaven's sake don't give way like that."

"It's all over now. I'm dead beat; I can do no more."

"Then let me go to father; let me fetch him from Van Helder's."

"Yes," he moaned; "and while you are gone I'll go down to the end of the point and jump in. This time I shall be too weak to swim."

"Harry, don't talk like that!" she cried, embracing him, as she saw with horror the pitiable, trembling state in which he was.

"I can't help it," he whispered as he clung to her now like a frightened child, and looked wildly at the door. "You don't know what I've suffered, buried alive in that cave, and expecting the sea to come in and drown me. It has been one long horror."

"But, Harry, dear, you are safe now."

"Safe?" he groaned; "yes, to be taken by the first policeman I meet, and locked up in gaol."

"But, Harry!" she cried, his agitation growing contagious, "I have promised. I will help you now. I'll keep it a secret, if you think it best, dear. Harry, for Heaven's sake be a man."

"It's all over now," he groaned, "so better end it all. I wish I was dead. I wish I was dead."

"But, Harry, dear," she whispered, trembling now as much as he, "tell me what to do."

"I can't now," he said; "I'm too weak and broken. All this has been so maddening that I'm like some poor wretch half-killed by drink. It's too late now."

"No, no, Harry, dear. It shall be our

secret then. Up, and be a man, my brave, true brother, and you shall go and redeem yourself. Yes, I'll suffer it all hopefully, for the future shall make amends, dear. You shall go across to France, and I will study my father's comfort, and pray nightly for you."

"Too late," he moaned—"too late!"

She looked at him wildly. The long strain upon his nerves had been too great, and he was white as a sheet, and shaking violently.

"Harry, dear, tell me what to do."

"Let them take me," he said weakly. "It's of no use."

"Hush!" she said, full now of a wild desire to save him from disgrace and to aid him in his efforts to redeem the past. "Let me think. Yes: you want money."

Full of the recollection of his former appeal, she took out her keys, opened a drawer, while he half knelt, half crouched upon the carpet. She had not much there, and, whispering to him to wait, she left the room, locking him in, and ran up to her chamber.

Harry started as he heard the snap made by the lock; but he subsided again in a helpless state, and with the disease that had been hanging about waiting to make its grand attack gradually sapping its way.

In five minutes Louise was back.

"I have not much money," she whispered hastily; "but here are my watch, two chains, and all the jewels I have, dear. They are worth a great deal."

"Too late!" he moaned as he gazed up at her piteously, and for the moment he was delirious, as a sudden flush of fever suffused his cheeks.

"It is not too late," she said firmly. "Take them. Now tell me what next to do."

"What next?" he said vacantly.

"Yes. You must not stay here. My father may return at any time. Brother—Harry—shall I get you some clothes?"

"No—no," he said mournfully. "I shall want no more clothes."

"Harry!" she cried, taking his face between her hands, and drawing it round so that the light fell upon it; "are you ill?"

"Ill? yes," he said feebly. "I've felt it before—in the wet cave—fever, I suppose. Lou, dear, is it very hard to die?"

"Oh, what shall I do?" cried the agitated girl, half frantic now. "Harry, you are not very ill?"

"Only sometimes," he said slowly, as he

looked round. "I seem to lose my head a bit, and then something seems to hold me back."

"Harry!"

"Yes," he cried, starting up; "who called? You, Lou, money—give me some money."

"I gave you all I have, dear, and my jewels."

"Yes, I forgot," he said huskily, as in a moment his whole manner had changed, and with feverish energy he felt for the trinkets she had given him.

"You are ill, dear," she whispered tenderly. "Would it not be better to let me fetch our father?"

"I'd sooner die," he cried, catching her wrist. "No. He shall not know. There, I can see clearly now. That horrible weakness is always taking me now, and when it's on I feel as if I should kill myself."

"Harry!"

"Hush! I know now. We must go before he comes back."

"We?" she said aghast.

"Yes, we. I'm not fit to be alone. You must come with me, Lou, and help me. If I go alone I shall go mad."

"Oh, Harry! my darling brother."

"Yes," he cried in a hoarse whisper; "I know I shall. It's too horrible to live alone, as I've been living. You must come with me and save me—from myself—from everybody. Why do you look at me like that?"

He caught her by the shoulder, and glared at her with a long, fierce stare.

"I—I could not leave home, Harry," she said faintly.

"You must, you shall," he cried, "unless you want me to really die."

"But my father, dear?"

"Quick! write!" he said with the feverish energy which frightened her; and dragging open the blotter on a side table, he pointed to a chair.

"He is mad—he is mad," she wailed to herself, as in obedience to a will far stronger at that moment than her own, she sat down and took up pen and paper.

"Write," he said hoarsely.

"Write, Harry?"

"Yes, quick!"

In a horror of dread as she read her brother's wild looks, and took in his feverish semi-delirium, lest he should carry out a threat which chilled her, she dipped her pen and waited as, after an evident struggle with a clouding intellect, Harry said quickly,

"Dear father, I am forced by circumstances to leave home. Do not grieve for me, I am well and happy; and no matter what you hear do not attempt to follow me. If you do you will bring sorrow upon yourself, and ruin upon one I love. Good-bye; some day all will be cleared up. Till then, your loving daughter, LOUISE."

"Harry!" she sobbed, as she laid down the pen, and gazed at the tear-blurred paper. "You cannot mean this. I dare not—I could not go."

"Very well," he said coldly. "I told you it was too late. It does not matter now."

"Oh," she panted, "you are not reasonable. I have given you money. Go as you said and hide somewhere. You are weak and ill now."

"Yes," he said, in a voice which wrung her heart. "I am weak and ill now."

"A little rest, dear, and the knowledge that you have the means of escaping will make you more calm."

He looked at her with his eyes so full of wild anger that she half shrank from him, but his face changed.

"Poor little sis!" he said tenderly; "I frighten you. Look at me. Am I fit to go away alone? I know—I feel that at any moment I may break down and go off my head amongst strangers."

She looked at him wildly, and as she stood trembling there in a state of agitation which upset her generally calm balance, she read in his eyes that he was speaking the truth.

"Put that note in an envelope and direct it," he said in a slow, measured way, and mechanically and as if for the time being his will was again stronger than hers, she obeyed him, dropped the letter on the table, and then stood gazing from it to her brother and back again.

"It's hard upon you," he said, with his hand to his head, as if he could think more clearly then, "hard upon the poor old dad. But it seems my only chance, Lou, my girl."

Father—brother—what should she do?

"I can feel it now," he said drearily. "There, I'm cool now. It's lying in that cold, wet cave, and the horrors I've gone through. I've got something coming on—had touches of it before—in the nights," he went on slowly and heavily, "p'raps it'll kill me—better if it does."

"No, no, Harry. Stay and let me nurse you here. We could keep it a secret from every one, and——"

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"Hold your tongue!" he said fiercely. "I might live—if I went away—where I could feel—I was safe. I can't face the old man again. It would kill me. There, it's too much to ask you—what's that?"

Louise started to the door. Harry dashed to the window, and his manner was so wild and excited that she darted after him to draw him away.

"Nothing, dear, it is your fancy. There, listen, there is no one coming."

He looked at her doubtfully, and listened as she drew him from the window.

"I thought I heard them coming," he said. "Some one must have seen me crawl up here. Coming to take me—to gaol."

"No, no, dear. You are ill, and fancy all this. Now come and listen to me. It would be so wild, so cruel if I were to leave my home like this. Harry! be reasonable, dear. Your alarm is magnified because you are ill. Let me—no, no, don't be angry with me—let me speak to my father—take him into our confidence, and he will help you."

"No," he said sternly.

"Let me make him happy by the knowledge that you are alive."

"And come upon him like a curse," said Harry, as there was a tap at the door, which neither heard in the excitement of the moment, for, eager to help him, and trembling lest he should, in the excited state he was, go alone, Louise threw herself upon her knees at her brother's feet.

"Be guided by me, dearest," she sobbed, in a low, pained voice. "You know how I love you, how I would die if it were necessary to save you from suffering; but don't—pray don't ask me to go away from poor father in such a way as this."

As she spoke a burst of hysteric sobbing accompanied her words; and then, as she raised her tear-blinded eyes, she saw that which filled her with horror. Uttering a faint cry, she threw herself before her brother, as if to shield him from arrest.

Duncan Leslie was standing in the open doorway, and at her action he took a stride fiercely into the room.

Harry's back was half turned toward him, but he caught a glimpse of the figure in the broad mirror of an old dressoir, and with one sweep of his arm dashed the light over upon the floor.

The heavy lamp fell with a crash of broken glass, and as Louise stood clinging to her brother, there was a dead silence as well as darkness in the room.

THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE.

Short Sunday Readings for September.

By HENRY ALLON, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

I.—THE CORINTHIANS.

Read Acts xviii. 1—17; 1 Cor. iii. 1—17.

PRESENT duties are inculcated best by historic instances; and it is a note of the truth of the Bible that its historic instances are thoroughly human. Its delineations are not paragons of the imagination, they exhibit men of like passions with ourselves.

These pictures of the Church in Corinth are valuable as historic records of the state of things in the Apostolic Churches; they are equally valuable as lessons for our modern Church life. In their characteristic faults, the Corinthians are as true to human nature as to the circumstances of their time. No religious fiction could have imagined their simple unconscious fidelity and failings; no mere impostor would have dared to exhibit them.

A young Christian Church, just emerging from the moral feculence of paganism, is exhibited in its transition—its strange blendings of good and evil, of lofty Christian holiness and gross pagan vices, of Christian idea and unconscious heathen tradition.

In our own day of advanced morality such a church would be summarily excommunicated. And yet the merciful and patient Master bears with its imperfect beginnings, and leads it on to Christian purity and brotherhood.

The schismatic intolerance and bitterness of the Corinthians was probably a survival of the janglings of their philosophers: although, as the virulence of similar schisms in our modern church life sadly testifies, there was a good deal of human nature in it.

Conflicting opinions about Christian truths and things there will always be, so long as human minds and hearts are so diversified. But there is a great difference between honest and modest judgments which do no violence to the conscience, and to the tenderness of Christian brotherhood, and the vanities, jealousies, and selfishness of a sectarian heart. The one has its seat in the limited understanding of a man, the other in his wrong moral feelings. Errors are radically different from passions. It is as sins of passion that the apostle deals with these differences; they are denounced with strong moral reprobation: "Are ye not carnal and walk as men?"

These sectaries represented the two sections of Corinthian converts—those converted from Judaism, and those converted from paganism—the ritualists, and the rationalists of early Church life.

Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, was the chosen head of the ritualistic school; Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, that of the rationalistic party. Other factions there were, constituted by crossings and modifications of these; one of which inscribed upon its banner the name of Apollos, another disavowing all sectarianism—and probably the most intolerant of all—called itself by the name of Christ.

Paul does not debate these different theologies; he simply rebukes the spirit of schism; as strong and as bitter, probably, in those who held the truth, as in those who maintained error. A man is not necessarily right because he is contending for right things.

Apollos seems to have been magnified to the disparagement of Paul; perhaps because of his dialectical skill and eloquence. Paul teaches us only rudimentary things, Apollos leads us to the higher philosophy of Christian truth.

Replying to this disparagement, Paul tells them:—first, that their spiritual incapacity, produced by their carnal feeling, had necessarily limited his teachings. "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not able to bear it; yea, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal." And next:—that whatever the workman he is not to be magnified above his work. "What, then, is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him." And then:—that it is no unimportant thing to do rudimentary work—to lay the foundation of the Christian life, and to lay it rightly—"well begun is half done." His grace had been, "as a wise master builder, to lay the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers." And yet again:—Even building upon a true foundation, a man may not build wisely. Upon the same foundation different structures may be erected, and different materials employed.

Thus his thought passes into the grand conception of the heart of the Christian man as a temple in which God deigns to dwell. Of this true temple of God, Christ is the foundation, sanctified lives are the superstructure, the Spirit of God is the indwelling deity, and in it a service of praise is offered continually.

SECOND SUNDAY.

II.—THE FOUNDATION.

Read Isaiah xxviii. 9—17; Matt. xxi. 13—23.

In what sense is Jesus Christ the foundation of the Christian life? Clearly in manifold ways—in every way in which He is related to Christian thought or life—in more ways, therefore, than words or thoughts of ours can explain. The one radical idea is that it is not any specific thing in Christ, either in His character, teaching, or life, that is the foundation of Christian life; it is His entire personality—all that constituted Him the Christ—the enlightening, quickening, redeeming power in human life; as with significant emphasis the apostle puts it, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone."

The New Testament conception is very distinct and emphatic. It does not regard Jesus Christ as the foundation of Christian religiousness in the sense in which Moses was the foundation of Jewish religiousness—that is as the mere teacher of its idea, or the organizer of its constitution. He is the immediate source of all the life, fidelity, and love of Christian hearts. Christ is not merely a religious prophet, He is a vital religious force.

This is the distinctive note of Christianity. All other religious founders might disappear, and their religious systems remain intact. Were Christ to disappear Christianity would perish. Christ is Christianity. Christian theology is simply the explanation of what Christ was and did—of His incarnation, death, and resurrection. It rests not upon His teachings, but upon His doings. He is vitally related to His disciples, as the vine to the branches, as the life-giver to the life.

The foundation, therefore, is that in Christ which enables and constitutes spiritual life. It cannot be mere doctrine; which simply instructs life and inspires it, but cannot constitute it. Christ Himself, not His doctrine, is the foundation. He does not say, "Believe in my doctrine," but "Believe in me." Trust in me for the quickening and nurture of your religious life. "Except ye eat the

flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." "I live," says Paul, "and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."

Christian doctrine has important relations to Christian life. It is not life, nor the cause of life, but it is very potent in its influence upon life. Chemical qualities are not life, nor the cause of life, but they determine the sustenance of life, and the quality of the life that is sustained. Even the doctrine of the Incarnate Christ is not the foundation of spiritual life; it is only an explanation of His prerogative as life-giver; but it is a potent inspiration of life. It cannot, in its practical influence upon my religious feeling, be the same thing, whether I trust and worship Christ as the divine Son of God, the author of my spiritual life, or simply learn of Him as a teacher, and imitate Him as an example.

Like all ideas, ideas about Christ are moral forces which practically affect my feeling and conduct—inspire me with gratitude, love, and self-sacrifice. As I conceive of Christ I love Him, serve Him, and trust in Him. Conception of what the Christ was, and did, kindled in men, like John and Peter and Paul, that indescribable enthusiasm of feeling and service which characterizes them. It was not admiration, and love, merely, it was consecration, worship, and martyrdom. He filled their imagination; He was more than they could think and feel. Christ Himself is more than any doctrine about Him. He "comes to us and dwells in us."

Much less can any religious experience of our own—our penitence, or faith, or holiness, or fidelity—be the foundation of our religious life. Life is not its own cause. Whatever its evolution, some power, not ourselves, must produce it. For the nurture of religious life we need the great distinctive doctrines of the Christ; but, as with all nutriment, there must be the accompanying, mystic, inscrutable energy of life. Only, Christian life, in virtue of its distinctive doctrine, is nurtured to a richer goodness than all other religious life. No moral forces, short of those of the Christ, will produce the sentiment, the holiness, the beneficence of the Christian life.

The teaching and example of Christ Himself are not the foundation of the Christian life; they are but another form of doctrine concerning it. However perfect as ideas, they lack inherent vital force for the quickening of spiritual life in sinful hearts. It

was not religious idea that men lacked so much as spiritual power to realise religious idea; they "knew the better, but pursued the worse." Christ comes, first, as a life-giver. Reduce Him to a mere religious teacher and good man, you rob even His example of half its force. If He be merely the son of a village carpenter where is His condescension? He simply submitted to circumstances; He did not humble Himself to become a man; He did not make Himself of no reputation; He was not rich and became poor. He produced an exaggerated impression of what was due to Himself; and came perilously near to blasphemy in His great claims to be "the light of the world," "the bread of life," "the judge of quick and dead." While the magical force of the pathetic constraint "He loved me and gave Himself for me" is altogether destroyed. So greatly do you diminish the moral force of His example when you reduce His divine dignity. You lessen the adoring wonder, the patient reverence, the resistless enthusiasm that He excites. You cannot make a human Christ the foundation of spiritual life. You intrude a mere creature between God's prerogative of life-giving, and the deepest consciousness, the highest sanctity of the quickened soul. Paul could be only a builder of the spiritual temple, he could not be its foundation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, Jesus Christ."

This determines both the limit and the liberties of the Christian life.

Its limit:—no one is a Christian who does not build upon Christ the foundation.

Saul of Tarsus sought to build his temple upon his own good works—his moral qualities. He tells us how miserably he failed. All that had been "gain to him he counted loss for Christ." The new life must begin in reconciliation with God. Reconciliation with God is possible only in accordance with principles of strictest righteousness. I have no personal ground upon which I can righteously claim forgiveness, no inherent spiritual life through which I can grow to perfect holiness. The demand of my moral consciousness is imperative, "Wherewithal shall I appear before God?" Hence Christ's atonement for sin; which in the moral grandeur of its conception, the profound moral philosophy which it embodies, and its amazing manifestation of divine love and self-sacrifice, infinitely transcends all other theories of forgiveness. It is a forgiveness of which my conscience, my moral sense approves; which justice, as well as mercy endorses. He is "a just God while

He is the justifier of the ungodly." His "righteousness is declared in the remission of sins." Thus it becomes possible for God righteously to pardon, and to quicken spiritual life. This, I think, is the "basis of God's" dealings with sinful men, the new covenant which He has made with men. And this is the foundation upon which each individual life is built. "Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

And this is also the liberty of essential Christianity. No man may narrow this broad foundation, or make creed, or church, or ritual a co-ordinate essential of it. A man may hold many errors concerning the Christ in whom he practically trusts, and yet his trust, and love, and worship may be more than his creed. The test is simply life, essential life, not even the measure of life. If Christ be to me actually the life of my life, even though my theology may otherwise construe Him, I am building upon Him; my notions are not the criterion of my heart. A man may deny, in his theology, the Christ whom, by a glorious inconsistency, he worships in his life. Perilous it may be, but experience attests that it is possible. "To his own master he standeth or falleth." But, assuredly, the one essential to Christian salvation is not the utterance of a shibboleth, nor subscription to a creed, nor membership in a church, only participation in the life which He quickens.

In this the Church finds its true unity. These Corinthians are not urged to remedy their schisms by surrendering their different notions, but by a realisation of their common life in Christ. In Him, however they may repudiate each other, they are essentially, infrangibly one.

While therefore we imperatively assert the limits of spiritual life, let us as jealously guard its liberties. We may not bring to the foundation that God has laid our own poor adjuncts of creed, or church, or sacrament. Every such addition is obstructive and perilous. He is the most faithful to Christ who the most simply determines to "know nothing amongst men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

THIRD SUNDAY.

III.—THE SUPERSTRUCTURE.

Read Eph. ii. 1–20; Rom. xiii.

Upon the true foundation different structures may be builded.

The unskilful builder builds into his structures elements of character which are carnal and spurious. It is not necessary to suppose him consciously false, wilfully sinful. He may be simply defective in spiritual instinct, intelligence, or earnestness. Were he radically false, he would not be on the foundation at all. "The root of the matter is in him." He is saved, though his work perishes. Is not this true of thousands of inconsistent disciples of Christ? They are not consciously hypocrites; and yet what terrible elements of unspiritualness, selfishness, and sin enter into the composition of their character.

Suppose that it is a minister building up a church. Upon him the edification of the church mainly depends. He may build upon the true foundation, and yet build very heterogeneous materials. Strange elements are found in Christian churches; and are causes of unspiritualness, deadness, and strife. If a minister be over-solicitous about the increase of church members, he may unwittingly, or over-easily, admit unfitting persons to its fellowship. "Let him take heed how he builds." Some good and sincere men are very bungling church builders. They lack discernment of character; they lack tact in dealing with men; they lack moral courage in their practical action; and so they build up churches that have neither sanctity, coherence, nor stability.

Suppose that it is the individual man building up his own spiritual character. What spurious materials he may build—false doctrines, weak superstitions, "traditions of men, which make the commandments of God of none effect," puerile ritualisms, which profit nothing, or else carnal affections, selfish indulgences, worldly conformity, moral inconsistencies; building the temple of God with unworthy materials, with "untempered mortar;" the things of the flesh sadly and grotesquely mixed with the things of the spirit. What anomalies of character and conduct one sees in Christian men. Instead of "gold, silver, precious stones," you see "wood, hay, straw"—religion without sanctity, discipline without fidelity, worship without inspiration, rectitude without graciousness. Men are doubtful about them—bad men are scornful, good men are disquieted. Nobody instructs them, nobody admires them. It is not as if a sinful life, that would remove them from the foundation altogether; it is a life of weak inconsistency, of imperfect Christian feeling, and attainment, and service. The man will be saved in virtue of his fundamental spiritual life; "but saved so as by fire."

The skilful builder builds up genuine and consistent character; he rejects all spurious materials—falsity of thought, laxity of habit, incongruity of life. He accepts only such materials as contribute to the godliness, and the moral beauty of character; the culture of his entire spiritual life is true, careful, and supreme. He "perfects holiness in the fear of the Lord," "adorns the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things."

Scarcely is he a true man, who is indifferent to true notions about Jesus Christ; who does not nurture his sentiment towards Him by an eager endeavour to know all that He is and teaches. Scarcely is he a true man who knowingly permits unchristlike tempers, unfaithful doings, unspiritual sympathies. By true men, the materials of the superstructure are solicitously assimilated to the foundation upon which they are built; the living stones are as the living foundation. All the materials of the moral edifice are genuine, precious, and beautiful. The spiritual builder builds with spiritual understanding, refuses as material everything that will weaken or disfigure his edifice.

The superstructure has vital relations with the foundation. By a bold metaphorical license the apostle Peter represents believers as "living stones" in virtue of being built upon the living foundation stone; and so built up into a spiritual house. While Paul, blending the metaphor of a house with that of a tree, represents the whole as growing, "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord." The foundation communicates its vital properties to the stones built upon it, sends up into them a mystic quickening power, a mighty effluence of life, which makes them the living stones of a spiritual house. So that every man, coming to Christ, has his vital place and function in the great spiritual edifice. He becomes an integral part of the Catholic church. He is asked concerning neither his baptism nor his denomination. In virtue of the life received from Christ, all believers are essentially one. I exchange salutations with men of every name; ages do not separate us, distance does not isolate; not only they of Achaia, they of Rome also salute us. Fénelon claims us as brethren, Pascal fights our battles, Xavier helps our labours, Leighton worships at our shrine, Wesley ministers our grace, Channing bears our likeness. Our hearts instinctively commune. We are consciously one in Christ, one with "the holy Church throughout all the world."

There is proportion and adjustment. The building is "fitly framed together." There is symmetry in church building. A church is not a mere concourse of godly men, a mere aggregate of things beautiful; it is a structure of orderly parts and manifold functions—column and capital, the useful for service, the beautiful for adornment—each in its proper place and relationship, each discharging its function. "From whom all the body fitly framed and knit together, through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

There is symmetry in character building. A Christian man is not a mere miscellany of excellencies; proportion, harmony, mutual qualifications are necessary for perfect character. Virtues in their unqualified development pass into vices. Thus, the prominence of one virtue excuses deficiencies in others—the liberal man is a churl, the righteous man is proud and hard, the active man is a niggard, the benevolent is indolent. Virtues supplement and perfect each other. Isolated virtues are often repellent.

Thus, in the various membership of the Church, as in the varied relationships of individual life, every man, everything has its proper place and service. No man, no member may say to another, "I have no need of thee." One, as a pillar, gives strength; another, as a window, gives light. God's temple is distorted and riven, and its fair proportions are destroyed, whenever exclusive, or selfish, or jealous, or unbrotherly passion has place; each is necessary for the completeness of the whole, the whole is necessary for the perfection of each.

"It groweth;" it is ever developing, "going on unto perfection." In the individual man, knowledge grows, and intelligence, and power, and spirituality, and consecration, and refinement. "He grows up into Christ, the living head in all things." In the collective Church, wisdom grows, and sanctity, and broad charities, and Christlike influence, and ministering grace. In churches, as well as in individuals, there is individuality of development. A youth of rashness and fervour, a maturity of wisdom and attempered affections; an early spirit of folly, of zeal without knowledge, of waywardness and disintegration, a later temper of sober intelligence, of well-considered means, of patient culture, of beautiful charities, of tender forbearance; and each with a temper, a culture of its own. Churches, as well as indi-

viduals, "forget things behind, and reach forward to things that are before."

So through the Christian ages the collective Church has grown; sometimes in dislocating revolution, and strenuous conflict; sometimes in quiet nurturings, and summer restfulness; sometimes through fierce siftings of its doctrine; sometimes through quiet fruit-bearing of "the things most surely believed amongst us." Christian thought has enlarged to greater breadth; Christian feeling has deepened to more spirituality, Christian life has ripened to more human, and tender, and catholic sympathies. What a contrast the Christian doctrine and life of this nineteenth century present to those of the second century!

How the dimensions of the great temple of God have enlarged, as generation after generation of living stones have been built upon the foundation, as country after country has been added to its domain! How it has added transept after transept, turret after turret! How its builders multiply! How their skill increases! So the building rises; and prophecy has assured us of a day when "the top stone shall be brought on with shoutings of 'Grace, grace unto it.'"

FOURTH SUNDAY.

IV.—THE TESTING.

Read 2 Tim. ii. 19–26; 1 Peter iv. 12–19, ii. 1–9.

Then there is the *testing* of character:—"the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." Life furnishes many tests of our workmanship—fires of temptation, of difficult circumstances, of strenuous demand; fires of heresy, in which doctrine is tested; fires of persecution, in which life is tested. How churches fall into unspiritualness, schism, and disruption! How character gives way, and men "make shipwreck of the faith and of a good conscience!" God's fire is always trying our work, "of what sort thou art"—the noisy popularity of a minister, the unscrupulous methods of a church, the loud profession and ostentatious fervour, the individual life. What "wood, hay, stubble" are burned out of men! while "Christ, the faithful, modest Christian life continues"—"gold, silver, precious stones"—which fire only serves to attest.

And then there are God's tests in His judgment of men. "He shall come as a purifier of silver." Can we even imagine the way in which, as the results of His testing, spurious things

shrivel, and genuine things will shine !
 "The day shall declare it, of what sort it is."

The wise builder's work will be made manifest in its truth and beauty. His materials have been carefully chosen, and wisely builded. He has sought truth, with strong desire to do it ; he has chosen the right, at every cost. He has struggled with the defects of his own character, lest they should be builded into its edifice. The moral qualities that he has builded are imperishable ; they are glorified by the fiery revelation. His "precious faith" is "tried by fire." The fabric abides. No test of God can ever harm truth, and holiness, and love. They are the imperishable qualities of the living foundation itself. With humble thankfulness he stands in that day, his timid solitudes relieved, his work unharmed. Ridiculed while he built, he now hears God's great commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant !" "His works do follow him."

But the poor builder who has builded into his edifice "wood, hay, stubble :"—

The minister who has gathered into the church the unspiritual and unworthy ; who has been more intent upon inculcating a creed than inspiring true spiritual life ; who has thought more of his ecclesiasticism than of saving men's souls ; who has courted applause by tricks of oratory and of dramatic sensationalism, rather than striven "if by any means he might save some ;" who has cared more for the ritual of worship than for its spirit : what will he think and feel when his work is subjected to the test of God's fire ? In the pure spiritual lights of God how his delusions will vanish ! "He has laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought." "He suffers loss"—the loss of his ministerial life work. All that he has built is burnt up. Instead of saved men—"his joy and crown of rejoicing"—his trophies are his shame.

Yet he himself is saved, but only just—"so as by fire." His sincerity does not verify his work, but it saves the worker. He was mistaken, not false, weak, not wicked. He did it "ignorantly through unbelief," therefore he "obtained mercy." His house is burnt over his head, but he himself escapes. Trembling and ashamed, he sees his edifice consumed.

So the man who builds up an unworthy personal character—"wood, hay, stubble." Vices of moral conduct, inconsistencies of spiritual life, worldliness of feeling and aim, evils of temper, falsities of doctrine, follies of superstition, ritualism, intolerance. In

God's day of fiery ordeal, no immoral thing, no untrue thing, no unspiritual thing can abide. However inwrought, however built into the structure, all that is false must be burned out. False things cannot enter heaven. If the man is true at heart he will be saved, but his sins and follies will burn and blaze around his dismayed soul. His charred and disintegrated structure seems falling about his ears, and threatens utterly to destroy him. But he is on the true foundation ; he has received Christ in true faith, been quickened by Christ to a true life, loved Christ with a true heart (even the prodigal in the far country had a son's heart at the bottom), although he has heaped up so much rubbish for a character.

God mercifully destroys that, and saves him—"so as by fire,"—as a man is saved who escapes from a burning house, with his clothes burned off his back. He suffers the loss, not only of all that a mistaken life has gathered, but of all that a true life might have gathered—sterling character, assiduous work, spiritual honours, qualification for the higher joys of heaven. He enters heaven denuded, ignorant, and weak, ashamed and disqualified, his whole life-work lost. It is not an "abundant entrance," as of a ship in full sail ; it is but a dismasted barque that has gained the shelter of the harbour.

How rich in suggestion all this is !

1. Concerning the true Church. Not an ecclesiastical organization, a theological creed, a prescribed ritual, but "a congregation of faithful men ;" not a sect, but a catholic temple, including all sects, all who build on the true foundation.

2. Concerning the true glory of a Church. Not its traditions, or secular relations, its wealth or its social honour, its worship or its activities, but the reality, purity, and intensity of its spiritual life.

We build for eternity. God's veracities are enduring as His own being. Let us therefore "take heed how we build," that by "patient continuance in well-doing we inherit glory, immortality, eternal life."

FIFTH SUNDAY.

V.—ITS DEITY, AND ITS SACRIFICE.

Read John xiv. 16—31 ; Acts ii. 1—21.

The representation closes with an urgency to sanctity and reverence. This conception of the human heart as the true temple of God is a very bold one ; it is the very ideal of religious life. Its two cardinal ideas are, the heart of a man as his true temple of worship,

and the heart of a man as the supreme place of divine manifestation. It is the heart of the man that has access to God ; the heart of the man that is the true place of spiritual communication from God ; the heart of the man in which is the true altar of sacrifice—the true consecration of the spiritual life—and that realises its true privileges.

Divine indwelling is part of the great mystery of life, and of God's relation to life. What life is we do not know. It is God's secret. It is that mysterious energy, which is so much more than mere organism or laws ; which makes us conscious and capable ; which makes processes and achievements of life possible.

All that I will say here is, that the life of a vegetable is just as inscrutable as the life of a soul. If the material body is animated with the life of sense, if the intellect is animated with the life of reason, why by analogy of reason should not the soul be animated with spiritual life ? All that we can know about it is what God Himself tells us. We may be conscious of spiritual quickening, but "we know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth." Save for what God tells us, we are as ignorant of the cause of spiritual life as the scientist is of the cause of physical life.

The Bible tells us that spiritual life is quickened by the Spirit of God ; and in this teaching there is nothing incongruous with either our experience or our consciousness.

My consciousness tells me that I need to be so quickened to spiritual life. The strange sense of sin is within me—the mysterious imperative that tells me that "I ought," and the indisputable consciousness that I have not done what I ought ; the sense of culpability, shame, and remorse. And when God tells me that His Holy Spirit renews spiritual life, although I could not have known it had I not been told, all that is within me attests the necessity and the fitness of such renewal. Then suddenly I acquire moral power ; the entire feeling of my life is changed ; I am "delivered from the body of this death," and consciously become a new creature. I feel that the effect is precisely such as a divine quickener would produce ; and I can account for it in no other way. And this is corroborated by the marvellous transformations which have been wrought in men, from the day of Pentecost to the present hour. Effects have been wrought upon human life for which you can find no other rational explanation.

Thus the heart of the man becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit—the place of spiritual inspiration and worship. It is the consummation of all religious ideas and experiences. Even the Christ goes away that the Comforter may come. His bodily presence and His teaching are an inferior grace to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is a perpetual inspiration and service—"He dwelleth with you and shall be in you."

Necessarily both temple and worship are constituted by the spiritual feeling of the worshipper. However God may come to me, I can realise His presence only by my spiritual emotions. I realise it by sympathy, by purity, by spiritual desire. God cannot come spiritually to a brute nature ; or to a man whose spiritual sensibilities are destroyed. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." If we fail, therefore, of any measure of spiritual indwelling, it is solely because of our defective spiritual sympathy and capacity. Were we holy as Jesus of Nazareth was, the spirit would be "given without measure" to us as unto Him. Thus spiritual life acts and reacts. "To him that hath shall be given." Spiritual feeling qualifies for spiritual communication, and spiritual communication increases spiritual feeling.

Thus God's Holy Spirit first subdues and quickens human hearts, and then dwells in them as the sanctifier, the comforter, the Paraclete, the inspirer of all gracious processes, of all holy attainments, of all worship, and prayer, and fellowship ; changing our bias, spiritualising our affections, helping our infirmities, renewing us day by day, filling us with "joy in the Holy Ghost," "bearing witness with our spirits that we are sons of God ;" and our very self—our love, our energy, our consecration—goes up as "a living sacrifice." It is the truest, greatest, most wonderful of Christian teachings. Both in its philosophy and its suitableness, this doctrine of the Holy Spirit is profoundly true to all our notions of life and of its processes.

This, according to the apostle, ought to inspire reverence even for the body ; elsewhere he calls its members "members of Christ." Here, they are "the temple of the Holy Ghost." This we are to keep holy ; no fleshly lust, no unholy use may desecrate it ; no altar to Mammon or to selfishness may be erected in it ; strange fires may not burn upon God's altar ; no unclean thing may be offered in sacrifice ; lest we "grieve," or "provoke," or even "quench" the Spirit of God who dwelleth in us.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXX.

PERHAPS it was almost a relief both to Frithiof and to Sigrid that, just at this time, all intercourse with Rowan-Tree House should become impossible. Lance and Gwen had sickened with scarlatina, and, of course, all communication was at an end for some time to come; it would have been impossible that things should have gone on as before after Frithiof's trouble; he was far too proud to permit such a thing, though the Bonifaces would have done their best utterly to forget what had happened. It would moreover have been difficult for Sigrid to fall back into her former position of familiar friendship after her last interview with Roy. So that, perhaps, the only person who sighed over the separation was Cecil, and she was fortunately kept so busy by her little patients that she had not time to think much of the future. Whenever the thought did cross her mind—"How is all this going to end?"—such miserable perplexity seized her that she was glad to turn back to the present, which, however painful, was at any rate endurable. But the strain of that secret anxiety, and the physical fatigue of nursing the two children, began to tell on her, she felt worn and old, and the look that always frightened Mrs. Boniface came back to her face—the look that made the poor mother think of the two graves in Norwood Cemetery.

By the middle of August Lance and Gwen had recovered, and were taken down to the seaside, while Rowan-Tree House was delivered into the hands of the painters and whitewashers to be thoroughly disinfected. But in spite of lovely weather that summer's holiday proved a very dreary one. Roy was in the depths of depression, and it seemed to Cecil that a great shadow had fallen upon everything.

"Robin," said Mrs. Boniface, "I want you to take that child to Switzerland for a month; this place is doing her no good at all. She wants change and mountain air."

So the father and mother plotted and planned, and in September Cecil, much against her will, was packed off to Switzerland to see snow-mountains, and waterfalls, when all the time she would far rather have been seeing the prosaic heights of the model lodging-houses, and the dull London streets. Still,

being a sensible girl, she did her best with what was put before her, and, though her mind was a good deal with Sigrid and Frithiof in their trouble and anxiety, yet physically she gained great good from the tour, and came back with a colour in her cheeks which satisfied her mother.

"By-the-bye, dearie," remarked Mrs. Boniface the day after her return, "your father thought you would like to hear the *Elijah* to-night at the Albert Hall, and he has left you two tickets."

"Why, Albani is singing, is she not?" cried Cecil. "Oh, yes; I should like to go of all things!"

"Then I tell you what we will do; we will send a card and ask Mrs. Horner to go with you, for it's the Church meeting to-night, and father and I do not want to miss it."

Cecil could make no objection to this, though her pleasure was rather damped by the prospect of having Mrs. Horner as her companion. There was little love lost between them, for the innate refinement of the one jarred upon the innate vulgarity of the other, and *vice versa*.

It was a little after seven o'clock when Cecil drove to the Horners' house and was ushered into the very gorgeous drawing-room. It was empty, and by a sort of instinct which she could never resist, she crossed over to the fireplace and gazed up at the clock, which ever since her childhood had by its ugliness attracted her much as a moth is attracted to a candle. It was a huge clock with a little white face and a great golden rock, upon which golden pigs browsed, with a golden swineherd in attendance.

"My dear," exclaimed Mrs. Horner, entering with a perturbed face, "did not my letter reach you in time? I made sure it would. The fact is, I am not feeling quite up to going out to-night. Could you find any one else, do you think, who would go with you?"

Cecil thought for a moment.

"Sigrid would have liked it, but I know she is too busy just now," she remarked.

"And, oh, my dear, far better go alone than take Miss Falck!" said Mrs. Horner. "I shall never forget what I endured when I took her with me to hear Corney Grain; she laughed aloud, my dear; laughed till she

positively cried; and even went so far as to clap her hands. It makes me hot to think of it even."

Mrs. Horner belonged to that rather numerous section of English people who think that it is a sign of good breeding to show no emotion. She had at one time been rather taken by Sigrid's charming manner, but the Norwegian girl was far too simple and unaffected, far too spontaneous, to remain long in Mrs. Horner's good books; she had no idea of enjoying things in a placid, conventional, semi-bored way, and her clear, ringing laugh was in itself an offence. Mrs. Horner herself never gave more than a polite smile, or at times, when her powers of restraint were too much taxed, a sort of uncomfortable gurgle in her throat, with compressed lips, which gallantly tried to strangle her unseemly mirth.

"I always enjoy going anywhere with Sigrid," said Cecil, who, gentle as she was, would never consent to be over-ridden by Mrs. Horner. "It seems to me that her wonderful faculty for enjoying everything is very much to be envied. However, there is no chance of her going to-night; I will call and see whether one of the Greenwoods is disengaged."

So with hasty farewells she went off, laughing to herself as the cab rattled along to think of Mrs. Horner's discomfort and Sigrid's intense appreciation of Corney Grain. Fate, however, seemed to be against her; her friends the Greenwoods were out for the evening, and there was nothing left for it but to drive home again, or else to go in alone and trust to finding Roy afterwards. To sacrifice her chance of hearing the *Elijah* with Albani as soprano merely to satisfy Mrs. Grundy was too much for Cecil. She decided to go alone, and writing a few words on a card asking Roy to come to her at the end of the oratorio, she sent it to the *artistes'* room by one of the attendants, and settled herself down to enjoy the music, secretly rather glad to have an empty chair instead of Mrs. Horner beside her.

All at once the colour rushed to her cheeks, for, looking up, she saw Frithiof crossing the platform; she watched him place the score on the conductor's desk, and turn to answer the question of some one in the orchestra, then disappear again within the swing-doors leading to the back regions. She wondered much what he was thinking of as he went through his prosaic duties so rapidly, wondered if his mind was away in Norway all the time—whether autumn had brought to

him, as she knew it generally did, the strong craving for his old life of adventure—the longing to handle a gun once more; or whether perhaps his trouble had overshadowed even that, and whether he was thinking instead of that baffling mystery which had caused them all so much pain. And all through the oratorio she seemed to be hearing everything with his ears; wondering how the choruses would strike him, or hoping that he was in a good place for hearing Albani's exquisite rendering of "Hear ye Israel." She wondered a little that Roy did not come to her, or, at any rate, send her some message, and at the end of the last chorus began to feel a little anxious and uncomfortable. At last, to her great relief, she saw Frithiof coming towards her.

"Your brother has never come," he said in reply to her greeting. "I suppose this fog must have hindered him, for he told me he should be here; and I have been expecting him every moment."

"Is the fog so bad as all that?" said Cecil rather anxiously.

"It was very bad when I came," said Frithiof. "However, by good luck, I managed to grope my way to Portland Road, and came down by the Metropolitan. Will you let me see you home?"

"Thank you, but it is so dreadfully out of your way. I should be very glad if you would, only it is troubling you so much."

Something in her eager yet half-shy welcome, and in the sense that she was one of the very few who really believed in him, filled Frithiof with a happiness which he could scarcely have explained to himself.

"You will be giving me a very great pleasure," he said. "I expect there will be a rush on the trains. Shall we try for a cab?"

So they walked out together into the dense fog, Cecil with a biased sense of confidence in the man who piloted her so adroitly through the crowd, and seemed so astonishingly cool and indifferent amid the perilous confusion of wheels and hoofs, which always appeared in the quarter where one least expected them.

At last, after much difficulty, Frithiof secured a hansom, and put her into it. She was secretly relieved that he got in too.

"I will come back with you if you will allow me," he said; "for I am not quite sure whether this is not a more dangerous part of the adventure than when we were on foot. I never saw such a fog! Why, we can't even see the horse, much less where he is going."

"How thankful I am that you were here! It would have been dreadful all alone," said Cecil; and she explained to him how Mrs. Horner had failed her at the last moment.

He made no comment, but in his heart he was glad that both Mrs. Horner and Roy should have proved faithless and that the duty of seeing Cecil home had devolved upon him.

"You have not met my mother since she came back from the sea," said Cecil. "Are you still afraid of infection? The house has been thoroughly painted and fumigated."

"Oh, it is not that," said Frithiof; "but while this cloud is still over me, I can't come. You do not realise how it affects everything."

Perhaps she realised much more than he fancied, but she only said,

"It does not affect your own home."

"No, that's true," said Frithiof. "It has made me value that more, and it has made me value your friendship more. But, you see, you are the only one at Rowan-Tree House who still believes in me; and how you manage to do it passes my comprehension—when there is nothing to prove me innocent."

"None of the things which we believe in most can be absolutely proved," said Cecil. "I can't logically justify my belief in you any more than in our old talks I could justify my belief in the unseen world."

"Do you remember that first Sunday when I was staying with you, and you asked me whether I had found a Norwegian church?"

"Yes, very well. It vexed me so much to have said anything about it; but you see, I had always lived with people who went to church or chapel as regularly as they took their meals."

"Well, do you know I was wrong; there is a Norwegian church down near the Commercial Docks at Rotherhithe."

And then, lured on by her unspoken sympathy, and favoured by the darkness, he told her of the strong influence which the familiar old chorale had had upon him, and how it had carried him back to the time of his confirmation—that time which to all Norwegians is full of deep meaning and intense reality, so that even in the indifference of later years and the fogs of doubt which pain and trouble conjure up, its memory still lingers, ready to be touched into life at the very first opportunity.

"It is too far for Sigrid and Swanhild to go very often, but to me it is like a bit of

Norway planted down in this great wilderness of houses," he said. "It was strange that I should have happened to come across it so unexpectedly just at the time when I most needed it."

"But that surely is what always happens," said Cecil. "When we really need a thing we get it."

"You learnt before I did to distinguish between needing and wanting," said Frithiof. "It comes to some people easily, I suppose. But I, you see, had to lose everything before understanding—to lose even my reputation for common honesty. Even now it seems to me hardly possible that life should go on under such a cloud as that. Yet the days pass somehow, and I believe that it was this trouble which drove me to what I really needed."

"It is good of you to tell me this," said Cecil. "It seems to put a meaning into this mystery which is always puzzling me and seeming so useless and unjust. By-the-bye, Roy tells me that Darnell has left."

"Yes," said Frithiof, "he left at Michaelmas. Things have been rather smoother since then."

"I can't help thinking that his leaving just now is indirect evidence against him," said Cecil. "Sigrid and I suspected him from the first. Do not you suspect him?"

"Yes," he replied, "I do. But without any reason."

"Why did he go?"

"His wife was ill, and was ordered to a warmer climate. He has taken a situation at Plymouth. After all, there is no real evidence against him, and a great deal of evidence against me. How is it that you suspect him?"

"It is because I know you had nothing to do with it," said Cecil.

He had guessed what her answer would be, yet loved to hear her say the words.

It seemed to him that the dense fog, and the long drive at foot pace, and the anxiety to see the right way, and the manifold difficulties and dangers of this night, resembled his own life. And then it struck him how tedious the drive would have been to him but for Cecil's presence, and he saw how great a difference her trust and friendship made to him. He had always liked her, but now gratitude and reverence woke a new feeling in his heart. Blanche's faithlessness had so crippled his life that no thought of love in the ordinary sense of the word—of love culminating in marriage—came to his mind. But yet his heart went out to Cecil,

and a new influence crept into his life—an influence that softened his hardness, that quieted his feverish impatience, that strengthened him to endure.

"Sigrid and Swanhild have been away with Mme. Lechertier, have they not?" asked Cecil, after a silence.

"Yes, they went to Hastings for a fortnight. We shut up the rooms, and I went down to Herr Sivertsen, who was staying near Warlingham, a charming little place in the Surrey hills."

"Sigrid told me you were with him, but I fancied she meant in London."

"No; once a year he tears himself from his dingy den in Museum Street, and goes down to this place. We were out of doors most of the day, and in the evening worked for four or five hours at a translation of Darwin which he is very anxious to get finished. *Hullo! what is wrong?*"

He might well ask, for the horse was kicking and plunging violently. Shouts and oaths echoed through the murky darkness. Then they could just make out the outline of another horse at right angles with their own. He was almost upon them, struggling frantically, and the shaft of the cab belonging to him would have struck Cecil violently in the face had not Frithiof seized it and wrenched it away with all his force. Then, suddenly the horse was dragged backwards, their hansom shivered, reeled, and finally fell on its side.

Cecil's heart beat fast, she turned deadly white, just felt in the horrible moment of falling a sense of relief when Frithiof threw his arm around her and held her fast; then for an interval realised nothing at all, so stunning was the violence with which they came to the ground. Apparently both the cabs had gone over and were lying in an extraordinary entanglement, while both horses seemed to be still on their feet, to judge by the sounds of kicking and plunging. The danger was doubled by the blinding fog, which made it impossible to realise where one might expect hoofs.

"Are you hurt?" asked Frithiof anxiously.

"No," replied Cecil, gasping for breath. "Only shaken. How are we to get out?"

He lifted her away from him and managed with some difficulty to scramble up. Then, before she had time to think of the peril, he had taken her in his arms and, rashly perhaps but very dexterously, carried her out of danger. Had she not trusted him so entirely it would have been a dreadful minute to her; and even as it was she

turned sick and giddy as she was lifted up, and heard hoofs in perilous proximity, and felt Frithiof cautiously stepping out into that darkness that might be felt, and swaying a little beneath her weight.

"Won't you put me down?—I am too heavy for you," she said. But, even as she spoke, she felt him shake with laughter at the idea.

"I could carry you for miles now that we are safely out of the wreck," he said. "Here is a curb stone, and—yes, by good luck, the steps of a house. Now, shall we ring up the people and ask them to shelter you while I just lend a hand with the cab?"

"No, no, it is so late, I will wait here. Take care you don't get hurt."

He disappeared into the fog and she understood him well enough to know that he would keenly enjoy the difficulty of getting matters straight again.

"I think accidents agree with you," she said laughingly when by-and-by he came back to her, seeming unusually cheerful.

"I can't help laughing now to think of the ridiculous way in which both cabs went down and both horses stood up," he said. "It is wonderful that more damage was not done. We all seem to have escaped with bruises, and nothing is broken except the shafts."

"Let us walk home now," said Cecil. "Does any one know whereabouts we are?"

"The driver says it is Battersea Bridge Road, some way from Rowan-Tree House, you see, but if you would not be too tired it would certainly be better not to stay for another cab."

So they set off and, with much difficulty, at length groped their way to Brixton, not getting home till long after midnight. At the door Frithiof said good-bye, and for the first time since the accident Cecil remembered his trouble; in talking of many things she had lost sight of it, but now it came back to her with a swift pang all the harder to bear because of the happiness of the last half-hour.

"You must not go back without resting and having something to eat," she said pleadingly.

"You are very kind," he replied, "but I cannot come in."

"But I shall be so unhappy about you if you go all that long way back without food; come in, if it is only to please me."

Something in her tone touched him, and at that moment the door was opened by Mr. Boniface himself.

"Why, Cecil," he cried. "We have been quite anxious about you."

"Frithiof saw me home because of the fog," she explained. "And our hansom was overturned at Battersea, so we have had to walk from there. Please ask Frithiof to come in, father, we are so dreadfully cold and hungry, yet he will insist on going straight home."

"It's not to be thought of," said Mr. Boniface. "Come in, come in, I never saw such a fog."

So once more Frithiof found himself in the familiar house which always seemed so homelike to him, and for the first time since his disgrace he shook hands with Mrs. Boniface; she was kindness itself, and yet somehow the meeting was painful and Frithiof wished himself once more in the foggy streets. Cecil seemed intuitively to know how he felt, for she talked fast and gaily as though to fill up the sense of something wanting which was oppressing him.

"I am sure we are very grateful to you," said Mrs. Boniface when she had heard all about the adventure, and his rescue of Cecil. "I can't think what Cecil would have done without you. As for Roy, finding it so foggy and having a bad headache, he came home early and is now gone to bed. But come in and get warm by the fire. I don't know why we are all standing in the hall."

She led the way into the drawing-room, and Cecil gave a cry of astonishment, for, standing on the hearth-rug was a little figure in a red dressing-gown, looking very much like a wooden Noah in a toy ark.

"Why, Lance," she cried, "you up at this time of night!"

The little fellow flew to meet her and clung round her neck.

"I really couldn't exackly help crying," he said, "for I couldn't keep the tears out of my eyes."

"He woke up a few minutes ago," said Mrs. Boniface, "and finding your bed empty thought that something dreadful had happened to you, and as nurse was asleep I brought him down here, for he was so cold and frightened."

By this time Lance had released Cecil and was clinging to Frithiof.

"Gwen and me's been ill," he said proudly, "and I've grown a whole inch since you were here last. My throat doesn't hurten me now at all."

The happy unconsciousness of the little fellow seemed to thaw Frithiof at once, the wretched five-pound note ceased to haunt

him as he sat with Lance on his knee, and he ate without much thought the supper that he had fancied would choke him. For Lance, who was faithful to his old friends, entirely refused to leave him, but serenely ate biscuits and begged stray sips of his hot cocoa, his merry childish talk filling up the gaps in a wonderful way and setting them all at their ease.

"Had you not better stay here for the night?" said Mrs. Boniface, presently. "I can't bear to think of your having that long walk through the fog."

"You are very kind," he said, "but Sigrid would be frightened if I didn't turn up," and, kissing Lance, he set him down on the hearthrug and rose to go. Cecil's thanks and warm handclasp lingered with him pleasantly, and he set out on his walk home all the better for his visit to Rowan-Tree House.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HAD it not been for the fog his long walk might have made him sleepy, but the necessity of keeping every faculty on the alert and of sharply watching every crossing and every landmark made that out of the question. Moreover, now that he had quite recovered from his illness it took a great deal to tire him, and, whenever he did succumb, it was to mental worry, never to physical fatigue. So he tramped along pretty cheerfully, rather enjoying the novelty of the thing, but making as much haste as he could on account of Sigrid. He had just reached the outer door of the model lodgings and was about to unlock it with the key which was always furnished to those whose work detained them beyond the hour of closing, when he was startled by something that sounded like a sob close by him. He paused and listened; it came again.

"Who is there?" he said, straining his eyes to pierce the thick curtain of fog that hung before him.

The figure of a woman approached him.

"Oh, sir," she said, checking her sobs.

"Have you the key, and can you let me in?"

"Yes, I have a key. Do you live here?"

"No, sir, but I'm sister to Mrs. Hallifield. Perhaps you know Hallifield, the tram conductor. I came to see him to-night because he was taken so ill, but I got hindered setting out again and didn't allow time to get back to Macdougals. I'm in his shop, and the rule at his boarding-houses is that the door is closed at eleven and mayn't be opened any more, and when I got there, sir, being

hindered with the fog, it was five minutes past."

"And they wouldn't let you in?" asked Frithiof. "What an abominable thing—the man ought to be ashamed of himself for having such a rule! Come in; why you must be half frozen! I know your sister quite well."

"I can never thank you enough," said the poor girl. "I thought I should have had to stay out all night! There's a light, I see, in the window; my brother-in-law is worse, I expect."

"What is wrong with him?" asked Frithiof.

"Oh, he's been failing this long time," said the girl; "it's the long hours of the trams he's dying of. There's never any rest for them you see, sir; winter and summer, Sunday and week-day they have to drudge on. He's a kind husband and a good father too, and he will go on working for the sake of keeping the home together, but it's little of the home he sees when he has to be away from it sixteen hours every day. They say they're going to give more holidays and shorter hours, but there's a long time spent in talking of things, it seems to me, and in the meanwhile John's dying."

Frithiof remembered how Sigrid had mentioned this very thing to him in the summer when he had told her of his disgrace; he had been too full of his own affairs to heed her much, but now his heart grew hot at the thought of this pitiable waste of human life, this grinding out of a larger dividend at the cost of such terrible suffering. It was a sign that his new life had actually begun when, instead of merely railing at the injustice of the world, he began to think what he himself could do in this matter.

"Perhaps they will want the doctor fetched. I will come with you to the door and you shall just see," he said.

And the girl, thanking him, knocked at her sister's door, spoke to some one inside, and returning, asked him to come in. To his surprise he found Sigrid in the little kitchen; she was walking to and fro with the baby, a sturdy little fellow of a year old.

"You are back at last," she said, "I was getting quite anxious about you. Mr. Hallifield was taken so much worse to-day, and hearing the baby crying I came in to help."

"How about the doctor? Do they want him fetched?"

"No, he came here about ten o'clock, and he says there is nothing to be done; it is only a question of hours now."

At this moment the poor wife came into the kitchen, she was still quite young, and the dumb anguish in her face brought the tears to Sigrid's eyes.

"What, Clara!" she exclaimed, perceiving her sister, "you back again!"

"I was too late," said the girl, "and they had locked me out. But it's no matter now that the gentleman has let me in here. Is John worse again?"

"He'll not last long," said the wife, "and he be that set on getting in here to the fire, for he's mortal cold. But I doubt if he's strength to walk so far."

"Frithiof, you could help him in," said Sigrid.

"Will you, sir? I'll thank you kindly if you will," said Mrs. Hallifield, leading the way to the bedroom.

Frithiof followed her, and glancing towards the bed could hardly control the awed surprise which seized him as for the first time he saw a man upon whom the shadow of death had already fallen. Once or twice he had met Hallifield in the passage setting off to his work in the early morning, and he contrasted his recollection of the brisk, fair-complexioned, respectable-looking conductor, and this man propped up with pillows, his face drawn with pain, and of that ghastly ashen hue which is death's herald.

"The Norwegian gentleman is here, and will help you into the kitchen, John," said the wife, beginning to swathe him in blankets.

"Thank you, sir," said the man gratefully. "It's just a fancy I've got to die in there by the fire, though I doubt I'll never get warm any more."

Frithiof carried him in gently and set him down in a cushioned chair drawn close to the fire; he seemed pleased by the change of scene, and looked round the tidy little room with brightening eyes.

"It's a nice little place!" he said. "I wish I could think you would keep it together, Bessie, but with the four children you'll have a hard struggle to live."

For the first time she broke down and hid her face in her apron. A look of keen pain passed over the face of the dying man, he clenched and unclenched his hands. But Sigrid who was rocking the baby on the other side of the hearth, bent forward and spoke to him soothingly.

"Don't you trouble about that part of it," she said. "We will be her friends. Though we are poor yet there are many ways in which we can help her, and I know a lady who will never let her want."

He thanked her with a gratitude that was pathetic.

"I'm in a burial club," he said after a pause, stretching out his nerveless fingers towards the fire, "she'll have no expenses that way; they'll bury me very handsome, which'll be a satisfaction to her, poor girl. I've often thought of it when I saw a well-to-do looking funeral pass alongside the tram, but I never thought it would come as soon as this. I'm only going in thirty-five, which isn't no great age for a man."

"The work was too much for you," said Frithiof.

"Yes, sir, it's the truth you speak, and there's many another in the same boat along with me. It's a cruel hard life. But then, you see, I was making my four-and-six a day, and if I gave up I knew it meant starvation for the wife and the children; there is thousands out of work, and that makes a man think twice before giving in—spite of the long hours."

"And he did get six shillings a day at one time," said the wife looking up, "but the company's cruel hard, sir, and just because he had a twopence in his money and no ticket to account for its being there they lowered him down to four-and-six again."

"Yes, that did seem to me hard, I'll not deny, I swore a bit that day," said Hallifield. "But the company never treats us like men, it treats us like slaves. They might have known me to be honest and careful, but it seems as if they downright liked to catch a fellow tripping, and while that's so there's many that'll do their best to cheat."

"But is nothing being done to shorten the hours, to make people understand how frightful they are?" asked Sigrid.

"Oh, yes, miss, there's Mrs. Reaney working with all her might for us," said Hallifield. "But you see folks are hard to move, and if we had only the dozen hours a day that we ought to have and every other Sunday at home, why, miss, they'd perhaps not get nine per cent. on their money as they do now."

"They are no better than murderers!" said Frithiof hotly.

"Well," said Hallifield, "so it has seemed to me sometimes. But I never set up to know much; I've had no time for book-learning, nor for religion either, barely time for eating and sleeping. I don't think God Almighty will be hard on a fellow that has done his best to keep his wife and children in comfort, and I'll not complain if only

He'll just let me sit still and do nothing for a bit, for I'm mortal tired."

He had been talking eagerly, and for the time his strength had returned to him, but now his head dropped forward, and his hands clutched convulsively at the blankets.

With a great cry the poor wife started forward and flung her arms round him.

"He's going!" she sobbed. "He's going! John—oh, John!"

"Nine per cent. on their money!" thought Frithiof. "My God! if they could but see this!"

* * * * *

By-and-by, when he had done all that he could to help, he went back to his own room, leaving Sigrid still with the poor widow. The scene had made a deep impression on him, he had never before seen anyone die, and the thought of poor Hallifield's pathetic confession that he had had no time for anything, but the toil of living, returned to him again and again.

"That is a death-bed that ought not to have been," he reflected. "It came from the hateful struggle for wealth. Yet the shareholders are no worse than the rest of the world, 't is only that they don't think, or if they do think for a time, allow themselves to be persuaded that the complaints are exaggerated. How easily men let themselves be hoodwinked by vague statements and comfortable assurances when they want to be persuaded, when it is to their own interest to let things go on as before!"

And then, quite unable to sleep, he lay thinking of the great problems which had so often haunted him, the sharp contrasts between too great wealth and too great poverty, the unequal chances in life, the grinding competition, the ineffable sadness of the world. But his thoughts were no longer tainted by bitterness and despair, because, though he could not see a purpose in all the great mysteries of life, yet he trusted One who had a purpose, One who in the end must overcome all evil, and he knew that he himself was bound to live and could live a life which should help towards that great end.

Three days later poor Hallifield's "handsome funeral" set out from the door of the model lodgings, and Frithiof, who had given up his half-holiday to go down to the cemetery, listened to the words of the beautiful service, thinking to himself how improbable it was that the tram-conductor had ever had the chance of hearing St. Paul's teaching on the resurrection.

Was there not something wrong in a system which should so tire out a man that the summit of his wishes on his dying day should be but an echo of the overworked woman whose epitaph ended with—

"I'm going to do nothing for ever and ever"!

How could this great evil of the overwork of the many, and the too great leisure of the few, be set right? A socialism which should compulsorily reduce all to one level would be worse than useless. Love of freedom was too thoroughly ingrained in his Norse nature to tolerate that idea for a moment. He desired certain radical reforms with his whole heart, but he saw that they alone would not suffice—nothing but individual love, nothing but the consciousness of individual responsibility could really put an end to the misery and injustice of the present system. In a word, the only true remedy was the life of Sonship.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ONE December day another conclave was held in Mr. Boniface's private room. Mr. Boniface himself sat with his arm-chair turned round towards the fire, and on his pleasant, genial face there was a slight cloud, for he much disliked the prospect of the discussion before him. Mr. Horner stood with his back to the mantelpiece, looking even more pompous and conceited than usual, and Roy sat at the writing-table, listening attentively to what passed, and relieving his feelings by savagely digging his pen into the blotting-pad, to the great detriment of its point.

"It is high time we came to an understanding on this matter," Mr. Horner was saying. "Do you fully understand that when I have once said a thing I keep to it? Either that Norwegian must go, or when the day comes for renewing our partnership I leave this place never to re-enter it."

"I do not wish to have any quarrel with you about the matter," said Mr. Boniface. "But I shall certainly not part with Falck. To send him away now would be most cruel and unjustifiable."

"It would be nothing of the sort," retorted Mr. Horner hotly. "It would be merely following the dictates of common-sense and fairness."

"This is precisely the point on which you and I do not agree," said Mr. Boniface with dignity.

"It is not only his dishonesty that has set me against him," continued Mr. Horner. "It is his impertinent indifference, his in-

sufferable manner when I order him to do anything."

"I have never myself found him anything but a perfect gentleman," said Mr. Boniface.

"Gentleman! Oh! I've no patience with all that tomfoolery! I want none of your gentlemen; I want a shopman who knows his place and can answer with proper deference."

"You do not understand the Norse nature," said Roy. "Now here in the newspaper, this very day, is a good sample of it." He unfolded the morning paper eagerly and read them the following lines, taking a wicked delight in the thought of how it would strike home:—

"Their noble simplicity and freedom of manners bear witness that they have never submitted to the yoke of a conqueror, or to the rod of a petty feudal lord; a peasantry at once so kind-hearted, so truly humble and religious, and yet so nobly proud, where pride is a virtue, who resent any wanton affront to their honour or dignity. As an instance of this, it may be mentioned that a naturalist, on finding that his hired peasant companions had not done their work of dredging to his satisfaction, scolded them in violent and abusive language. The men did not seem to take the slightest notice of his scolding. 'How can you stand there so stupidly and apathetically, as though the matter did not concern you?' said he, still more irritated. 'It is because we think, sir, that such language is only a sign of bad breeding,' replied an unawed son of the mountains, whom even poverty could not strip of the consciousness of his dignity."

"You insult me by reading such trash," said Mr. Horner, all the more irritated because he knew that Roy had truth on his side, and that he had often spoken to Frithiof abusively. "But if you like to keep this thief in your employ—"

"Excuse me, but I cannot let that expression pass," said Mr. Boniface. "No one having the slightest knowledge of Frithiof Falck could believe him guilty of dishonesty."

"Well, then, this lunatic with a mania for taking money that belongs to other people—this son of a bankrupt, this designing foreigner—if you insist on keeping him I withdraw my capital and retire. I am aware that it is a particularly inconvenient time to withdraw money from the business, but that is your affair. 'As you have brewed so you must drink.'"

"It may put me to some slight inconvenience," said Mr. Boniface. "But as far as

I am concerned I shall gladly submit to that rather than go against my conscience with regard to Falck. What do you say, Roy?"

"I am quite at one with you, father," replied Roy, with a keen sense of enjoyment in the thought of so quietly baffling James Horner's malicious schemes.

"This designing fellow has made you both his dupes," said Mr. Horner furiously. "Some day you'll repent of this and see that I was right."

No one replied, and with an exclamation of impatient disgust, James Horner took up his hat and left the room effectually checkmated. Frithiof, happening to glance up from his desk as the angry man strode through the shop, received so furious a glance that he at once realised what must have passed in the private room. It was not, however, until closing time that he could speak alone with Roy, but the moment they were out in the street he turned to him with an eager question.

"What happened to Mr. Horner today?"

"He heard a discourse on the Norwegian character which happened to be in the *Daily News* by good luck," said Roy smiling. "By the-by it will amuse you, take it home."

And drawing the folded paper from his coat pocket, he handed it to Frithiof.

"He gave me such a furious glance as he passed by, that I was sure something had annoyed him," said Frithiof.

"Never mind, it is the last you will have from him," said Roy, rubbing his hands with satisfaction. "He has vowed that he will never darken our doors again. Think what a reign of peace will set in."

"He has really retired then?" said Frithiof. "I was afraid it must be so. I can't stand it, Roy; I can't let you make such a sacrifice for me."

"Sacrifice? stuff and nonsense!" said Roy, cheerfully. "I have not felt so free and comfortable for an age. We shall be well rid of the old bore."

"But his capital?"

"Goes away with him," said Roy; "it will only be a slight inconvenience, probably he will hurt himself far more than he hurts us, and serve him right too. If there's a man on earth I detest it is my worthy cousin James Horner."

Frithiof naturally shared this sentiment, yet still he felt very sorry that Mr. Horner had kept his word and left the firm, for all through the autumn he had been hoping that he might relent and that his bark would

prove worse than his bite. The sense of being under such a deep obligation to the Bonifaces was far from pleasant to him; however, there seemed no help for it, and he could only balance it against the great relief of being free from James Horner's continual provocations.

Later in the evening, when supper was over, he went round to see Herr Sivertsen about some fresh work, and on returning to the model lodgings found Swanhild alone.

"Where is Sigrid?" he asked.

"She has gone in to see the Hallifields," replied the little girl, glancing up from the newspaper which she was reading.

"You look like the picture of Mother Hubbard's dog that Lance is so fond of," he said smiling. "Your English must be getting on or you wouldn't care for the *Daily News*. Are you reading the praises of the Norse character?"

As he spoke he leant over her shoulder to look at the letter which Roy had mentioned; but Swanhild had turned to the inner sheet and was deep in what seemed to her strangely interesting questions and answers continued down three columns. A hurried glance at the beginning showed Frithiof in large type the words, "THE ROMIAUX DIVORCE CASE."

He tore the paper away from her, crushed it in his hands, and threw it straight into the fire. Swanhild looked up in sudden panic, terrified beyond measure by his white face and flashing eyes, terrified still more by the unnatural tone in his voice when he spoke.

"You are never to read such things," he said vehemently. "Do you understand? I am your guardian and I forbid you."

"It was only that I wanted to know about Blanche," said Swanhild, conscious that in some way she could not explain he was unjust to her.

But unluckily the mention of Blanche's name was just the one thing that Frithiof could not bear, he lost his self-control. "Don't begin to argue," he said fiercely. "You ought to have known better than to read that poisonous stuff! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

This was more than Swanhild could endure; with a sense of intolerable injury she left the parlour, locked herself into her bedroom, and cried as if her heart would break, taking good care, however, to stifle her sobs in the pillow, since she too had her full share of the national pride.

"It is ungenerous of him to hate poor Blanche so," she thought to herself. "What-

ever she has done I shall always love her—always. And he had no right to speak so to me, it was unfair—unfair! I didn't know it was wrong to read the paper. Father would never have scolded me for it."

And in this she was quite right; only a very inexperienced "guardian" could have made so great a mistake as to reproach her and hold her to blame for quite innocently touching pitch. Perhaps even Frithiof might have been wiser had not the sudden shock and the personal pain of the discovery thrown him off his balance.

When Sigrid returned in a few minutes she found him pacing the room as restlessly as any wild beast at the Zoo.

"Frithiof," she said, "what is the matter with you? Have you and Herr Sivertsen had a quarrel?"

"The matter is this," he said hoarsely, checking his restlessness with an effort and leaning against the mantelpiece as he talked to her. "I came back just now and found Swanhild reading the newspaper—reading the Romiaux Divorce Case, thoroughly fascinated by it too."

"I had no idea it had begun," said Sigrid. "We so seldom see an English paper, how did this one happen to be lying about?"

"Roy gave it to me to look at an account of Norway; I didn't know this was in it too. However, I gave Swanhild a scolding that she'll not soon forget."

Sigrid looked up anxiously, asking what he had said, and listening with great dissatisfaction to his reply.

"You did very wrong indeed," she said warmly. "You forget that Swanhild is perfectly innocent and ignorant, you have wronged her very cruelly, and she will feel that though she won't understand it."

Now Frithiof, although he was proud and hasty, was neither ungenerous nor conceited; as soon as he had cooled down and looked at the question from this point of view, he saw at once that he had been wrong.

"I will go to her and beg her pardon," he said at length.

"No, no, not just yet," said Sigrid, with the feeling that men were too clumsy for this sort of work. "Leave her to me."

She rapped softly at the bedroom door, and after a minute's pause heard the key turned in the lock. When she entered the room was quite dark, and Swanhild, with her face turned away, was vigorously washing her hands. Sigrid began to hunt for some imaginary need in her box, waiting till the hands were dry before she touched on the

sore subject. But presently she plunged boldly into the heart of the matter.

"Swanhild," she said, "you are crying."

"No," said the child, driving back the tears that started again to her eyes at this direct assertion, and struggling hard to make her voice cheerful.

But Sigrid put her arm round her waist and drew her close.

"Frithiof told me all about it, and I think he made a great mistake in scolding you. Don't think any more about it."

But this was more than human nature could possibly promise; all that she had read assumed now a tenfold importance to the child. She clung to Sigrid, sobbing piteously.

"He said I ought to be ashamed of myself, but I didn't know—I really didn't know."

"That was his great mistake," said Sigrid quietly. "Now, if he had found me reading that report he might justly have reproached me, for I am old enough to know better. You see, poor Blanche has done what is very wrong, she has broken her promise to her husband and brought misery and disgrace on all who belong to her. But to pry into all the details of such sad stories does outsiders a great deal of harm; and now you have been told that, I am sure you will never want to read them again."

This speech restored poor little Swanhild's self-respect, but nevertheless Sigrid noticed in her face all through the evening a look of perplexity which made her quite wretched. And though Frithiof was all anxiety to make up for his hasty scolding, the look still remained, nor did it pass the next day; even the excitement of dancing the shawl dance with all the pupils looking on, did not drive it away, and Sigrid began to fear that the affair had done the child serious harm. Her practical, unimaginative nature could not altogether understand Swanhild's dreamy, pensive tendencies. She herself loved one or two people heartily, but she had no ideals, nor was she given to hero-worship. Swanhild's extravagant love for Blanche, a love so ardent and devoted that it had lasted more than two years in spite of every discouragement, was to her utterly incomprehensible; she was vexed that the child should spend so much on so worthless an object, it seemed to her wrong and unnatural that the love of that pure, innocent, little heart should be lavished on such a woman as Lady Romiaux. It was impossible for her to see how even this childish fancy was helping to mould Swanhild's character and fit her for her work

in the world ; still more impossible that she should guess how the child's love should influence Blanche herself and change the whole current of many lives.

But so it was ; and while the daily life went on in its usual grooves—Frithiof at the shop, Sigrid busy with the household work, playing at the academy, and driving away thoughts of Roy with the cares of other people—little Swanhild in desperation took the step which meant so much more than she understood.

It was Sunday afternoon. Frithiof had gone for a walk with Roy, and Sigrid had been carried off by Madame Lechertier for a drive. Swanhild was alone, and likely to be alone for some time to come. "It is now or never," she thought to herself ; and opening her desk, she drew from it a letter which she had written the day before, and read it through very carefully. It ran as follows:—

"DEAR SIR,—It says in your prayer-book that if any cannot quiet their conscience, but require comfort and counsel, they may come to any discreet and learned minister and open their grief, thus avoiding all scruple and doubtfulness. I am a Norwegian ; not a member of your church, but I have often heard you preach ; and will you please let me speak to you, for I am in a great trouble ?

"I am, sir, yours very truly,
"SWANHILD FALCK."

Feeling tolerably satisfied with this production, she enclosed it in an envelope, directed it to "The Rev. Charles Osmond, Guildford Square," put on her little black fur hat and her thick jacket and fur cape, and hurried downstairs, leaving the key with the doorkeeper, and making all speed in the direction of Bloomsbury.

Swanhild, though in some ways childish, as is usually the case with the youngest of the family, was in other respects a very capable little woman. She had been treated with respect and consideration, after the Norwegian custom ; she had been consulted in the affairs of the little home commonwealth ; and of course had been obliged to go to and from school alone every day, so she did not feel uncomfortable as she hastened along the quiet Sunday streets ; indeed, her mind was so taken up with the thought of the coming interview that she scarcely noticed the passers-by, and only paused once, when a little doubtful whether she was taking the nearest way, to ask the advice of a policeman.

At length she reached Guilford Square, and her heart began to beat fast and her colour to rise. All was very quiet here ; not a soul was stirring ; a mouldy-looking statue stood beneath the trees in the garden ; hospitals and institutions seemed to abound ; and Mr. Osmond's house was one of the few private houses still left in what, eighty years ago, had been a fashionable quarter.

Swanhild mounted the steps, and then, overcome with shyness, very nearly turned back and gave up her project ; however, though shy she was plucky, and making a valiant effort, she rang the bell, and waited trembling, half with fear, half with excitement.

The maid-servant who opened the door had such a pleasant face that she felt a little reassured.

"Is Mr. Osmond at home ?" she asked, in her very best English accent.

"Yes, miss," said the servant.

"Then will you please give him this," said Swanhild, handing in the neatly-written letter. "And I will wait for an answer."

She was shown into a dining-room, and after a few minutes the servant reappeared.

"Mr. Osmond will see you in the study, miss," she said.

And Swanhild, summoning up all her courage, followed her guide, her blue eyes very wide open, her cheeks very rosy, her whole expression so deprecating, so pathetic, that the veriest ogre could not have found it in his heart to be severe with her. She glanced up quickly, caught a glimpse of a comfortable room, a blazing fire, and a tall, white-haired, white-bearded man who stood on the hearth-rug. A look of astonishment and amusement just flitted over his face, then he came forward to meet her, and took her hand in his so kindly that Swanhild forgot all her fears, and at once felt at home with him.

"I am so glad to see you," he said, making her sit down in a big chair by the fire. "I have read your note, and shall be very glad if I can help you in any way. But wait a minute. Had you not better take off that fur cape, or you will catch cold when you go out again ?"

Swanhild obediently took it off.

"I didn't know," she said, "whether you heard confessions or not, but I want to make one if you do."

He smiled a little, but quite kindly.

"Well, in the ordinary sense I do not hear confessions," he said. "That is to say, I think the habit of coming regularly to con-

fession is a bad habit, weakening to the conscience and character of the one who confesses, and liable to abuse on the part of the one who hears the confession. But the words you quoted in your letter are words with which I quite agree, and if you have anything weighing on your mind and think that I can help you I am quite ready to listen."

Swanhild seemed a little puzzled by the very home-like and ordinary appearance of the study. She looked round uneasily.

"Well?" said Charles Osmond, seeing her bewildered look.

"I was wondering if people kneel down when they come to confession," said Swan-hild, with a simple directness which charmed him.

"Kneel down to talk to me!" he said, with a smile in his eyes. "Why, no, my child; why should you do that? Sit there by the fire and get warm, and try to make me understand clearly what is your difficulty."

"It is just this," said Swanhild, now entirely at her ease. "I want to know if it is ever right to break a promise."

"Certainly it is sometimes right," said Charles Osmond. "For instance, if you were to promise me faithfully to pick some one's pocket on your way home, you would be quite right to break a promise which you never had any right to make. Or if I were to say to you, 'On no account tell any one at your home that you have been here talking to me,' and you agreed, yet such a promise would rightly be broken, because no outsider has any right to come between you and your parents."

"My father and mother are dead," said Swanhild. "I live with my brother and sister, who are much older than I am—I mean really very old, you know—twenty-three. They are my guardians; and what troubles me is that last summer I did something and promised some one that I would never tell them, and now I am afraid I ought not to have done it."

"What makes you think that?"

"Well, ever since then there has seemed to be a difference at home, and, though I thought what I did would help Frithiof and Sigrid, and make every one happier, yet it seems to have somehow brought a cloud over the house. They have not spoken to me about it, but ever since then Frithiof has had such a sad look in his eyes."

"Was it anything wrong that you promised to do—anything that in itself was wrong, I mean?"

"Oh, no," said Swanhild; "the only thing that could have made it wrong was my doing it for this particular person."

"I am afraid I cannot follow you unless you tell me a little more definitely. To whom did you make this promise? To any one known to your brother and sister?"

"Yes, they both know her; we knew her in Norway, and she was to have married Frithiof; but when he came over to England he found her just going to be married to some one else. I think it was that which changed him so very much; but perhaps it was partly because at the same time we lost all our money."

"Do your brother and sister still meet this lady?"

"Oh, no; they never see her now, and never speak of her; Sigrid is so very angry with her because she did not treat Frithiof well. But I can't help loving her still, she is so very beautiful; and I think, perhaps, she is very sorry that she was so unkind to Frithiof."

"How did you come across her again?" asked Charles Osmond.

"Quite accidentally in the street, as I came home from school," said Swanhild. "She asked me so many questions and seemed so sorry to know that we were so very poor, and when she asked me to do this thing for her I only thought how kind she was, and I did it, and promised that I would never tell."

"She had no right to make you promise that, for probably your brother would not care for you still to know her, and certainly would not wish to be under any obligation to her."

"No; that was the reason why it was all to be a secret," said Swanhild. "And I never quite understood that it was wrong till the other day, when I was reading the newspaper about her, and Frithiof found me and was so very angry, and threw the paper in the fire."

"How did the lady's name happen to be in the paper?"

"Sigrid said it was because she had broken her promise to her husband; it was written in very big letters—'The Romiaux Divorce Case,'" said Swanhild.

Charles Osmond started. For some minutes he was quite silent. Then, his eyes falling once more on the wistful little face that was trying so hard to read his thoughts, he smiled very kindly.

"Do you know where Lady Romiaux is living?" he asked. But Swanhild had no

idea. "Well, never mind; I think I can easily find out, for I happen to know one of the barristers who was defending her. You had better, I think, sit down at my desk and write her just a few lines, asking her to release you from your promise; I will take it to her at once, and if you like you can wait here till I bring you back the answer."

"But that will be giving you so much trouble," said Swanhild, "and on Sunday, too, when you have so much to do."

He took out his watch.

"I shall have plenty of time," he said, "and if I am fortunate enough to find Lady Romiaux, you shall soon get rid of your trouble."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HAVING established Swanhild at the writing-table, Charles Osmond left her for a few minutes and went up to the drawing-room; it was one of those comfortable, old-fashioned rooms which one seldom sees now, and resting on the sofa was one of those old-world ladies whose sweet graciousness has such a charm to the more restless end of the nineteenth century. No less than four generations were represented in the room, for by the fire sat Charles Osmond's daughter-in-law, and on her knee was her baby son—the delight of the whole house.

"Erica," he said, coming towards the hearth, "strangely enough the very opportunity I wanted has come. I have been asked to see Lady Romiaux on a matter connected with some one who once knew her, so you see it is possible that after all your wish may come true, and I may be of some use to her."

Erica looked up eagerly, her face, which in repose was sad, brightened wonderfully.

"How glad I am, father! You know Donovan always said there was so much that was really good in her, if only some one could draw it out."

"How did the case end?" asked Mrs. Osmond.

"It ended in a disagreement of the jury," replied her son. "Why, I can't understand, for the evidence was utterly against her, according to Ferguson. I am just going round to see him now, and find out her address from him, and in the meantime there's a dear little Norwegian girl in my study, who will wait till I bring back an answer. Would you like her to come up here?"

"Yes, yes," said Erica, "by all means let us have her if she can talk English. Rae is

waking up, you see, and we will come down and fetch her."

Swanhild had just finished her letter when the door of the study opened, and looking up she saw Charles Osmond once more, and beside him a lady who seemed to her more lovely than Blanche; she was a good deal older than Lady Romiaux and less strikingly beautiful, but there was something in her creamy-white colouring and short auburn hair, something in the mingled sadness and sweetness of her face, that took Swanhild's heart by storm.

"This is my daughter-in-law, Mrs. Brian Osmond, and this is my grandson," said Charles Osmond, allowing Rae's tiny fingers to play with his long white beard.

"Will you come upstairs and stay with us till Mr. Osmond comes back?" said Erica, shaking hands with her, and wondering not a little what connection there could be between this fair-haired, innocent little Norse girl and Lady Romiaux. And then seeing that Swanhild was shy she kept her hand in hers and led her up to the drawing-room, where, with the baby to play with, she was soon perfectly happy, and chattering away fast enough, to the great amusement of old Mrs. Osmond, who heard the whole story of the model lodgings, of the dancing classes, and of the old home in Norway.

In the meanwhile Charles Osmond had reached his friend's chambers, and to his great satisfaction found him in.

"As far as I know," replied Mr. Ferguson, "Lady Romiaux is still in lodgings in George Street." He drew a card from his pocket-book and handed it to the clergyman. "That's the number; and to my certain knowledge she was there yesterday. Her father won't have anything to do with her."

"Poor child!" said Charles Osmond half to himself, "I wonder what will become of her?"

Mr. Ferguson shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, she's brought it all on herself," he said. "There is no doubt whatever that she is guilty, and how the jury disagreed I'm sure I don't know."

Charles Osmond did not stay to discuss the matter, but made the best of his way to George Street, and sent in his card with a request that Lady Romiaux would, if possible, see him on a matter of business.

In a minute or two he was ushered into a drawing-room, which had the comfortless air of most lodging-house rooms; standing on the hearthrug was a young, delicate-looking girl; for a moment he did not recognise her as the Lady Romiaux whose portraits were

so well known, for trouble had sadly spoilt her beauty, and her eyelids were red and swollen, either with want of sleep or with many tears.

She bowed, then meeting his kindly eyes, the first eyes she had seen for so long which did not stare at her in hateful curiosity, or glance at her with shrinking disapproval, she came quickly forward and put her hand in his.

"For what reason can you have come?" she exclaimed; "you of all men."

He was struck with the wild look in her great dark eyes, and intuitively knew that other work than the delivery of little Swanhild's letter awaited him here.

"Why do you say, 'Of all men' in that tone?" he asked.

"Because you are one of the very few men who ever made me wish to do right," she said quickly. "Because I used sometimes to come to your church—till—till I did not dare to come, because what you said made me so miserable!"

"My poor child," he said: "there are worse things than to be miserable; you are miserable now, but your very misery may lead you to peace."

"No, no," she sobbed, sinking down on the sofa and hiding her face in her hands. "My life is over—there is nothing left for me. And yet," she cried, lifting her head and turning her wild eyes towards him, "yet I have not the courage to die, even though my life is a misery to me and a snare to every one I come across."

"Are you alone here?" he asked.

"Yes; my father and mother will have nothing to say to me—and there is no one else—I mean no one else that I would have."

He breathed more freely.

"You must not say your life is over," he replied. "Your life in society is over, it is true, but there is something much better than that which you may now begin. Be sure that if you wish to do right it is still possible for you."

"Ah, but I can't trust myself," she sobbed. "It will be so very difficult all alone."

"Leave that for God to arrange," he said. "Your part is to trust to Him and try your best to do right. Tell me, do you not know my friend Donovan Farrant, the member for Greysheet?"

She brushed the tears from her eyes and looked up more quietly.

"I met him once at a country house in Mountshire," she said. "He and his wife were there just for two days, and they were

so good to me. I think he guessed that I was in danger then, for one day he walked with me in the grounds, and he spoke to me as no one had ever spoken before. He saw that my husband and I had quarrelled, and he saw that I was flirting out of spite with—with—well, no matter! But he spoke straight out, so that if it hadn't been for his wonderful tact and goodness I should have been furious with him. And he told me how the thing that had saved him all through his life was the influence of good women; and just for a few days I did want to be good, and to use my power rightly. But the Farrants went away, and I vexed my husband again and we had another quarrel, and when he was gone down to speak at Colonel Adair's election, I went to stay, against his wish, at Belcroft Park; and when I had done that, it seemed as if I were running right down a steep hill and really couldn't stop myself."

"But now," said Charles Osmond, "you must begin to climb the hill once more. You must be wondering though all this time what was the errand that brought me here. I brought you this letter from a little Norwegian girl—Swanhild Falck. In the midst of your great trouble I daresay her trouble will seem very trifling, still I hope you will be able to release her from her promise, for it is evidently weighing on her mind."

"That's another instance of the harm I do wherever I go," said poor Blanche, reading the letter, "and in this case I was really trying to undo the past, very foolishly as I see now. Tell Swanhild that she is quite free from her promise, and that if it has done harm I am sorry. But I always do harm! Do you remember that story of Nathaniel Hawthorne's about the daughter of the botanist, who was brought up on the juices of a beautiful poison-plant, and who poisoned with her breath every one that came near her? I think I am like that."

"I remember it," he replied. "A weird, unwholesome story. But if I remember right, the heroine died herself rather than poison others."

"Yes, and that is what I wish to do," she said, with once more that look in her eyes which had startled him. "But I am a coward; I haven't the courage."

"Wait," he said gravely; "there is a real truth in your idea, but do not set about it in a wrong way. To seek physical death would only be to take another wrong step. It is not you, but your selfishness that must die."

"But if I were not what you would call selfish, if I did not love to attract men and

make them do just what I please, if I did not enjoy the feeling that they are in love with me, I should no longer be myself," she said.

"You would no longer be your false self," he replied. "You would be your true self. Do you think God made you beautiful that you might be a snare in the world? He made you to be a joy and a blessing, and you have abused one of His best gifts."

She began to cry again, to sob piteously, almost like a child.

Charles Osmond spoke once more, and there was a great tenderness in his voice.

"You have found now that self-pleasing brings misery to yourself and every one else. I know you wish to do right, but you must do more than that; you must resolutely give your body, soul, and spirit to God, desiring only to do His will."

She looked up once more, speaking with the vehemence of despair.

"Oh," she said, "it seems all real now while I talk to you, but I know it will fade away, and the temptations will be much more strong. You don't know what the world is—you are good, and you have no time to see with your own eyes how, underneath all that is so respectable, it is hollow and wicked."

"It will be your own fault if you are not stronger than the temptations with which God allows you to be assailed," he said. "You loathe and fear evil, and that is a step in the right direction, but now you must turn right away from it, and learn to look at purity, and goodness, and love. Don't believe that vice is to conquer—that is the devil's lie. The strength of the Infinite, the love of the All-Father will conquer—and that love and that strength are for you."

"What!" sobbed Blanche, "for a woman who has dishonoured her name—a woman cast out of society?"

Charles Osmond took her hand in his strong, firm clasp.

"Yes, my child," he said, "they are for you."

There was a long silence.

"And now," he said at length, "unless you have any other friends to whom you would rather go, I am going to ask you to come home with me. I can promise you at least rest and shelter, and a welcome from my dear old mother, who, being very near to the other world, does not judge people after the custom of this one."

"But," she said, with a look of mingled

relief and perplexity, "how can I let you do so much for a mere stranger? Oh, I should like to come—but—but——"

"You are no longer a stranger," he replied. "And you must not refuse me this. You shall see no one at all if you prefer it. Ours is a busy house, but in some ways it is the quietest house in London. My son and his wife live with us. They, too, will be so glad if we can be of any use to you. Come, I cannot leave you here in this loneliness."

"Do you mean that I am to come now?" she said, starting up.

"Yes, if you will," he replied. "But I will go and call a hansom; and since I am in rather a hurry, perhaps you will let your maid follow with your things later on in the evening."

So in a few minutes they were driving together to Guilford Square, and Blanche was transplanted from her miserable loneliness into the heart of one of the happiest homes in the country. Leaving her in the study, Charles Osmond went in search of Swanchild.

"It is all right," he said, handing her a little note in Blanche's writing; and while the child eagerly read it he turned to his daughter-in-law.

"Will you tell them to get the spare room ready, Erica dear?" he said. "I have persuaded Lady Romiaux to stay with us for a little while."

Swanchild caught the words, and longed to ask to see Blanche, but she remembered that Sigrid would not like it; and then, with a sudden recollection that the afternoon was almost over, and that she must go home, she thanked Charles Osmond, reluctantly parted with the baby, kissed old Mrs. Osmond and Erica, who made her promise to come and see them again, and hurried back to the model lodgings.

Her happiness and relief, and the pleasurable excitement of having learnt to know a new and delightful family, were slightly clouded by the uncomfortable thought of the confession that lay before her. What would Frithiof and Sigrid say to her? And how should she put into words the story of what she more and more felt to have been a wrong and foolish, and very childish scheme of help?

"Oh, how I wish it were over!" she thought to herself, as she marched on to her disagreeable work like a little Trojan. Big Ben was striking five as she crossed the court-yard. She had been away from home more than two hours. She hurried on to

the porter's office, and asked breathlessly for the key.

"Mr. Falck took it ten minutes ago," said the man.

And Swanhild turned away with a sigh

and a little shiver, and began very slowly to mount the stone stairs.

"Oh! what will he say to me?" she thought, as she clasped Blanche's note fast in her little cold hand.

THE SAILOR.

By ROBERT RICHARDSON, B.A.

OH, the lark sang loud an' sweet, as he rose abune the wheat,
Wi' the dewdrop on his bonny breast still clinging;
Oh, the lark sang sweet an' loud frae the white edge o' a cloud,
And the world awoke to listen till his singing.

A' the valley mile on mile rippled owre wi' a smile,
And the burn croodled low amang its heather;
And the rosy milking maid lilted canny as she gaed,
For joy o' the merry May weather.

But my heart fell wae and chill as we dropped below the hill;
And the capstan song rang in my ear sae dreary,
As we crossed the harbour-bar, 'neath the lonely morning star,
And a wet wind in the sheets aye sae weary.

For I was leaving there a lass was never one more fair,
And her kisses on my cheek were still burning;
But when I come hame again o'er the wild and fickle faem,
She'll still be watching fain for my returning.

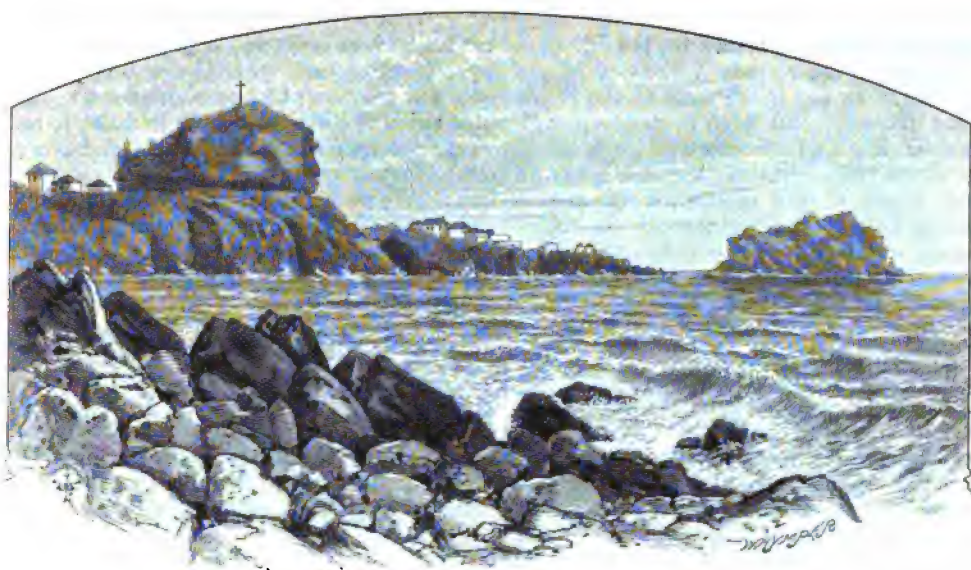
Oh, the lass sae sweet and meek! it's wet, wet was her cheek,
And the word she could na' speak as we parted;
And the tears were on my ain, for my heart 'maist brak' in twain
To leave her a' her lane sae dowie-hearted.

Oh, the night fell chill an' mirk as we lost sight o' the kirk,
And the 'longshore lights fell far and faint to leeward;
And the thochts within my breast, oh, I couldna' gar them rest!
And the wind aye seuching sad frae the seaward.

But I'll think when winds are loud in halyard and in shroud,
And the gale is like to heel the good barque over,
One is thinking o' the ship, in the watches o' her sleep,
Wi' a prayer on her pure lip for her lover.

And, oh, but I'll be fain when the ship is hame again,
I'll heedna' how the lift may veer or vary;
A' my cares I shall tyne, and a blithe heart will be mine,
Wi' a purse o' siller fine for my Mary.

She'll hae tears, but no' for care, and they'll make her still mair fair,
And she'll loe me a' the mair for my roaming;
And the joy will dance my ee at the kisses she'll gie me
'Neath the briar abune the kirk in the gloaming.



Carachio.

UNDER THE PEAK.

By FLORA L. SHAW, AUTHOR OF "CASTLE BLAIR," &c.

With Illustrations from Drawings by W. M. BAILLIE.

I.

THE sea was rolling up in mountains of blue against a rosy coast, dotted with white houses and plumed with tufts of palm, when we woke one morning on board a big ocean steamer to find that we had reached the Canary Islands in the night. Grand Canary lay at a little distance, dark purple under golden mist, and looked like some great plum or rich and strange tropical fruit floating on the water. We were nearer to Teneriffe, where we intended to land. The peak was hidden in clouds, but the island appeared to be all one sunny mountain. Red lava cliffs, sparsely dotted with greenery, and broken by deep wooded gorges which ran to the sea, rose sheer up from the white rim of the waves, and were piled one upon another in volcanic confusion. Villages nestled here and there on the ledges, and hanging gardens of vine and cactus clung to the face of the rock. Santa Cruz, the capital of the islands, spread itself in a blaze of light round the harbour, and only three dark-red church spires, rising from the midst of its houses and gardens, reminded us that the town was older than the pretty colours of its fresh paint might suggest.

Steamers could not approach the pier, and landing was no easy matter. Little boats

danced like nut-shells on the great Atlantic rollers, and seemed to be always balancing themselves on the extreme edge of a wave, in peril of capsizing; but somehow or other the passengers and their luggage were transferred from the ship to the tiny flotilla that clustered round it, and before mid-day we had landed on the pier on which Nelson lost his arm. A good-humoured group gathered to see us land, and some little brown children, dressed in rags of yellow and pink, ran alongside of us to the hotel; but it was a holiday, one of the many saints' days of the year, the shops were shut, there were few people in the street, and the first impression was of the hush of one of those enchanted spots in which it is "always afternoon."

We visited the cathedral, and saw there the colours taken from Nelson at the time of the invasion, an event of which the islanders speak much as we in England speak of the dispersion of the Spanish Armada; and we also visited the museum, where there was matter of historic interest of a very different kind in the collection of Guanche skulls and mummies and implements of daily use, which have descended from the Homeric age of the islands. Unfortunately we were none of us antiquarians, to reconstruct, as we might have

done from what lay before us, the life of a people who were already spoken of in the "Odyssey" as the inhabitants of the Fields of the Blessed. But even to us the plough made of a goat horn attached to a stick, the rough stone knives, the fish-hooks of bone, spoke of the occupation of a pastoral race; and to me personally as house-keeping woman a big jar of what was called petrified butter was eloquent with a story of home. Who made it? Who saved it? one wondered. And what catastrophe intervened to prevent it from being consumed by the mouths for which it was intended?

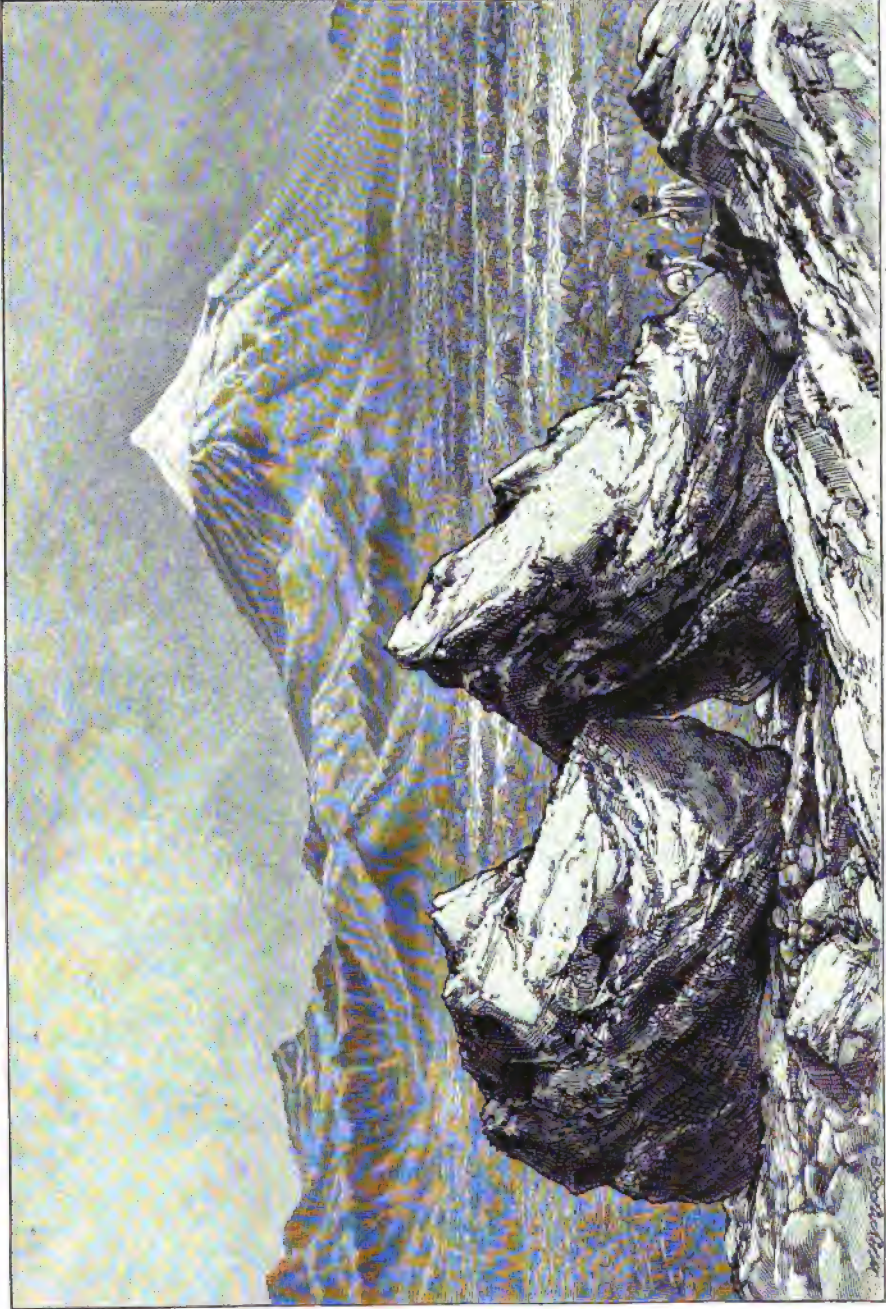
Between the museum and the market every paving-stone might have been a century, and the contrast was vivid which was presented by the undisturbed dust and stillness of the one and the bubble of noise in the other. Guavas and garlic, and roses and dates were piled with fresh salads on stalls, where cut pumpkins and tomatoes gave colour, and oranges and bananas added their various yellows to each rich combination. The sunshine, the colour, and the heaped-up plenty charmed our northern eyes, and it was delightful to see people who looked like beggars come and carry away for a penny or two baskets full of what would have been in London the exclusive luxuries of the rich.

We continued our walk, caring more to see the town than its sights, and found it just what it had looked from the sea—an old town repainted, with its history seemingly forgotten in commerce. All the largest buildings had names on them which ended in Co., or its equivalent, and the houses which had no names evidently belonged to the company's partners. They were rectangular, spacious, and of continental appearance, painted mostly in white, or yellow, or pink, with sun-shutters closed to keep out the sun, and balconies from which on the shady side of the street ladies dressed in black looked down on the passers-by. It was only in the poorer quarters that the fine carving of old doors and window-shutters was left without the new coat of paint; and here, where the bronzed faces did not fear the sun, and because of the holiday there was no work to do, the swinging panels of shutters were pushed freely out, and the dark woodwork served as a frame to charming pictures. We did not feel ourselves to be strangers. Every one was ready to salute us as we passed. There was general good-humour and an atmosphere of easy hospitality, which put us at once at our ease. The band played for us, we felt, in the square; the flowers bloomed for us in the

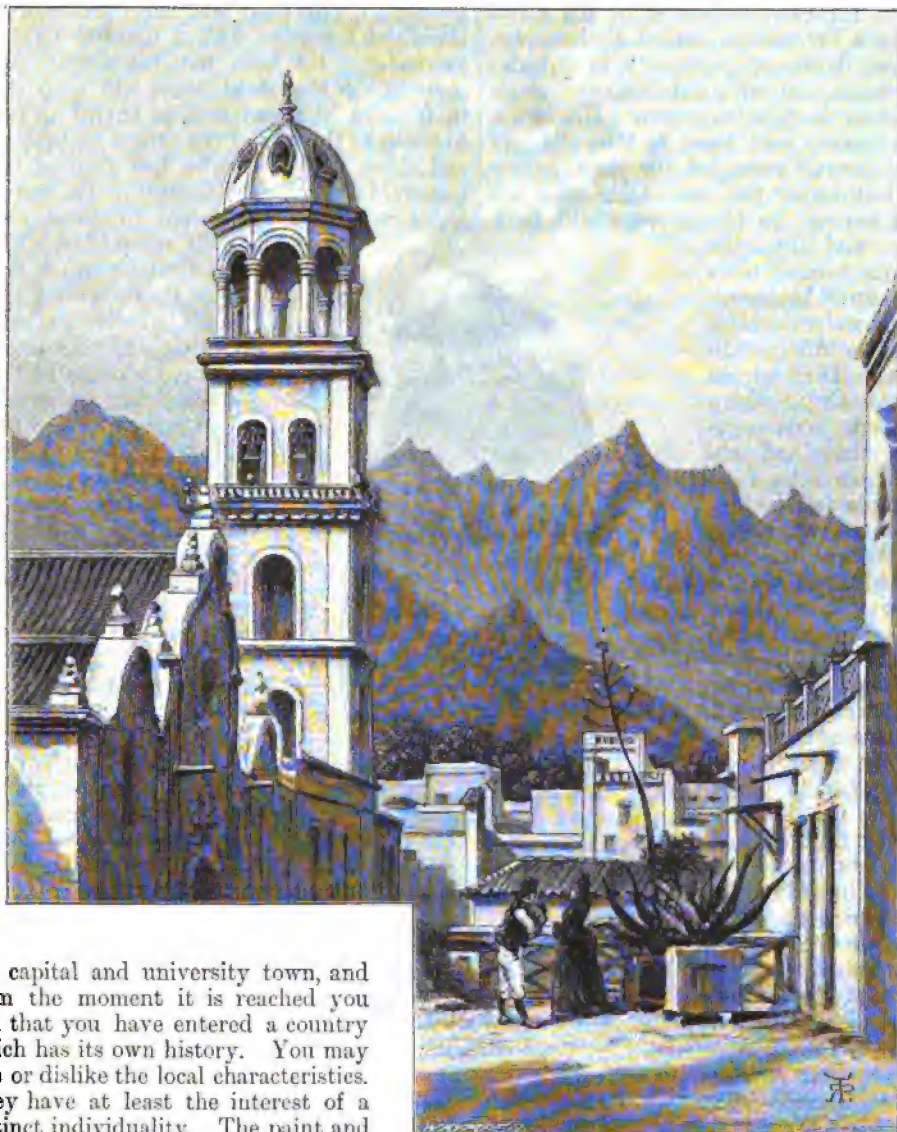
gardens, where roses, and oranges, and ibiscus were hustling each other in a web of many-coloured creepers; the sun shone for us; the blue sky was ours if we chose to make it so. There was no air of exclusiveness, and every one appeared willing to help us if we wanted help. We made several acquaintances in the course of the afternoon—acquaintances of the pavement—and by the advice of one of them pushed our exploration of the town out to the cochineal gardens which fringed it. There was no difficulty in obtaining leave to enter, and we examined the little plum-coloured grubs which look like a blight on the prickly pear. This ugly plant is to them as the mulberry to the silkworm, and as they are a valuable crop the plantations of it which surround Santa Cruz are extensive enough to make a very disfiguring feature in the landscape, all the more that at certain seasons the cultivation of the cochineal grub demands that every leaf shall be wrapped in cotton rags. Here and there in the dampest corners banana-trees pushed their untidy heads together, and heavy bunches of their green fruit hung in the deep shade they formed. There were no big trees, and the country looked so barren that there was nothing but the magnificent colour and outline of the rocks and the sea to create the impression of beauty which we received. To us all was new, but nothing seemed strange. It is the special charm of the island that from the moment you set foot upon it you feel at home.

No one stays in Santa Cruz except natives who have business there. It is the capital of the province formed by the seven Canary Islands, and the seat of local government, besides being the principal port. To islanders it has therefore a certain importance, but to foreigners it is only the ante-room of an old house which they wish to explore. They take no interest in its modern restorations, its well-mended streets, and well-planted squares. It is, on a very small scale, what they have seen a thousand times before, and all that remains with them when they look back on it is a grateful remembrance of the courtesy and kindness with which they were welcomed here to the island. Teneriffe with all its strange traditions lies behind. They are anxious to escape and to see it.

There is but one road for wheeled traffic in the island, and it leads over the rocky face seen from the sea to Laguna, which stands in a cleft of the hills at an elevation of something less than two thousand feet above Santa Cruz. Laguna is the



THE GREAT CRATER OF TENERIFFE.



Santa Cruz.

old capital and university town, and from the moment it is reached you feel that you have entered a country which has its own history. You may like or dislike the local characteristics. They have at least the interest of a distinct individuality. The paint and varnish of Santa Cruz have not been carried up the hill, the streets of Laguna are not mended, there are no modern squares with fountains and commemorative monuments, but old houses stand as their founders built them, the coats of arms of Spanish nobles moulder over doorways of stone. Here and there, from a grass-grown patch of rarely worn pavement, the portal opens of a church or monastery, offered in the fervour of immediate gratitude to some patron of victory. Heavy doors carved from the timber of sub-tropical forests hang still in their places. The whole

town is a monument of something, which the prevailing neglect and decay combine with the poverty of the modern overgrowth to tell you must have long since been dead.

The Spanish conquest of the island took place when Spain was a nation whose glorious destiny it seemed to be to add world to world. Not content with discovering a new hemisphere, they claimed to have rediscovered in the Canary Islands the remains of the lost Atlantis of the ancients, and thus

to have opened the past as well as the future. The first European conqueror of the Canaries was a Frenchman named Bethencourt, who was, however, practically in Spanish employment, and who did homage for his conquest to the Spanish crown. His immediate successor sold them to Portugal and the two crowns struggled for their possession. But during this period, the most important among the islands were still independent, and Tenerife was never reduced till a Spanish army landed on its shores under the command of the Adelantado de Lugo. They landed at Santa Cruz, where through previous negotiations they had obtained some little footing, and planted the first cross from which the town takes its name; but the islanders resisted invasion with a vigour which prevented the Spaniards for a long time from penetrating any farther. It was at last under cover of a November night, in the year 1494, that they scaled the heights leading to Laguna, surprised the natives encamped there, and fought on the site on which the town now stands the pitched battle which determined the fate of the island. A dark stone cross standing by the roadside at the entrance to the

town marks the spot on which the signal for the assault was given by the Spanish commander. The chroniclers of the conquest do justice to the bravery of their antagonists. Though the natives had only sticks and stones to oppose the Spanish powder and steel they fought with the utmost fury, the conflict lasted for hours with constantly varying success, and the incidents of it, related as they are with much detail in poetry and prose by the old historians, read like the details of some Homeric fight. At last the brother of the Guanche chief fell wounded. He cried out declaring his name and estate, that he might not be hacked in pieces like a common man. His assailants replied, asking if he would be

baptized. He refused, and they chopped off his head. This head was afterwards sent to the chief Bencomo, with a demand for his surrender. He bade the messengers tell their master that dead bones had no power to frighten him, and that he envied no fate so much as the fate of the prince his brother and those with him who had realised the honour of dying for their country. The native forces were, however, forced to retire, and

finally vanquished. The two Realejos in the valley of Orotava mark the spot of their last encounter, and the intervening incidents of the campaign are commemorated in the names of the village through which the new road passes, Vitoria and Matanza, or the Victory and the Slaughter. Victory and slaughter resume in two words the early history of the conquest. A people like the Guanches had no means of standing against the Spaniards, but the feeling of patriotism was so strong amongst them that mothers strangled their own babies, and old men collecting their sons slew them all, and then flung themselves upon the fire-sharpened stakes which served them for swords, rather than fall into the hands of the strangers. In despair of conquering so



Tenerife Man.

strong a sentiment, or reconciling such a people to their rule, the conquerors came to the decision within forty years that the only method was to exterminate them all. It is said that they carried out this cruel decree partly by massacre and partly by selling their victims into slavery.

Fortunately, however, there were always some among the Spaniards who disapproved of the policy of slaughter, and it is probably to this circumstance that we owe the comparatively full and sympathetic descriptions that have descended to us of the customs and character of the antique people they destroyed. The manuscript of a Spanish writer of the early part of the seventeenth

century, Don Abreu Gallinda, which was translated and incorporated in Glas' "History of the Canary Islands," mentions Guanche families still existing at that time in more than one district of the island; but Glas himself, writing a hundred years later, says that none of the great families of the place would acknowledge Guanche descent, though he attributes to that strain many of their most charming qualities; and goes so far as to say that they have inherited nothing from the Goth but his barbarity. Viera y Clavijo, the latest and perhaps the best of their own historians of note, attributes the reluctance to acknowledge Guanche blood to the fact that the Spaniards sold so many of the natives for slaves, and thus tainted the fountain at its source. He is, nevertheless, of the opinion of Glas and Gallinda that Guanche blood is largely mixed with Spanish in the race which inhabits the Canary Islands; and he gives extremely interesting accounts of the earlier people. He believes them to have come originally from Egypt, and other writers have suggested some race affinities with the Berber peoples of the Atlas Mountains. Their method of preserving their mummies, their burial rites, and some other religious ceremonies are among the principal grounds for connecting them with the Egyptians; but if this supposition with regard to their origin is correct, they must have branched away in a very early period of Egyptian growth. The skulls collected in the Museum of Santa Cruz show an extremely good average of cerebral development; but the Guanches had no knowledge of architecture, engineering, sculpture, or any of the arts and industries which made Egypt famous. Their origin loses itself in the most remote periods of antiquity. They were, as Viera describes them, a pastoral people, living in a state of the utmost

simplicity and Arcadian purity, upon a soil which produced all that was needful for them and their flocks. The details of their life remind one of the pastoral beginnings of the tribes of Israel. Their food consisted of the young of their flocks and of a kind of porridge made from the meal of corn roasted before it was ground, and afterwards kneaded with water in a goatskin. They called it *gofio*, and *gofio*

is to this day the principal food of the island peasantry. On great occasions or in the houses of the rich they used to mix a little honey in the cake. There is a story told of a Guanche boy captured by Spaniards, and after seven years of captivity, during which he was instructed in the Christian religion, escaping to join his fathers. As soon as he touched the shore and made himself known to the people, they brought him, with great rejoicing, *gofio* in which honey had been kneaded, but he, the story says, refused to touch it until he had knelt before the king and declared to him the whole doctrine of Christianity.

One day, when we were picnicking on the side of a gorge, we saw people coming down to us from a farm higher up. They also brought and offered

us *gofio* kneaded with honey, and prepared just as their ancestors may have prepared it thousands of years ago. The incident naturally suggested a passing wonder as to what "whole doctrine" the modern invaders will declare to the inhabitants of the island. We did not decline their kindly hospitality, but after tasting the cake I must, if I am to be candid, admit that I prefer the literature of past ages to the food, and I would as soon have eaten the petrified butter which I saw in the museum at Santa Cruz. This only applies, however, to the raw *gofio*. When *gofio* is cooked it is much like other forms of porridge, and there is a possibility of conceiving that a



Teneriffe Woman.

hungry Esau might have sold his birthright for a dish of it.

The laws of the Guanches were mild, and their habits gentle and conciliatory. It was only when they were pushed to extremes that they fought for themselves and their country, with a courage which their chroniclers compare to the courage of Greek heroes. Their form of government was monarchy of a paternal sort, and they had a well-defined order of nobility and an order of priesthood. The right of conferring rank as a noble belonged to the high priest; and the ceremony, which corresponded in some measure to the European investiture of knighthood, was curious and interesting. It was always performed in public, and before an assembly of the people. The candidate, who had to be qualified by birth and capable of bearing arms, presented himself, with long hair flowing down his back, to the high priest. The priest, then turning to the multitude, conjured them, in a loud voice, to declare by the eternal name of God whether they knew any cause why the man before them should not receive the sign of nobility of his fathers. Amongst other things which they were charged to declare, one was whether they had ever known him to commit violence in time of peace, or to have acted discourteously or spoken foully, especially to any woman. When the multitude declared him guiltless of any disqualifying faults, the priest cut his hair about his ears, gave him the lance with which, at the bidding of the sovereign, he had to fight, and declared that from henceforth he should sit in the seat of the noble and be respected by the people as his fathers had been. If, on the contrary, fault was proved against him, his hair was shaved close to his head, he was declared ignoble, and excluded for ever from the order of nobility. Men to whom this disgrace was attached were known by the name of the "Shorn." The legend by which they accounted for the original foundation of an aristocracy was as simple as many of our own Old Testament stories. "In the beginning of the world," they said, "God formed a number of men and women out of earth and water, and He divided amongst them all the flocks and fruits of the earth. Afterwards he determined to create more men and women; but when these last begged of Him to give them also flocks and fruits He replied, 'Serve the others and they will give you food.'" It

says something for the national morality of the race that, with such a theory of divine right, they recognised any possibility of exclusion for bad conduct from the privileged class.

They neither had nor desired money. Their riches consisted in flocks and herds and the crops which they removed from the land. All the land belonged to the king. He allowed his vassals year by year to use it for agricultural purposes, dividing it between them as he thought best. Viera y Clavijo relates charming instances of the paternal consideration of the kings for their people's needs. The institution of slavery, so fatal to the Greeks, was unknown to them. They were naturally frugal, simple, and industrious. Their women were carefully defended by the laws. "They were," their historian reports, "diligent and chaste, like the men." The dress of the people, minutely described at the time of the conquest, was simple, and consisted chiefly of leather, which they tanned and dyed in various colours. They lived, as the poorest among the peasantry do to this day, in caves. Their household arts were of the most primitive description. Their wants were few. After describing their daily occupations of sowing and reaping, milking and weaving, Viera y Clavijo says of them:—"This kind of life, laborious, rustic, and naturally moderate as it was, forming healthy and active bodies hardened to work, was the principal cause of the great strength of which they gave such terrible proofs. On the other hand, their inclination to equity, their temperance, their sincerity, and other moral virtues, were the fruit of constant occupation, which placed them, as it were, beyond the reach of active passions, such as luxury, avarice, ambition, violence, &c. They did not know the adored tyrants to which men sacrifice their freedom. They never spoke of gold, or silver, or jewels, nor of the other forms of conventional wealth which depend upon caprice, and very often upon an absolutely mistaken judgment. Their hopes were of timely rains and fortunate seedtime, of abundant crops and prosperous herds. Quiet sleep, sweet peace, the fertility of their women, the strength of their arms, the blessing of heaven upon their flocks and herds, their granaries and stores—these were their riches, necessary, simple, innocent, and not to be discredited by our vanity."

FREDERICK ELTZE.

By JOSEPH SWAIN.

THERE are some men whose lives could never be constructed out of an examination of their works, and this is the case with poor Eltze, whose story is the saddest with which I am acquainted. Judged by the sketches he did, one would conclude that he was the happiest of men; only in very rare cases is there any trace of sadness in his work; his children are always full of fun and gaiety, his youths and maidens always in love with one another; and age is always accompanied with pleasant attributes of honour and respect. One must needs laugh when Eltze drew the picture: there was no corner in which any one could find a sigh. Yet the artist never knew what robust health was, never had troops of friends, never mingled in the games of happy childhood, but drew his inspiration from the stories told in newspapers, and such interpretations as he could obtain from looking down upon the people in Great Scotland Yard. This, as almost everybody knows, is the headquarters of the detective police force of the Metropolis, and to go to Scotland Yard is by no means a cheery anticipation.

Eltze's parents were German; his father when a young man was confidential valet to the Duke of Sussex, and at his death became confidential clerk to the late Sir Richard Mayne, and his mother had charge of a suite of rooms used by Sir Richard. For their services they were provided with apartments for themselves, and here it was that I first made acquaintance with the young artist. He had sent Mark Lemon some specimens of work for *Punch*—I believe that they were initial letters; and they were of such a character as to lead the Editor to direct me to make a call. On reaching Scotland Yard I was ushered upstairs into a room at the back of the house, and the young artist exhibited to me a large number of sketches, all showing traces of rapid execution. The subjects were chiefly of a social character, and illustrations of child life, and he drew much of his inspiration from what he had seen of children at Ramsgate, where he was born, and where his parents lived for some years. He was at first engaged upon initial letters, and was afterwards entrusted with half-page drawings on social subjects. This was during the lifetime of Leech; and

after the death of that gifted artist in 1864, Eltze drew some of the principal social subjects and half-page illustrations. His work in *Punch* ranged over a period of only six years—commencing with a slight sketch which appeared April 30, 1864, and closing with the initial letter C which appeared September 17, 1870, two months before his death.

At the time when I made his acquaintance he was in ill-health, suffering from the first symptoms of consumption; and from year to year the malady increased in intensity, until after sixteen years' suffering he died November 11, 1870, at Hastings, and was buried at Kensal Green. I never met him walking in the street, and I know that for months together he never went outside the house in which he lived except in a cab. Amongst his friends was Mr. Westall, the model, who was much attached to him, and who was engaged by most of the R.A.'s, and was able to give Eltze much information of what was going on in the different studios.

After the death of his father, he and his mother took a cottage near Epsom for a short time. He was then working for *Punch*, and his mother had a small pension from the police. I went down to see him upon one occasion, and found him, notwithstanding his ill-health, cheerful and happy. There was a big fruit-pie on the dinner table, and I remember that Eltze pressed me very much to try it, and laughingly said, "My mother made the crust with suet." There was a wonderful bond of affection between him and his mother, and she, poor lady, thought a great deal of her son's talent. They were not long at Epsom, and from there went to reside at 6, Trafalgar Square, Chelsea, where her poor son's body was brought from Hastings prior to his funeral.

Eltze's connection with *Punch* commenced with a small drawing 5½ inches by 3½ inches, which appeared, as I have said, in 1864. This was entitled "Othello on Crinoline," founded on the words "It is the cause! It is the cause!" It was the time when the crinoline had grown to the most extravagant size, and *Punch* had determined to put the nuisance down. Ridicule was heaped upon the monstrosity, and it was made fun of in many consecutive numbers. This picture is not in Eltze's happiest style. Desdemona with a

thorough English face lies asleep in bed ; while Othello in his shirt and slippers, with a tiny tasselled nightcap perched on the top of his curly head, raves at a crinoline. This garment he holds together in his hands, the upper portion forming the letter O, though the drawing is not used for an initial letter, and the right hand also grasps an Italian rapier. There followed, on May 14, eight cuts, representing "The Rejected of the Academy." These, which are very funny, are "Vice"—drawing of a vice ; "The Chops of the Channel"—three chops flying in the air ; "The Old, Old Story"—a dilapidated cottage by the sea, with a broken window shutter ; "The Mill Race"—two windmills with human legs and arms having a race ; "The Missing Link"—a torch ; "This is a sorry sight, Macbeth"—two hands extended from a nose just shown in the margin ; "Venus Rising from the Sea"—a star ascending out of the water ; "Unto this Last"—a shoemaker's last on the floor. The text is exceedingly droll. Pains are taken to describe the beauties of the several pictures : the suggestiveness of the screw which closes the anvil ; the streaks in the chops, and the angry air, and the light upon the falling shutter, "aërial perspective has never been carried to such perfection." The article winds up with a solemn declaration that these pictures furnish proof of the non-decadence of English art. The sketches are interesting also as the first introduction of the series, now so popular, in the hands of another artist—"The Academy Pictures."

On May 28 there appeared six small pictorial renderings of "Foreign Intelligence :—" "The Bourse opened flat"—a bag containing money wide open ; "Lively appearance after business hours"—the same bag closed and distended with money ; "Hides active but with a downward tendency"—a bull leaping over a gate ; "Iron Market: Pigs dull"—three fat pigs asleep ; a man in a cotton night-shirt reading a newspaper by the light of a candle, which is dripping, in illustration of "Cotton Market," "Stripes tending upwards," and "Tallow yielding ;—" "Foreign Stocks a shade higher, and Gold advanced"—represented by a foreigner wearing an exceedingly high stock, and breast pins standing out conspicuously from his breast. In the same number is the first half-page illustration which Eltze drew. On the wall are the words "To the Underground Railway," and three ladies in crinolines are watching a sewers' man descending by an open grating. These sketches scarcely bear

comparison with those which follow, but improvement was quickly manifested, and the half-pages became more numerous. His humour was first apparent in "A Friend in Need," September 24—an old gentleman being helped up on to the front seat of an omnibus by a boy with the bristle end of his broom ; and on October 1, "The Safest Way of taking a Lady down to Dinner"—the lady taking up the whole of the staircase, and the gentleman descending outside the balusters. The first drawing in which he showed his wonderful skill in imparting motion to the things he drew, and suggesting action on the part of his figures, appeared on October 8, a half-page called "How very thoughtful !" A boat rowed by a waterman, and very deep in the sea, carries three ladies and four gentlemen. "Old lady" says, "Are you not afraid of getting drowned when you have the boat so full ?" to which the boatman replies, "Oh, dear no, mum, I always wears a lifebelt, so I'm safe enough." The boat is moving through a broken sea, articles that are worn are flying backwards, a lady's crinoline spreads over the stern in the water, and gulls hovering in the air add to the completeness of the illusion.

On October 29, 1864—the day Leech died—there appeared another half-page by Eltze, entitled "Too clever by half !" in which a little child with her finger in the mouth of a baby tells her indignant aunt, amid the amusement of three other ladies, "Baby's mouth so funny ; it's just like yours before you get out of bed—no, not one tooth."

The half-pages drawn by Eltze after Leech's death rapidly improved in quality. That on November 5, is called "A slight misunderstanding," some draymen are engaged in lowering a cask into a cellar below a church, and a foreigner asks "Any body in that !" to which the reply is "A very good body too." On December 24, appeared "A scene in a Ball-room," Spriggles, with an admirably drawn face, has burst his braces, and the ladies surrounding him thinking he has been taken ill are tendering sympathy.

One of his best illustrations in *Punch* appeared February 18, 1865, and represented what Mr. Punch saw on St. Valentine's Day. The text is as follows :—"A gentleman who does not wish to give his name for family reasons, states that just for the fun of the thing, he looked out of the window to see if he should have a Valentine, and that was what met his eye." On the right hand page Mr. Punch is standing at an open window, and



A SCAMPER THROUGH THE FERNS.

From an unpublished drawing.

below on the opposite page is a sea of pretty faces, every one raised smilingly towards the window.

On April 29, 1865, there was an exquisite half-page, entitled "A case of Ring Dropping," representing a marriage service interrupted by the bridegroom dropping the ring. The picture is crowded with figures, the parson, clerk, bride, bridegroom, bridesmaids, and verger, nearly all of whom are taking part in the search, turning over hassocks, and raising dresses. The clergyman and the verger being the only two not actually engaged in the search.

Another half-page full of life and movement appeared on June 17, and is entitled "Query? Do not the long skirts kindle Christian feeling in our hearts when leaving church?" There is a crush in the aisle of the church after service, men are thrown against pew doors, gentlemen are enclosed by the long trains of the ladies, and in endeavouring to avoid treading upon them create confusion, which is admirably depicted upon the faces of the ladies; one gentleman in his vain endeavour to avoid the train of a lady, loses his wig; one or two are raising their legs, another is about to stamp his foot down wildly upon a train, to preserve his perpendicular. The ladies sail on, some with placid countenances, others looking viciously at the gentlemen behind, or with a sneer at the lady by their side.

On December 30, 1865, appeared the first of the series devoted to the amusements of children. This is called "The Waits"—four pretty children in their night dresses, with a little dog, at a bedroom door, and underneath the words, "The only ones to whom Mr. P. gives a Xmas box." On February 4, an "Animated Egg" represented some lads rolling a snowball, in the centre of which was one of their companions.

Punch's Almanack for 1865 contains several of his illustrations, full of those tender touches of which he was the best exponent of his day. A very sweet drawing appears under the heading of "A Christmas Sermon." A child is sitting with an elder sister in a pew at church: "Lizzy: Oh, Amy, where is the misletoe? Amy: They never have it in church, dear. Lizzy: Oh! then we must not love each other when we are in church."

In the volume of *Punch* for 1866, March 17, is one of the happiest of his productions; this is called "Presence of mind," and represents a number of children in the hall of a house playing at horses. The driver, wearing

a big hat, sits in a perambulator; there are two children in the traces prancing along; a fourth, a little girl, has fallen, a boy blows a paper trumpet, and a dog is running; the driver seeing the fallen child, calls out, "Sit on her head and cut the traces." There is life in every figure, animation and glee in the children's faces, and the little terrier's coat is electrified, and every hair stands up.

In May 5, 1866, is a famous scene full of fun and energy. A number of boys and girls, the grandchildren of a Bishop, have got into his library, and are building a dog kennel with the old folios. The dogs Eltze introduced were always long-haired terriers. One boy is on a pair of folding steps, getting another book from the shelf, when the good Bishop comes in with a rush. Catching hold of one child by the arm, he makes a leap for the boy on the steps, and catches hold of him also; the others on the floor are too intent in covering the dog with an open folio to notice for the instant, and the child on the steps protests at the attack made on him with the excuse, "We are only taking the very oldest we can find."

In *Good Words*, for 1864, there appears only one drawing by Eltze, amongst a number of others by Millais, Tenniel and Pinwell. This was called "At the Gate," and represented a child in thin garments, blown by the wind, looking through a gateway at a mansion whose windows are lighted. It illustrates a poem by J. C. A., beginning:—

"Footsore, cold, and weary,
The child stood at the gate,"

and the story is of a mother, who, dying, entreats her daughter to follow her through the gate into the far country. Finding this iron gate and beautiful house, the child fancies she has found the entrance to the far country, and lingers there until driven away by a cold-hearted porter. The engraving on the opposite page is from the original pen-and-ink sketch for the finished drawing. Eltze himself named this drawing "A Child's idea of Heaven."

The Sunday Magazine for 1865 has a full-page sketch by him entitled "Gleaning." There is a poem which describes the scene illustrated:—

"When I went out to glean
The sea was still, the tree was still,
The stubble grass was green."

Here the gleaners are a few women, two girls and a boy; there is a waggon with corn in the roadway, and a glimpse of sea beyond. The spirit of the poem is beautifully rendered.

"The Table Book," illustrated by Eltze (altogether an idea of his own) and edited by Mark Lemon, was published by Bradbury and Evans in 1867, and this book gave to



"At the Gate."

the gentle artist the utmost scope for the exercise of his peculiar talent. Its full title was "The New Table Book, or, Pictures for Young and Old Parties, with a copy of verses to each picture, and a page for everybody's Favourite." The editor's lines were of the fewest, the address beginning:—

"Gentles all, although our Pictures speak for themselves, it has been thought meet to tag them with brief rhymes, if not with much reason," &c.

In the "Table Book" are many very striking pictures, boys home from school sliding down the balusters of a staircase; children at the sea-side joining hands and dancing in the water; Christmas games; and out-door sports.

Eltze also furnished eight illustrations to a well-known little book, by Miss Ingelow, entitled "Stories told to a Child."

The chief drawings which he made for *Once a Week* appeared in 1868, two years before his death, when his weakness had made him a close prisoner, waited upon by his affectionate and admiring mother. They were all double-page pictures, and illustrated the social questions of the day: sea-side sketches, incidents at Wimbledon, the effect

of the hot weather on people, and the plea of women for the franchise. Every picture is instinct with life, motion, and merriment.

In 1869 he drew the Calendar Page to "*Punch's Almanac*."

Punch is represented coquetting with a lady, skating, lolling on the sea-shore, and playing pan-pipes. In the centre Punch bears the world on his shoulders, and children's faces, laughing and smiling, appear everywhere. Amongst the signs of the Zodiac a steaming kettle is introduced. Everything is animated and stirring, and every face is laughing.

In 1869 Eltze made many drawings for *The Illustrated Midland News*, which was conducted by Mr. Joseph Hatton. The Christmas number was designed by him, and he made a large drawing for the first page, entitled "Bringing in

Christmas." He also drew the Incidents of the Week. In January, 1870, he drew "Coming home from Church on a Winter Sunday."

The last of his social pictures in *Punch* appeared January 15, 1870, and was called "In Town, and Country." "In Town," paterfamilias with his wife, both covered with the same umbrella, are struggling against a storm of wind and rain. The street is crowded with foot passengers, and every step taken causes the water to spring up. In "Country," fields are represented under water, there is a row of stunted willows with naked branches, and rain is falling: a desolate picture having something akin to his own experience of life.

It is quite impossible to exhaust the beautiful series of social sketches which Eltze made. His very last drawing was to an initial letter "C," and appeared September 17th, 1870. Punch wearing a Turkish fez is represented on a minaret, with hands extended, and the text begins thus:—"Come, all of you, and listen: Mr. Punch begs leave to acknowledge (without thanks) 7,827 jokes, literary or pictorial, on the word 'Sedan.'" That was the leave-taking of poor Fritz Eltze.

The *Illustrated Midland News* published the last illustration of Iris on February 11, 1871; this was a three-quarter page drawing, the subject being "a valentine," made, says the editor, shortly before he died. It was in happy accord with the work he did, and very suggestive that the very last work should be the token of tender love, a valentine. The picture, which lacks animation, represents two young maidens standing before a toilet mirror, examining the valentines they have received. All that the editor says of Eltze is that he was "a rising artist, and died comparatively young." He was only thirty-four at the time of his death.

Our full page picture, taken from a drawing never before published, illustrates a theme of which the artist never tired: the Joyousness of Children.

Eltze died at 10, Claremont, Holy Trinity, Hastings, in the parish of St. Mary-in-the-Castle, on November 11, 1870, from consumption. His mother and his niece were with him at the time of his death, and they afterwards brought his body home to 6, Trafalgar Square, Chelsea; and the final interment took place at Kensal Green, Dr. Painter, of Beaufort Gardens, Brompton, joining the unhappy women on that mournful occasion.

In all the intercourse I had with him, I was deeply impressed by his affectionate devotion to his parents. His love for his mother was very conspicuous. After his father's death he was her chief support, and manifested his love by a thousand delicate attentions. They never seemed to tire of each other's company, and the mother, though he was at home all day, never seemed to tire of him; nor did he ever show the least trace of irritability at living so monotonous and solitary a life, but appeared to be one of the happiest and merriest of men. Without acquaintances, or friends, with only an occasional trip out of doors, and that always taken in a cab, and with

the daily papers, he continued to conjure up scenes of delightful merriment;—quietly sarcastic pictures, seaside tricks or enjoyments, phases of social life, and sarcastic hits at social blots. Children were a ceaseless source of enjoyment to him; yet he never had the opportunity of seeing them in their pleasant parties at home, or out of doors. But with him the child was the embodiment of all that was jolly, beautiful, tender, gentle in human life; and he portrayed them laughing, frisking, skipping, playing, without a suggestion of sin, or want, or weakness.

Eltze studied at Leigh's schools of art, in Newman Street, for three or four years. In person he was very tall, probably not of less height than six feet, with delicately chiselled features. He was a man of refined taste, and was endowed with a genial and sensitive nature. He was much respected by all who knew him, and generous to a degree, and was always ready to acknowledge the genius shown by the work of other artists, at the same time that he was ready to admit his own shortcomings.

In 1860 there were many great artists before the public. *Once a Week* was the only weekly publication illustrated that could

afford to employ such men as J. E. Millais, F. Leighton, F. Walker, J. Tenniel, J. Leech, E. J. Poynter, F. Sandys, C. Keene, S. L. Fildes, C. Green, and many others. This periodical was the only medium for bringing together so many artists of high standing. The work was mostly of a facsimile character, so that the particular style of each artist was represented. I was fortunate in having a good staff of assistants, who took delight in working with me to preserve the special characteristics of each artist's



Father Christmas.

drawing; and without their aid it would have been impossible to have done justice to so much work in the time. I consider the greatest compliment ever paid me was by

Eltze, who one day said to me, "How is it you are able to preserve the character of each artist's drawing in the way you do? When I look over any engravings I can generally tell who the engraver is, but when I look at your work I can see at once who the artist is." His pictures gave delight to thousands, and made homes brighter and happier; yet no one dreamed that they were the production of one who all the while lay under the doom of death, who seldom got out into the sunshine, never knew what it was to walk in a garden, and only for a very brief period could look from his windows upon fields and trees.

After her son's death Mrs. Eltze removed to Moore Park Road, Fulham, where, in trying to eke out a small pension by letting furnished apartments, she quickly got into difficulties.

Her son left an enormous number of draw-

ings behind him, including many unfinished pictures in oil and water. I urged her to allow these to be sold, as she was in great need at the time; but she would not part with one. After the lapse of five or six years she did consent to do so; but by that time, however, the name of Eltze had been utterly forgotten, and no one could be found who took any interest in the drawings which had been made famous by *Punch* and other works. The sketches were sold by public auction and brought very little. Day by day her position became worse and worse, and at last all her goods were seized and sold for rent.

Pecuniary difficulties, loss of sight, and failing health have combined to sadden the closing days of Mrs. Eltze's life, and under the stress of this threefold calamity her mind, I grieve to say, has given way, necessitating her removal to a public asylum.

OUR BRITISH LIZARDS AND THEIR WAYS.

BY THE REV. THEODORE WOOD, F.E.S.

WHY is it, one cannot help wondering, that popular inspiration, when selecting for an animal a title which shall be in some way descriptive of its structure or its habits, should so generally be at fault? Why do we speak of the "black beetle" in reference to an insect which is not black and is not a beetle? Why do we collocate in its alternative designation the names of a bird and a fish, with neither of which an insect can have the least affinity? Why do we credit the fishing-frog with the name of a reptile—or, to speak more correctly, with that of a batrachian? Still more absurd and inexplicable, why do we describe an eyed lizard as a *blind-worm*?

This latter error is the oldest of all, and dates back at least as far as the time of Shakespeare, who evidently held the "eyeless, venomous worm" to be one of the most loathsome of earth's productions. How the mistake originated it would be difficult to say. That the blind-worm possesses eyes is evident enough to any one who even casually glances at the animal, and there is certainly nothing in its habits or manners which would lead one to suppose that the sense of sight is wanting, or even in the slightest degree defective. Indeed, as will be presently seen, the animal *must* be possessed of tolerably keen sight in order to capture its prey. And yet, even to the present day, many an edu-

cated and observant man believes in its total blindness, just as he believes in the blackness of the cockroach, the close relationship of spiders to insects, and the piscine character of the whale.

Of the same erroneous nature is Shakespeare's estimate of the powers and disposition of the blind-worm. Does he not give the harmless little reptile high place among the foul creatures specially called upon to respect Titania's slumbers?—

"Newts and blind-worms do no harm,
Come not near our fairy queen."
Midsummer Night's Dream, Act II. sc. 2.

And does he not mention its "sting" as a leading ingredient in the unhallowed brew wherewith the "secret, black, and midnight hags" evoke the apparitions which warn Macbeth of his future dangers? For more than three hundred years the blind-worm, from no fault of its own, has posed before the world as a venomous reptile, and has endured the inevitable consequences of its evil but undeserved reputation. That its traducers can bring forward no evidence of its baleful deeds matters little; that it possesses neither fangs, nor sting, nor poison, matters less. Fact has many a hard battle to fight before it can oust Tradition from its stronghold, and the blind-worm is only one of many hundreds of creatures which, in truth our most useful

allies, are nevertheless treated by us as we should treat our worst enemies.

And that without the least inquiry into their true character, which we seem to consider as wholly superfluous and uncalled-for. We behave towards animals in general, indeed, very much as the French criminal law deals with an accused man, laying upon him the burden of showing his innocence rather than upon the prosecution that of proving his guilt. In only too many cases we go farther still in the path of injustice, and altogether dispense with trial and even accusation, retaining none of the ordinary formalities save those of verdict and sentence.

It is rather a matter for surprise that creatures so generally misrepresented as the blind-worm should contrive in any degree to hold their own in the face of the war of extermination which is continually being waged against them. Harmless and innocent though they may be, every man's hand is against them, and we can only wonder that, like the dodo and the great auk, they have not long since been driven, by human persecution, from the face of the earth.

Such, however, is happily not as yet the case, and the blind-worm, most interesting of our few British lizards, is still to be commonly seen in districts undesecrated by the ever-advancing tread of the builder. Gliding slowly along in its graceful, sinuous course, with much the same mysterious ease which characterizes the motions of the seal when in the water, we may notice it in many a grassy meadow, or watch it as it winds its way through the herbage at the foot of some hedgerow, its forked tongue darting in and out of its mouth so rapidly the while that the eye can scarcely follow its movements. Yet let us not stoop to raise it without good cause, not from groundless fear that it may wreak its vengeance upon us, and with venomous tooth inflict a deadly wound, but on account of the singular practice to which it is upon such occasions addicted. For the blind-worm is one of those creatures which Nature has endowed with the strangest and to us most incomprehensible of all instincts, viz., that of self-mutilation at the approach of danger. Just as the lobster casts off its claws in affright—or is said so to cast them—if a cannon be fired above it, thus irrationally depriving itself of its only weapons, so the blind-worm, possessing no limbs to discard, throws off its tail as the only member available for that purpose, and voluntarily sacrifices almost one-half of its bodily substance.

Not without good results, however, for

the severed organ, probably owing in some way to the shock received by the lacerated nerves, is immediately endowed with a strange and intensified sensibility, and enters upon a series of most lively and excited evolutions, leaping repeatedly into the air, and twisting and turning about very much as if it were under the influence of a powerful galvanic battery. The attention of the enemy, if enemy there be, is naturally transferred to the mysterious object engaged in so remarkable a performance, and the blind-worm meanwhile, or, rather, what is left of it, seizes the opportunity and makes good its escape.

And, curiously enough, the mutilated animal appears to suffer but little from its wound, severe and even irreparable though the injury may seem to ourselves, for the exposed surface not only heals with astonishing rapidity, but speedily shows signs of its intention to reproduce the missing member. And before many days have passed away this intention is carried into effect, a new tail grows in place of the old, and the blind-worm is once more possessed of the proportions which, in the time of its need, it had so ruthlessly abridged.

Never to our eyes, however, does the body regain its pristine elegance, for the mark of the wound still remains in the form of a distinct constriction at the point of severance, while the newly-gained member is always somewhat shorter and more stunted than its predecessor. Beauty, however, is a minor necessity in comparison with utility, and as this latter quality does not appear to be in any way deficient, the new tail is to all intents and purposes a perfect substitute for the old.

Perhaps the most curious part of the matter is the peculiarity of structure which renders the amputation possible, for the vertebrae at the base of the tail are actually penetrated by the muscles, which pass through them from side to side, so that by their sudden and violent constriction the spine is snapped at its weakest point. How the muscles themselves are simultaneously divided is a different question, and one which cannot be so easily answered.

Another curious point in the history of the blind-worm is the character of its food, which consists almost exclusively of the small white slugs which are so plentiful and so destructive in our gardens. A singular taste to us, no doubt, to whose ideas those slimy molluscs are so essentially repulsive, but one which renders the animal a most

useful ally to the gardener, provided only that he can be persuaded to avail himself of its services. The trade in toads and frogs, so valuable on account of their insectivorous proclivities, may now be almost considered as a recognised branch of commerce, although not one of very long standing; in course of time, perhaps, that in blind-worms will extend to equal or even greater proportions.

As far as can be judged from a study of its habits in captivity, the blind-worm feeds only at intervals of two or three days, digestion being apparently a long and tedious process. The animal, indeed, may almost be regarded as a kind of reptilian camel, with the power of storing up food instead of water, so that, at any rate during the earlier part of the year, when frosty nights are many and slugs venture but seldom from their retreats, one satisfactory repast will render it independent of food for several days to follow.

During many months of the year, however, its victims altogether disappear, burying themselves deeply in the ground in order to escape the effects of the chilling cold. The blind-worm, consequently, is placed in the position of the bat, the dormouse, the hedgehog, and many other animals, in that it must contrive to exist throughout the winter and early spring without food of any kind whatsoever. And so, early in autumn, creeps over it that strange, mysterious torpor to which we give the very inefficient title of "hibernation," a torpor which lies midway, so to speak, between life and death, combining some of the characteristics of each, and yet being widely different from either.

But what this lethargy is we cannot tell. We do not even know what sleep is; much less can we comprehend hibernation. That an animal should be able to live for months together without food, without drink, without motion, without even the necessity for breathing, save occasionally and at long intervals, is an inexplicable mystery to us. What is it that brings on the torpor? It is not the direct action of the cold; we know that. How are the vital functions arrested and held in abeyance for months together, while the thread of life remains unbroken? What peculiarity is there in the constitution of certain animals that forces them to yield to its influence, while others know it not? All these are questions to which we can venture no reply. We can say that the torpor is a blending of life and death. We may term it a suspension of almost all the vital ener-

gies, a trance that is something more than a trance, a temporary palsy of every mental, and almost every bodily function—what we will. But we can explain nothing.

In every branch of his subject the physiologist finds himself confronted by mysteries such as these, facts for which he cannot account, and which serve to remind him how very limited his knowledge is, after all, and how vast is the field of discovery which yet lies before him. And the farther he goes the more numerous do such problems become, and the greater grows his sense of his own ignorance.

At last comes the spring, and the blind-worm participates in the general awakening of nature. No sooner do the slugs leave their earthy retreats and sally forth for a meal upon the fresh green herbage, than their unrelenting persecutor sets out in search of them, and recommences the good work which for so many months has perforce been interrupted. And so, whenever the slugs are carrying on their mischievous labours, the blind-worm is doing all in its power to restrict their ravages, and is thus working, as every servant of Nature works, for others as well as itself, and helping, by its daily labours, to render the world habitable by higher beings.

Snake-like in form and movements, there are other respects also in which the blind-worm resembles the members of the serpent tribe, and one of them lies in the fact that, at certain intervals, it is obliged to change its skin. This it does in two ways. As a general rule, it strips off the discarded garment just as one pulls off a sock or a stocking, turning the greater part inside out during the process. Sometimes, however, and especially if it can find no suitable herbage against which to rub itself, its coat is cast off in fragments, the head being usually the last part of the body withdrawn. In localities where the blind-worm is plentiful these cast skins are often to be found, the animal not possessing the curious taste of that strict economist the toad, who invariably rolls his disused raiment into a ball, and swallows it with evident appreciation.

NEXT to the blind-worm, perhaps, the sand-lizard is the most familiar of our British species, for there are few sandy heaths upon which it may not be seen by any one who will take the trouble to look for it. A bright and active little creature it is, darting briskly to and fro with a curiously jerky motion, and giving one the idea that its motive

power must be due to clockwork, which requires re-winding at intervals of two or three seconds. In point of agility, however, it is surpassed by its near relative, the scaly lizard, which is at least half as active again, and dashes about with really wonderful impetuosity for a cold-blooded reptile.

Harmless though it is, the sand-lizard bears in most parts of the country a reputation at least as evil as that of the blind-worm. I well remember capturing one of these reptiles when a child, and showing it in triumph to the gardener—an intelligent man in most respects—in order that he might admire its beauty. The man almost lost his senses from sheer terror, and retreated as fast as I advanced, imploring me meanwhile, in terror-stricken accents, to throw my prisoner away before it turned on me and bit me. By way of convincing him that it could not do so I placed my finger in its mouth, but he was beyond the reach of any such argument, and only redoubled his entreaties. His unalterable belief, as I gathered from

his incoherent remarks, was that lizards were in the habit of biting hay-makers as they lay sleeping in the shade after their mid-day meal, that a deadly poison was introduced into the wound, and that the injured men, to use my informant's inelegant but expressive language, "went on swelling and swelling until they busted." And this or a similar belief seems to be almost universal among the agricultural classes.

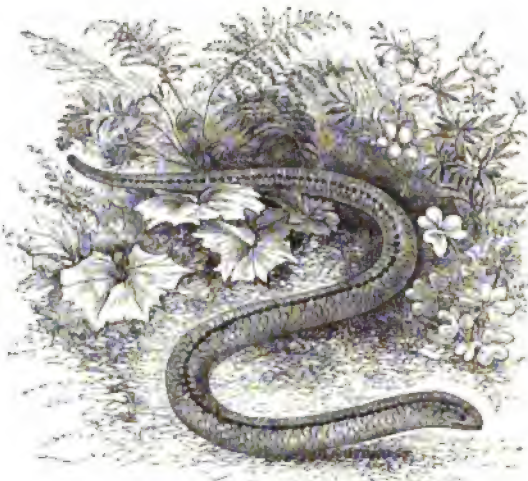
In Ireland, this harmless little reptile appears to be equally dreaded, but its mode of attack is held to be of a different character; as witness the following remarks of a country car-driver, quoted from a recent issue of one of the daily newspapers:—

"They are dreadful, are lizards. They don't bite ye like snakes, or spit at ye like toads; but if ye sleep wid ye'r mouth open, they crawl, just crawl down ye'r throat into

ye'r stommick and kill ye. For they've schales on their bodies, and can't get back; and they just scratch, and bite, and claw at ye'r innards till ye die."

It is a curious fact that the smaller and more harmless the animal, the more terrible are the powers with which it is popularly accredited. A truly venomous and dangerous animal like the viper, for instance, is looked upon as comparatively innocuous by the side of such creatures as that which we are now discussing, and we even read, upon credible testimony, of a number of villagers refusing to proceed along a pathway until one of their number, more courageous than his fellows, had jumped upon a death's-head moth which happened to be resting upon the ground!

How such extraordinary ideas originate it is difficult to imagine. They can be traced to no definite source, but seem to be of unknown antiquity, handed down from one generation to another, and considered almost as articles of faith, which none may venture to ques-



Blind-worm.

tion, far less to deny. It is useless to prove, by actual demonstration, that the abused little creatures are perfectly and absolutely harmless. The conviction to the contrary is far too deeply planted to be uprooted in so simple a manner, and the experimentalist is probably looked upon as a rash and deluded enthusiast who madly tempts his fate, or even as one secretly practising the Black Art, and permitted to perform acts which to all others were certain destruction. And this is no overdrawn account, as any one can testify who has had personal experience of the strange notions prevalent among the lower classes of the community, notions which, preposterous though they may be, will not be eradicated for many a long year to come. Superstition is not yet dead, and natural history, perhaps, suffers more from its influence than any other branch of knowledge.

For superstition such notions must be considered; and worse than superstition. One can find some excuse for a man who believes, for instance, in apparitions of the traditional character, in warnings from the dead, or in many other supernatural phenomena; for, without admitting that such manifestations do actually occur, few of us will be venture-

some enough to assert that they are utterly and in all circumstances beyond the range of possibility. But it is *not* possible, under any conditions, that the blind-worm and the sand-lizard should ever do, or have done, the terrible deeds ascribed

to them. They lack, not only the will, but the means to cause the slightest injury to any human being, and there is in consequence absolutely no ground whatever, actual or possible, for the charges brought against them. Yet there are thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands who hold to their baseless opinions in defiance of experience, of fact, and of common sense; and the penalty of their wilful ignorance falls, not upon themselves, but upon beings which have done nothing whatever to deserve it.

UNLIKE the blind-worm, the sand-lizard bears captivity but sadly, and is tolerably sure to be found dead in its cage before many days have passed away. It seems, indeed, to lose all desire for life when once it is placed in confinement, pines for the free and active existence which it formerly led, refuses to take food, and so commits voluntary suicide by slow starvation. I have kept a sand-lizard prisoner once and will never do so again, knowing the lingering death to which by so doing I should certainly doom it.

There is a redeeming feature concerning the animal, however, and that is, that its ways and habits can be easily watched without the necessity for taking it captive at all.

So long as the observer does not venture too near the timid little creature, allow his shadow to fall upon it, or alarm it by a heavy footstep, it will be in nowise disconcerted by the presence of a spectator, and will carry on its search for food with perfect composure. A sunny day, however, must be chosen for the purpose of watching it, for, like all reptiles,

it is peculiarly susceptible to cold, and never leaves its retreat unless the temperature be tolerably high.

Reptiles are not as a rule remarkable for excess of parental affection, and the sand-lizard fully agrees in this particular with other members of

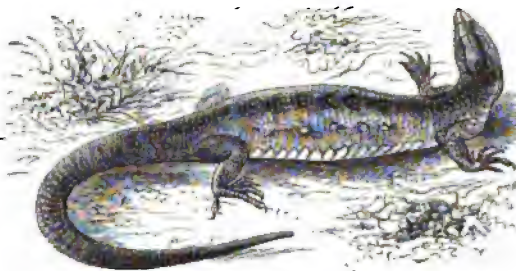
its class; for it evidently considers that, when once its eggs are laid, it has fully discharged its maternal duties, and can safely leave its offspring to cater for themselves. It contents itself, therefore, when the appropriate season comes round, with scratching a shallow hole in the sand, placing therein the eggs—fourteen or fifteen in number—covering them, and leaving them to their fate. As an exposed spot is always chosen for this purpose, the sun's rays do all that is needful, and the young lizards, when they appear, accept the situation, and become independent from the very moment of their birth.

The scaly lizard, however, first cousin to the preceding, is less destitute of affection for her little ones, for she is sometimes to be seen surrounded by her family, and probably in some way ministering to their juvenile wants. But then, it is only

just to say, her young are born alive, so that she cannot but take some little interest in their welfare; whereas the sand-lizard, who is obliged not only to lay eggs, but to bury them underground for some length of time, can hardly be expected to wait about the spot until her little brood make their appearance in the world, and is scarcely to be blamed if she



Sand Lizard.



Scaly Lizard.

straightway forgets the very fact of their existence.

As regards activity, the scaly lizard is the Mercury of the reptile world, darting to and fro with such astounding velocity that a very quick eye and an adroit hand are required to bring about its capture. It has a provoking way, moreover, of taking refuge beneath the sprays of a low furze bush just as the fateful stroke is about to be delivered, and the intending captor must either await a more favourable opportunity, or else brave the spines of that most unpleasant of shrubs, with the almost certain probability of failing after all. It may be accepted as an axiom, indeed, that, until a little experience has been gained, two lizards out of every three will elude the fingers outstretched to grasp them.

Both the scaly and the sand lizard, by the way, possess the same curious instinct of self-mutilation which has already been described with reference to the blind-worm, and will part with their tails upon very slight provo-

cation. The latter, also, will do its best to bite the hand of its captor if it be seized, although its teeth are far too small to allow it to realise its very natural ambition.

Both lizards also agree in another particular, and that relates to the character of their food, which seems to consist entirely of the smaller insects. Their favourite victims appear to be those popularly known as the two-winged flies, in which the wings are reduced to a minimum in number and size, while the body consists almost wholly of nutritious matter. In default of such dainty morsels, however, small beetles and bugs are eagerly accepted, and the number of such small fry which one of these lizards will consume in the course of a single day is really astonishing. Could these little creatures, indeed, be only taught to discriminate between the injurious and the beneficial species, and to feed upon those only which belong to the former class, we should have few more valuable assistants in the task of cultivating the ground than these two interesting lizards.

UTOPIA.

By EMILY H. HICKEY.

WHERE is the land of Utopia,
The good, the fair ?
How shall we bask in its sunshine,
Breathe in its air ?
Say, is that wonderful country,
Indeed, nowhere ?

Where the love of men for their fellows
Is deep and strong ;
Where the trust of men in their fellows
Is broad and long ;
Where the voices of man and nature
Make one great song.

Where they ever seek the Ideal
With hearts unashamed ;
And the search for good and beauty
Is all unblamed ;
And the name of falsehood never
So much as named.

All of the folk in Utopia
Are free of the sod ;
They know no fetters of slavery,
No tyrant's nod ;
They may not be dragged or driven,
Were it even to God.

Are all in Utopia equal ?
They all are free ;
They have room to breathe and grow in,
To hear and see ;
And they never think of claiming
Equality.

Work and honour and pleasure
Are all they claim ;
For spirit differs from spirit
As frame from frame ;
And fair degree is better
Than same and same.

They sometimes go wrong in Utopia,
And err likewise ;
But the light of a loyal purpose
Is in their eyes ;
And if they stumble in going,
Again they rise.

They cleave not to old for old's sake,
Nor new for new
They seek, but are eager-willing
God's will to do ;
So shall they one day, surely,
Know what is true.

Whenever one steppeth forward
New ways to try,
There is none to hiss him and scorn him,
Or raise the cry,
"Bring stones wherewith to stone him
For blasphemy."

They know the eternal Spirit
Hath many a guise
Of body for high revealing
To seeking eyes;
They love the spirit truly,
And so are wise.

The worn-out body they gently
Lay in its rest,
The dark and quickening glory
Of earth's dear breast;
From good there comes the better,
From better, the best.

They are never afraid in Utopia
To try and to prove;
Each follows a loyal impulse,
However it move,
And doeth whatever he pleaseth,
Because all love.

They know the wonderful secrets
That lie soft curled
Round the heart of the mystic flower
Which is the world;
The home of life and quickening,
With light imperaled.

They have watched her all the daytime
Know every heave
And fall of her bosom's beauty,
And softly cleave
To her side, and laugh with her laughter,
And with her grieve.

They have gazed on her in the night-time,
In lucid rest;
They have seen her lovely body
By sleep carest;
They know of the mole cinque-spotted
Upon her breast.

Their eyes are open for seeing,
Their ears can hear
The blare of the great wind's trumpet,
Its flute-song clear;
The music of spirit voices,
Afar, anear.

They are all alive and responsive
To tone and touch;
But know not the pain they suffer
Who feel too much—
The folk we call the poets,
And the like of such.

They know not our anguish-billows
On oceans wild;
The needs of the sense and the spirit
Are reconciled;
The strength of the man has wedded
The heart of the child.

Are there ever tears in Utopia?
Ah, who may say?
Is the fire of pain a-burning
There day by day?
—Well, tears and fire may be lustral,
May heal, not slay.

When shall the sight of that country
Crown wish and prayer?
Oh! shall we ever find it,
The dear, the fair?
Or is the land of Utopia,
Indeed, nowhere?

ANCIENT SOUTHWARK.

By WILLIAM C. PRESTON.

FEW persons who visit London for sight-seeing and enjoyment regard the south side of the river as worth much attention. Certainly there is Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle—that must, of course, be seen; nor must Lambeth Palace be forgotten. And there are excursions which can only be made from the London Bridge or Waterloo station. So the Thames must be crossed sometimes; but for the rest, what is there to attract? What holiday-makers want to explore the New Cut or the Borough? To the popular imagination these are prosaic

and sordid localities consecrated to business and the poor, infested by characters whose close acquaintance is undesirable, and redolent of fried fish and other objectionable smells—savoury or unsavoury according to opinion.

Crossing London Bridge, either to reach the station or to observe that wonderful traffic which, even in the Metropolis, is not elsewhere to be matched, does any one not impelled by business or philanthropy ever feel tempted to turn down High Street on the one hand or Tooley Street on the other? If

by any chance the unaccustomed visitor finds that he has been drawn some distance along one of these thoroughfares, how eager he is to get out of it! How deafening the rattle of carts and waggons; how bewildering the noisy stream of hurrying people, for the most part ill-clad, ill-fed, and sometimes ill-mannered! How depressing the suggestions of the very shops and buildings, the limp and flaccid vegetables, the shrivelled and decaying fruit, the butchers' meat dried and scraggy, the crockery with its garish patterns, the tawdry finery in the drapers' windows, and, above all, the abounding gin palaces! all is evidently arranged to meet the needs of the poorest; there is nothing to excite either admiration, desire, curiosity, or interest of any kind. We may well have no wish to linger in Southwark.

And yet if I were to say that amidst all this racket and commotion, these dirty streets and dismal surroundings, we stand on the most classic ground in London, I should not be far wrong. Go where we will we tread upon some spot that was once the site of a notable building, the scene of an historical event, the point to which the eyes of the entire nation were turned, or a place associated in some way with the fame and fortunes of men and women of renown. Here once were noble palaces, extensive parks, and picturesque houses nestling amongst gardens and shadowed by trees. Localities now squalid and dingy have oftentimes been bright with royal pageants; courtly processions went winding through streets now lined with the most wretched dwellings and known only to the poorest of the people; kings feasted with their nobles in mansions that have given place to shops and taverns; the highest aristocracy of rank and intellect gathered nightly to see Shakespeare act where now a mighty brewery flourishes; the poet himself lived within a stone's throw of the Borough Market; hard by were the magnificent residences of the Bishops of Rochester and Winchester; close at hand lived Beaumont and Fletcher; in the church of St. Mary Overy, or, as it is now called, St. Saviour's, lie the ashes of Gower the poet and of Edmund Shakespeare, the dramatist's brother; in the churchyard are buried Fletcher and Massinger; and within a few hundred yards is the spot where stood the famous Tabard, immortalised by Chaucer as the starting-point from which he and his fellow-pilgrims set out for the shrine of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury.

Going farther back still we find South-

wark associated in many important ways with the earliest history of our country. High Street was no doubt part of the great Roman road leading from the metropolis to the southern parts of England, so that it may be said to be at least two thousand years old; and the large quantity of Roman remains discovered here at various times prove that the Romans had an extensive settlement and a cemetery of considerable size. Dane and Norman alike had to count with the "south work" of London in their attempts to possess themselves of the country, and the Danish King Olaf, who fought a battle here in 1008, has yet his record in the Borough in the church of St. Olave, or St. Olaf, and in Tooley Street, the name of which is really a corruption of St. Oley Street. Forty-four years later the army of Godwin, Earl of Kent, was drawn up on the Southwark bank of the river, whilst he himself with his fleet passed through the arches of London Bridge to engage the royal navy which, one is rather amused to read, "consisted of about fifty vessels then lying off Westminster."

After the disastrous Battle of Hastings the victorious Norman marched upon Southwark with the intention of laying siege to London, but judging discretion to be for the time the better part of valour he contented himself with laying Southwark in ashes and then pushed forward to subjugate the western counties. Such associations with historical events and historical personages might be recalled in any number. If one could only lift some magic wand and restore at will the Southwark of successive periods, few would blame us for speaking of it as the most interesting quarter of London, and few visitors to the metropolis would shun the southern side of the river. But, alas! another kind of wizardry has exercised its power in exactly the opposite direction; its spells have taken some hundreds of years to work, but they have effected such a transformation as it would be difficult to parallel. With two or three exceptions all the old landmarks are gone, and there is nothing to assist the imagination in restoring the scenes of the past.

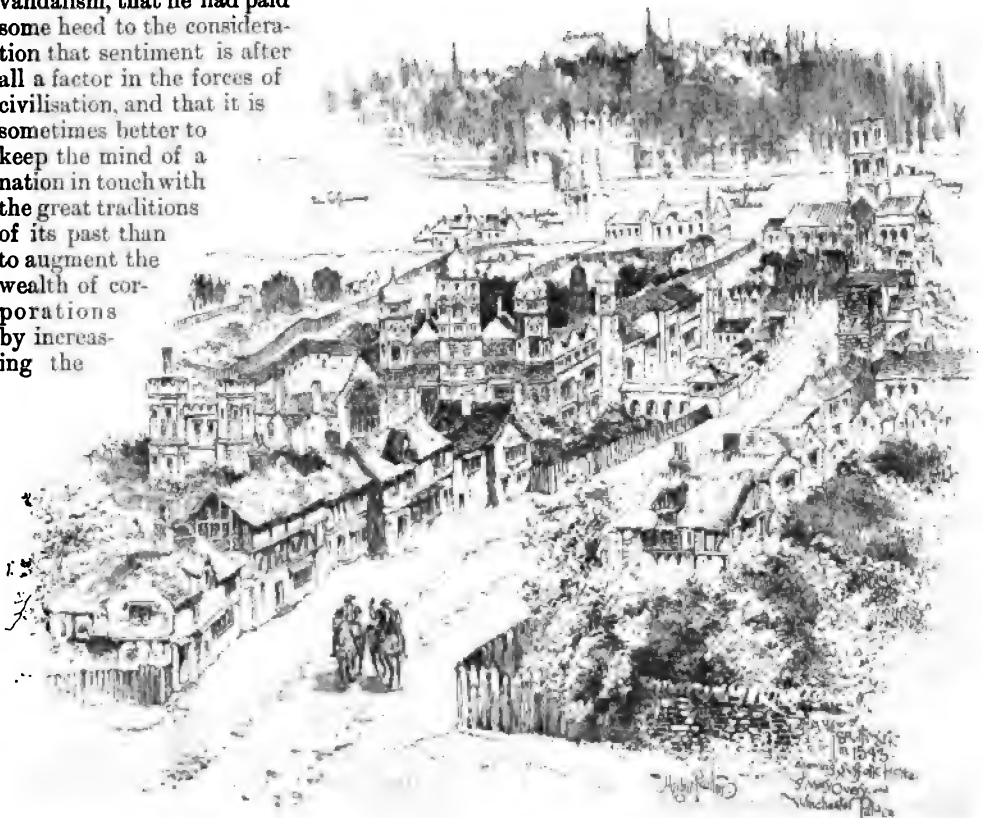
"But see," says the man of progress and improvement, "how much the transformation you complain of has increased the value of the place. Eight hundred years ago the entire revenue of Southwark was only £16, and the citizens of London bought the manor from Henry VIII. for the paltry sum of £647; and now, look you, land was sold there only the other day at the rate of £70,000

per acre. What would you? Isn't it better to turn the place to account after such a magnificent fashion than to retain those old buildings that not one in ten thousand would care to look at? Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and Edward Alleyn's Bear Garden are gone it is true, but see what you have in place of them. What could be more interesting than Barclay & Perkins' Brewery covering its twelve acres of ground, and brewing three thousand bushels of malt per day? Would not most people be more interested in looking at that huge vat which holds £9,000 worth of porter, and at those splendid copper boilers that cost nearly £5,000 each, than at an old tumble-down theatre or the relics of Roman baths? And if you have lost the 'Tabard' Inn, with its memories of Chaucer, and the old Marshalsea prison, see what capital streets have been opened out, and how every foot of ground has been utilised."

This may be all very true, at least in the opinion of ninety-nine out of every hundred; but none the less do we wish that a few of those old land-marks could have been spared, that the improvement-man had not been quite so ruthless in his vandalism, that he had paid some heed to the consideration that sentiment is after all a factor in the forces of civilisation, and that it is sometimes better to keep the mind of a nation in touch with the great traditions of its past than to augment the wealth of corporations by increasing the

value of their land and to crowd within a given space as many shops and taverns as possible.

Since the outward form of things has been so greatly changed, it is well that we should keep as vivid as may be our mental picture of what localities like Southwark were in days gone by; and something more will be gained by this than the mere gratification of curiosity or of archaeological tastes. In our attempt we receive welcome help from artists and annalists who have happily left us pen-and-pencil pictures that no Board of Works can obliterate and no vandalism can destroy. Take, for instance, the sketch of Southwark in 1543 which is given at the foot of this page. There is every reason to believe that it accurately represents the general aspect of a large portion of the borough and indicates the position of some of the most interesting of its buildings. Suppose we take our stand in the road-way to-day a little below the well-known St. George's Church, of which that indefatigable and philanthropic clergyman, the Rev. Burman Cassin, is now the rector. We shall then be upon the spot occupied by

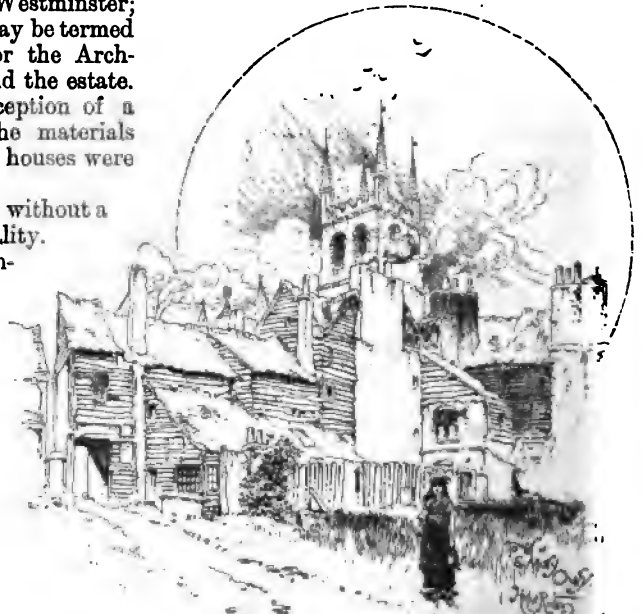


the two horsemen in our illustration. Looking in the direction from which they are advancing we shall be gazing along the Borough High Street towards London Bridge; but of the picturesque scene represented by the artist not one feature now remains except, of course, the river and St. Mary Overy's Church.

Here on the left is a building which in its day passed through many vicissitudes. The reader will remember that Henry VIII. had a young sister Mary, who was married at the age of sixteen to Charles XII. of France. In three months she was left a widow and soon afterwards became the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, who built this mansion as his residence and called it Suffolk House. It was a magnificent place, as may easily be seen, and soon passed into the hands of the king himself, who gave his brother-in-law in exchange a palace of the Bishop of Norwich in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. It now became a Mint of Coinage, and Henry dying soon afterwards, the building was to a large extent neglected. Still it must have retained something of its former splendour and importance, for in 1549 we find Edward VI. coming from Hampton Court to visit the place and dining here with the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs. Its name had then been altered to Southwark Place, but another change ere long occurred. It was discontinued as a mint and became the palace of the Archbishop of York by grant of Queen Mary as recompense to him for York House at Westminster; and then presently came what may be termed its downfall and dispersion, for the Archbishop sold both the palace and the estate. The former was, with the exception of a small portion, pulled down, the materials were sold and a number of small houses were erected on the site.

We must not pass this building without a word about the surrounding locality. It appears as pleasant a neighbourhood as one could wish to live in, with its delightfully irregular gabled houses and their garden plots behind, their overhanging trees and rustic fences. But, as in the London of to-day some of the poorest houses and the most miserable and vicious of the population are to be found almost under the very walls of palaces and in close proximity to wealth and luxury; so it was in 1543. The artist could

not put everything into his picture, else there would have been evidence of this. It is curious that, with all the changes that have come over Southwark, the Mint of to-day is morally and socially the lineal descendant of the Mint of three hundred years ago, for the district as well as the building was then known by this name. Some hint of its character is given by the sketch, on next page, of the Mint from Redcross Street. Both these thoroughfares still exist, and it was here that, six years ago, when investigations were being made into the condition of the outcast poor of London, we met with some of the most revolting and heart-rending revelations of poverty, wretchedness, and vice. Since then much improvement has been effected, but the locality bears yet a strong family likeness to its predecessor in the time of Edward VI. In the streets and alleys running out of Mint Street debtors, coiners, and vagabonds early found an asylum, and, as the old chronicler puts it, "traitors, felons, fugitives, condemned persons, convict persons, felons defamed, those put in exigent of outlawry, felons of themselves, and such as refused the law of the land." It was a favourite resort and hiding-place of Jack Sheppard, and Jonathan Wild is said to have kept his horses at the Duke's Head in Redcross Street. The circumstance that at one time the law relieved all debtors under £50 who had taken sanctuary in the Mint from



their creditors contributed to bring strangely contrasting characters together here, and so we find "poor Nahum Tate," once poet-laureate, and joint author of Tate and Brady's version of the Psalms, seeking shelter here from his rapacious creditors, and here he was compelled to remain until he found the safer shelter of death. The locality was naturally a dangerous place for officers of justice, and process-servers were commonly pumped upon, and sometimes thrown into "the Black Ditch" of mud and filth.

But we must leave this unlovely neighbourhood and pursue our way up High Street. Nearly opposite Suffolk House may be seen the tower of St. George's Church, or, more properly speaking, the Church of St. George the Martyr. The present structure, built in 1733, is upon the site of the one seen in our illustration, but very different in design, and wonderfully so in its busy and noisy surroundings. Here lies buried the notorious Bishop Bonner, "a man who seems to have been of so detestable a nature that if there had been no persecution he must have sought other means of venting his cruelty." A little higher up stood the Marshalsea, the prison in which he died after ten years' confinement, and to which he was consigned on losing his see of London for adherence to Rome. We cannot speak of this without recalling an incident which showed that the cruel persecutor could be witty on occasion. As he was being conducted to the Marshalsea a man meeting him cried, "Good-morrow, Bishop Quondam!" To which Bonner promptly replied, "Farewell, knave Semper!"

Other notabilities lie buried in this same spot. Of one we are reminded whenever we hear the phrase, which used to be regarded as a vulgar synonym for accuracy, "According to Cocker," for the engraver and teacher of writing and arithmetic of that name, whose Arithmetic was a text-book with our grandfathers, is said to have been interred in the churchyard. Time has been when I am afraid I used to wish that his arithmetic had been buried with him, for a venerable teacher of my own employed it as an engine of torture in my early days. I fear if I had known then that Bonner and he lay so near each other in



death I should have been guilty of wishing that they had had some acquaintance during life; for in that case the career of the Protestant Cocker might have been closed before his Arithmetic had seen the light.

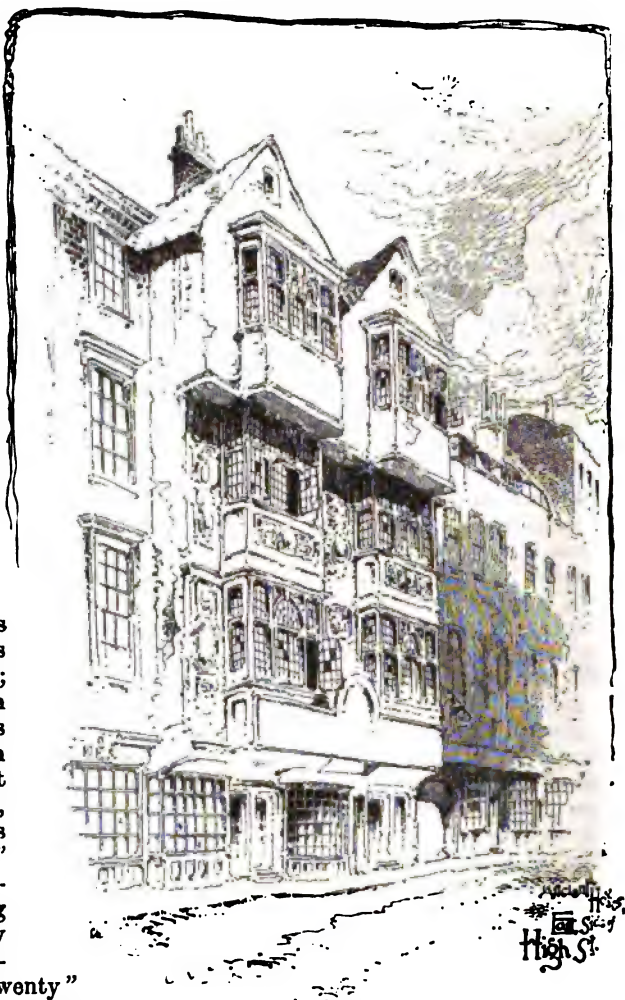
On the same side of the way, still nearer London Bridge, there were until comparatively recent years some relics of the old Tabard Inn. Even at the time of our sketch this was the most ancient of the inns of Southwark, for Stow (1598) tells us, "In Southwark be many fair inns for the receipt of travellers, amongst the which the most ancient is the Tabard, so called of the sign which, as we now term it, is of a jacket or sleeveless coat, whole before, open on both sides, with a square collar, winged at the shoulders: a stately garment of old time much worn of noblemen and others." Of all the mementoes of Southwark's association with what is interesting in our history probably this is the one whose disappearance is most to be regretted, because "this was the hostelry where Chaucer and the other pilgrims met together, and with Henry Bailly, their host, accorded about the manner of their journey to Canterbury." The poet himself tells us:—

"Befell that in that season, on a day
At Southwark at the Tabard as I lay,
Ready to wander on my Pilgrimage
To Canterbury with devout courage,
At night was come into that hostelry
Well nine-&-twenty in a compaignie
Of sundrie folk, by adventure yfall
In fellowship, and pilgrimes were they all,
That towards Canterbury wouden ride:
The chambers and the stables weren wide,
And well we weren eased at the best."

This was just five hundred years ago; but as we look into the sketch we can almost

fancy that we see the inn yard becoming lively with the bustle of the arrival of the guests on that memorable April evening. And "who is this in a remote corner of the gallery, leaning upon the balustrade, the most unobserved but most observing of all the numerous individuals scattered about the scene before us? His form is of a goodly bulk and habited in a very dark violet-coloured dress, with bonnet of the same colour; from the button on his breast hangs the gilt anelace, a kind of knife or dagger. His face is of that kind which, once seen, is remembered for ever. Thought, 'sad but sweet,' is most impressively stamped upon his pale but comely features, to which the beard lends a fine antique cast. But it is the eye which most arrests you; there is something in that which whilst you look upon it, seems to open as it were glimpses of an unfathomable world beyond. It is the great poet-pilgrim himself, the narrator of the proceedings of the *Canterbury Pilgrimage*." We seem to see also the host welcoming the pilgrims, and, passing through a door in the gallery into the "Pilgrims' Room" behind, we behold the "nine-and-twenty" as Chaucer has described them with the inimitably vivid touches which give life and distinctive character to each. We listen to the host proposing his plan for beguiling the journey by competitive story-telling, the prize to be a supper for the winner at the expense of the rest when they return; and we long above all things that this old building, or as much of it as was left by the great fire of 1676, had been at all costs preserved, that we might have at least some visible link remaining connecting the life of the present with the "father of English poetry." It is hard assuredly to realise this connection as we look upon the High Street of to-day.

Happily there is yet one substantial relic of ancient Southwark upon which we may gaze. In the extreme background of our sketch rises the imposing tower of the Church of St. Mary Overy, or, as it had been named



at the date to which the illustration belongs, and as it is now known, the Church of St. Saviour, situated at the foot of London Bridge. It has suffered many things at the hands of many architects, restorers, and improvement-men, but still there is much that dates back to the earliest times and gives us an idea of what it once was. In magnitude and architectural character it ranks as the third church in the metropolis, and must have been at one time finer than it is now. Its origin carries us back to the time before even a wooden bridge spanned the Thames. A maiden named Mary, we are told, plying to and fro between the opposite shores of the river, devoted her earnings, as well as the earnings of her parents before her, to the erection of a House of Sisters. This was

long before the Conquest. The House was afterwards converted into a college for priests, and in 1106, two Norman Knights, William Pont de l'Arche and William Dauncy, founded a church "for canons regular." It was named St. Mary "Overy," meaning Over the Rhé (Saxon for river), or, which seems more probable, St. Mary o' the Ferry; in some ancient records it is called "St. Mary at the Ferry." Architecturally it is extremely interesting, but this aspect of its interest my limits will not permit me to unfold. It is one of the few churches in the kingdom which possesses a Lady Chapel. This was built by the Bishop of Winchester after the Great Fire of Southwark in 1212 and was used by Bishop Gardiner as a Consistorial Court in the reign of Queen Mary. In 1555 a Commission sat here for the trial of heretics, and Bishop Hooper and John Rogers were the first victims sent by it to the stake. Four years afterwards the Popish vestments were sold for the repairs of the church, and a stained-glass window now honours the memory of the martyrs. In this church are monuments and tombs of many eminent men and of some whose claim to distinction lies in their singularity or notoriety rather than in their eminence. Gower the poet has a splendid monument, due less to his poetical fame than to his benefactions to the church. Opposite to his tomb is the

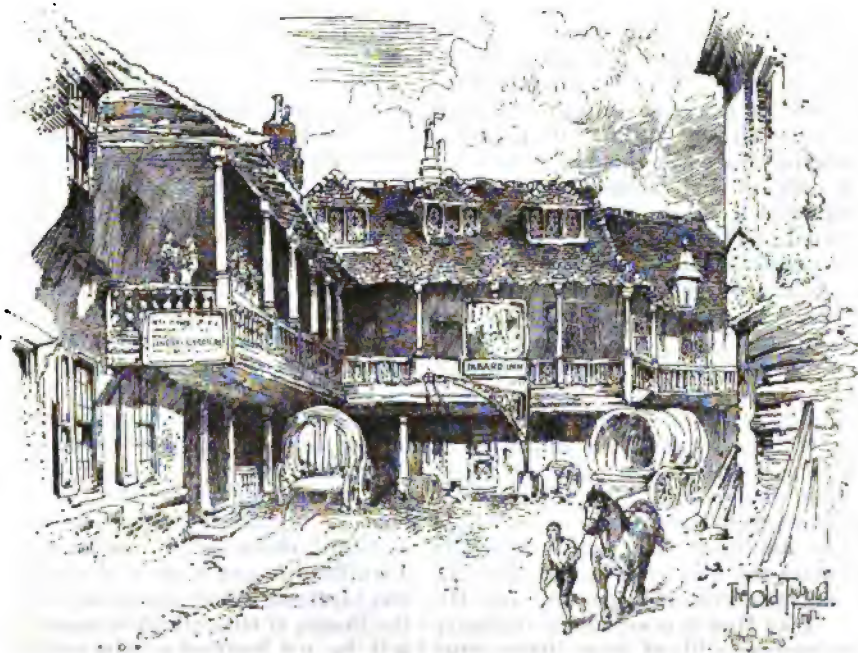
bust of John Bingham, saddler to Queen Elizabeth and James I.; and in the north transept lies Dr. Lockyer, the empiric, beneath the epitaph—

"His virtues and his pills are so well known,
That envy can't confine them under st. ne."

In the burial register we find the names of "Edmond Shakespeare, a player," "Mr. John Fletcher, a man," and "Philip Massinger, a stranger."

Winchester Palace, on the river bank, founded by Bishop Walter Giffard about 1105, and Rochester House, the residence of the Bishops of Rochester, have entirely passed away, warehouses, wharfs and similar buildings occupy their place, and the state and magnificence which once overshadowed these now prosaic localities are utterly forgotten.

For the present, however, we must take our leave of the neighbourhood. Although but few points have been touched they will sufficiently prove that Southwark is singularly rich in its associations with the past, and unattractive as its modern aspect is, it would not be difficult to show that the Southwark of to-day is full of interest also, to those who care to inquire into the condition and life of its people and to look at what is being wrought amongst them by the mighty forces of our time.



THE PARABLES OF AIR, OF WATER, AND OF FIRE.

BY THE REV. CANON RAWSTORNE.

MANY coarse and carnal interpretations of New Testament texts, and some idolatries, have been caused by a strange forgetfulness of our Lord's constant method of teaching by parable. "Without a parable he spake not:" so that wherever in his teaching he presents us with an external image, we must look beneath it for the moral or spiritual meaning. We find Him, while teaching according to this familiar method, likening the divine influence and presence in man to three of those four primary elements into which the old, pre-scientific world used to classify the material substances which exist in nature. The Spirit of God was air, it was water, it was fire. To the fourth element, earth, was likened the hard, dull, cold, inert, unfeeling, lifeless heart of man, which it is the Spirit's function to soften, cleanse, refresh, and fertilise like water, to warm and kindle like fire, to vivify and animate like air (Matt. xiii. 34; John iii. 5, 8; Matt. iii. 11; Luke viii. 12—15).

The first of the three parables is contained in the expression, Spirit of God, itself. Each of the original words for *spirit* (*Ruach* or *Pneuma*) means air, or wind, or breath—air in itself, air in motion, or air inhaled. It was under that likeness that the idea of an invisible immaterial spirit first presented itself to man, and the word by which he tried to express his new-born thought was that which he had already used for air. Nor was it wonderful that such should be the case. It was only through a shadow or resemblance that such an idea could be presented to his mind; and air is the thing which most nearly resembles that immaterial, omnipresent, almighty Spirit, which we believe God to be. It is the thing in nature that is quite invisible—like God. And yet, though unseen, it is possessed of irresistible force—like Him. Like God, it combines power with gentleness: nothing softer than a summer air, nothing fiercer than a tempest which lashes the sea into fury and uproots forest-trees from the ground. On earth, air is omnipresent: wherever there is a *vacuum*, it rushes in and fills it, thus raising naturally in the mind the idea of Him who fills the whole universe with His presence and His power. Like Him it is absolutely necessary to every moment's life of every living thing

in earth, or sky, or sea: "If Thou takest away their breath, they die." A few moments' privation of vital air is enough to extinguish life. So that air, being the most apparently immaterial of all material things, has been to mankind a link between the material and immaterial worlds—a ladder-step by which the human mind has risen to the conception of an immaterial deity and of that spiritual immaterial part, which, as we fondly hope, will prove, when death comes, to have existed in us from our origin, and to be destined to endure in us for ever. One resemblance more. Though air is in itself invisible, yet its effects are always seen. Such also is the case with the Spirit of God. Itself and its fruits are inseparable; it is where they are, it is not where they are not. "The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, so is *every one* that is born of the Spirit"—*every one*—the Spirit and its effects are never parted, any more than are their effects from its types in nature. The wind is never parted from the sounds and motions of which it is the cause. Is there no motion in the clouds—no rustling in the leaves—no ripple on the water—no waft of air upon the cheek? Then surely there is no wind. Are living creatures gasping, and fainting, and dying for want of breath? Then surely there is no air. Is there no truthfulness, no purity, no holiness, above all no love, in a life or heart of man? Then the Spirit of God is not in him. But if those fruits exist and abound, then, even though he be heathen, infidel, or heretic, the divine Spirit of life is in him. And to deny either of these facts, but especially the positive side of the doctrine, is to commit that sin of the Pharisees which can never be forgiven. It may be difficult to fit these facts into certain theories of sacramental grace; but, if it be so, so much the worse for the theories, which must harmonize with the facts of life, or else be plucked up as plants which the heavenly Father has not planted. If I see a man of intense truthfulness, of unstained honour, of unaffected godliness, of enlightened philanthropy—a man, in fact, like John Bright—and I am told that he never was baptized, I must not venture to say that the Breath of God, which breatheth where it will, has not breathed on him and given him

the birth-from-above of the Spirit. Or, if I see a man whose whole life has been devoted to one great cause, and that the cause of Christ, spreading truth and holiness in the darkest regions of the earth, and at last dying a lonely death, far from family and home, like David Livingstone; and if I am told that he, being an Independent, had no valid ordination, and therefore had no security of possessing himself or of communicating to others, all that may be conveyed by human hands of the grace of the Christian ministry—I reply that there was visible in him

"That blessed unction from above,

which

Is comfort, life, and fire of love,—"

that I can hear in him the sound of the Wind of God, and see in him the character and life inspired by the Breath of God, and that these sure signs were for him a letter of orders, traced by no human hand but legible to all men.

Next follows the parable of the water.

This is older than the days of Jesus of Nazareth, water having been already to Isaiah, and perhaps to others before him, a favourite symbol of God's Spirit. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," said that prophet; and again, "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground," to which last saying he adds in the answering parallel the necessary explanation, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah xlv. 3; lv. 1).

Three times in the fourth Gospel our Lord mentions the Spirit under the same figure. To Nicodemus He described that birth-from-above, which alone admits into God's kingdom, as a birth of water and of the Spirit. To the woman of Samaria He spoke of a living water which should satisfy man's thirst for ever. To the people of Jerusalem He offered a river of living water flowing from within the heart. And then He left His evangelist to give the needful explanation of this thrice-repeated figure, "This spake He of the Spirit" (John iii. 3—5; iv. 10, 14; vii. 37—39).

Water is *refreshing*. When a soul is athirst for God, the Spirit meets him with the invitation, "Come ye to the waters," "Take of the water of life freely." This Spirit is itself the water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds out of the throne of God and satisfies man's thirst for ever (Isaiah lv. 1; Rev. xxii. 1, 17).

Water is *fertilising*. When man's moral nature is so dead and dry that neither good wishes nor good works can grow from him, the Spirit's baptism of water makes it spring again, "like the willows by the water-courses," and "blossom as the rose" (Isaiah xxxv. 1; xlv. 4).

Water is *purifying*. When the heart, oppressed with the consciousness of guilt, is saying, "Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin," desiring not merely the remission of a penalty but a thorough cleansing, which shall reach the inmost springs of feeling, thought, and will, then the water of the Spirit alone has power to effect the deep inward change (Psalm li. 2).

Surely this is the birth of water and of the Spirit which it seemed so strange to our Lord should be quite unknown to the teacher of Israel—to find our inward natures cleansed, refreshed, and fertilised by this living Water of God, and so to be introduced into a new life in a new world (John iii. 5, 10).

There is yet one symbol more.

"He that cometh after me," said John the Baptist, shall "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The expression is precisely similar to that used in the conversation with Nicodemus; only the symbol is changed. There the Spirit was water, as in the first case it was wind or air, and here, lastly, it is fire (Matt. iii. 11).

Fire *kindles*. Man's heart is naturally cold to all but selfish things. He can be warm about his money-making or his love-making, or his pleasure-seeking. If he can identify himself with an ecclesiastical or political party so completely as to make that a second self, and to pour into it all his selfishness, he will compass sea and land to make a proselyte, or to win over a partisan. But few will much exert themselves to save a soul, or to make a human being happy. The heat that warms man's soul is oftenest only earthly fire. But if a man has experienced the baptism from above, the same warmth is generated for nobler and less selfish aims. His heart within him burns to do good. The sight of sorrow, suffering, want, ignorance, vice, crime, kindles within him the enthusiasm of love—a fervent, enduring desire, which becomes to him a principle of his life, to help all who are "vexed of the evil one," whether materially or morally. For he has been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. (Matt. xxiii. 15; Acts x. 38; Luke vi. 18.)

Or again, worship is cold; and all the

costly aids to devotion, which are piled on it by the fashion of the day, only help to chill it more. In presence of the architecture, the music, the painting, the needlework, the imagery, the ceremonial, the pulpit rhetoric, our sacrifice remains like Elijah's, after the twelve barrels full of water had been poured on it, very cold, without a spark of fire; and we stand beside it, trying to evoke, by still further artificial excitements, the fire which does not fall from heaven. But only the God which answereth by fire can send down, direct from Himself, the true spirit of warm devotion, the baptism of fire.

Once more, fire *lightens*. We need light more than ever now, when it has become even a distinction, of which men are vain, to profess to know nothing about a Being above ourselves, and a life beyond this present one.

Painfully and laboriously "we kindle a fire, and compass ourselves about with the sparks," which flash on us from our own researches, or from the sayings of the seers of the hour; and we would fear the Lord (if we were sure there were a Lord), and we would obey the voice of his servant (if we knew He had a servant); and so we try to walk in the light of our fire, and in the sparks that we have kindled. But, alas! we walk in darkness and have no light. For those who thus complain there still exists, as an object of hope and prayer, the Spirit's baptism of enlightening fire. (Isaiah l. 10, 11.)

There only remains to be expressed the wish and the prayer. Wash me too with the water; kindle me with the fire; vivify me with the air; baptize me with the Holy Ghost.

OUR OLD DOCTOR.

A Village Signette.

By J. E. PANTON, AUTHOR OF "COUNTRY SKETCHES IN BLACK AND WHITE," &c.

WHENEVER I am sick or sorry—and as years drift by in our village, sickness and sorrow seem much more frequent visitors than they used to be—I lean back in my red-cushioned chair by the bow-window and think regretfully, with sometimes a tear in my eye, about our dear old doctor. It has often struck me, that even in such a remote corner of the world as is our village, a great deal more of one's comfort and happiness depends upon one's doctor than upon anyone else in the world; and I do not think I ever felt this more severely than when circumstances drifted me away from home for some months, and I was laid up in one of the London suburbs; where the doctor was attentive enough, but where his bill was something awful to contemplate, and where I was obviously nothing more to him than a case; worth so much to him in his ledger, out of whom he would squeeze as much money as he possibly could.

I have kept that doctor's bill by way of a curiosity, and to show to anyone who doubts my word, and turning out some papers that are kept in the oaken chest that was originally part of the furniture in Corfe Castle, I came upon it, and it reminded me once more—if indeed I ever need reminding of him—of my dear dead friend whose accounts for a life-long attendance, all added together, would not reach to the end of one page of that other

bill, the folios of which are numbered one, two, three, and even four, and make pleasant reading, I must own, on such a day as this, when the south-west wind laden with rain is howling round my cottage and reminding me of the past in a manner that would be melancholy if I had not also some delightful reminiscences to ponder on as well.

I was not quite seventeen when I first met our doctor riding down the lane, that leads between flowering hedges to some low meadows, beyond which lies the harbour sacred to wildfowl and the beautiful herons; who stand there "fishing the tides," or fly about between the mud-banks and the great heronry in the blue-green fir-trees by Arne; and I recollect even then being struck with his kind eyes and his firm mouth, the while I smiled to see he had taken little Willy Northover up before him, because the child was not well, and it was such a long, long mile between the schoolhouse and the cottage by the dairy-farm; where Willy lived to be company to his grandfather, and to be nearer school than he would have been in his mother's little shanty out on the open heath beyond Cold Harbour. It struck me then, though I was but a girl—and a heedless one too, my mother said—that a man who could think of saving a child's steps like that must be either a very good man or a father of a large family; but I soon discovered he had no

children; and therefore I immediately placed him on the pinnacle once occupied by Sir William Wallace, then by Robert Bruce, and finally, I blush to own now, by Charles I., and proceeded to think of him as a hero, though certainly I told no one in our village what my opinion of our new doctor really was.

How well, too, I remember my first call on his wife in company with my mother; how I wondered at her as she lay on her couch, a little querulous because dinner should have been at two, and now it was a quarter-past three; a little complaining because a doctor's wife was the last person considered ill by the doctor; and something more than a little cross when a tiny scrawled note was brought her, beginning—I could not avoid seeing this, for when read she cast it open on the floor—"My Dearest," and telling her he could not leave his patient because the child was so terribly ill, and though he could do nothing for him, his presence soothed and comforted the wretched parents. "And they are paupers," murmured Mrs. Vansittart, "and will never pay him a penny," while I impulsively exclaimed at his goodness and told how I had seen him carrying Willie on horseback, and added words of girlish enthusiasm at which my mother smiled and Mrs. Vansittart frowned; as if she did not quite like anyone thinking of her husband when she required consideration; but I was glad my mother thought as I did, although I could only prevail upon her to pity the wife's constant ill-health, when I wanted her to wax enthusiastic over anyone so "absurdly prosaic" as an ordinary village doctor. Absurdly prosaic! That is what my great friend, Alys Bartlett, called my dear doctor; and I do not think I was quite as sorry as I should have been when she married the brewer in the county town, who made her spell her name Alice, as she had been christened, and was about the most prosaic person I ever met; and I recollect too how my face flushed as I reminded her how very unlike a prosaic individual Dr. Vansittart looked, riding across the heath, helter-skelter, in a drenching thunder-storm, because he suddenly remembered a plan by which he hoped to help some unfortunate miners, buried deeply in the clay-pits that lie between our village and the range of the Purbeck Hills. What a time that was to be sure! Shall we, any of us that were alive at the date, ever even forget the suspense and agony that seemed alike the property of all? how streams of folk wandered across the heath to gather news and then wandered back dispirited and

weary because there was as yet no news at all, and the men were still entombed in their living grave? I can see the master, who too is sleeping behind the hills in that tiny churchyard that holds so very many of the dearest and best of my village acquaintance; his clever face lined and worn by the suspense of the days and nights during which he never rested, so it seems to me now, from his endeavours to save his servants; and I can see—ah, how well!—the doctor's calm quiet countenance and hear him suggest using the long tubing of india-rubber to pump air down to the men, standing in nowise idle but helping in every way to assist the sufferers, who finally came out again into the open air, saved by the science of the man the village all called so prosaic.

About this time signs of lessened means began to show themselves in the doctor's house, and our village rejoiced in such food for gossip as had not been served out to us for many a day. The idea of retrenchment there is infallibly coupled with meanness; and that the doctor should compel that poor dear delicate little wife of his to go without anything—no matter how absurd or how expensive—showed a spirit so grovelling and so poor, that our great lady felt called upon to go to the little house in North Street to find out for herself what the talk was really all about; but she had so little to say for herself after the interview with Mrs. Vansittart, and appeared actually so very subdued, that I could not help suggesting to mother that she had been snubbed by the fragile little creature; who positively seemed all the better for her troubles, and much stronger than she had been when she came among us first. Not long after the first hint of retrenchment was given in the doctor's house I experienced for myself what the attendance of Dr. Vansittart really meant and was. Not that I was confessedly very ill; then a doctor is entirely a different being, so it seems to me, than when one is only ailing; but I had received a blow that even now I do not care to dwell upon except lightly; and it appeared to me that never more for me would the sun shine, or the roses blossom as they were wont to do. "He" had been killed out in the terrible ride of the Light Brigade in the Crimean war, and I was left worse than widowed to mourn the man whose wife I was to have been, and whose name I had never borne. It would not have been so hard had we been married, I said, and turning my face to the wall I refused to be comforted.

It was at my worst that they persisted in sending for Dr. Vansittart, and indeed had it not been for him I think my brain would have given way. Of course at the beginning I had nothing to say to him, and refused to do anything he ordered for me; and it was not until he had told me of things worse than death that I rose, and under his guidance came back again into ordinary life once more; for I only knew what all the retrenchment meant, and to me alone was confided the anguish of heart he bore silently, and like a martyr, because his one only child was an outcast from among men, and was a spendthrift and a gambler, and bid fair to drain his parents of every farthing they had in the world. No one save I, myself, knew that he had a son, and I learned to trust in a Higher Power more than I had ever done, when I heard how sure the doctor was that the boy would be saved at the end, because he had been and was still the child of many prayers.

Leaning back now I almost see, as I close my eyes and shade my face from the heat of the fire, that kindly face again, and experience the cool touch of his hand as he felt my pulse, holding his big silver watch in the other, talking to mother all the while about one of her numerous protégés; and I wonder again, as I wondered then, at the calm voice and the keen intelligence and the good, honest nature, that nothing could embitter, nothing make swerve from the right path, or cause to neglect a duty that to other men might not perhaps have seemed a duty at all. There is not one disagreeable remembrance of him; no, not one. Even old Miss Petersfield ceased to abuse him because he was not born in our village—a heinous crime in her eyes for anyone to commit; and when he attended her for years and years, and never sent in a bill, because he knew she had only just enough money to keep body and soul together, and that she often went without proper food, in order to retain a certain amount of state and appearance that deceived no one in the place, she even presented him solemnly with a tea-cosy worked by herself—a token of friendship she had never given to anyone who had not been born, and his father before him, within the walls that encircle our little cluster of houses; and which he used religiously, albeit it was more hideous than I can say, because he looked upon it as a sign he had conquered the last stronghold of prejudice in a place where, as I said before, every stranger is looked upon in the light of a possible malefactor! How often, I wonder, did Dr. Vansit-

tart push open our tiny green gate and tap at our dining-room window with his whip for admittance during that first long and terrible year? How often would he forget his own fatigue in trying to interest me in some one of his many patients, grown up or otherwise? Ah! I know not, for, unlike my suburban doctor, there was kept no account of those visits, each one of which did me more good than did those of Dr. Dash all rolled into one; for there was no drawback to receiving Dr. Vansittart, who was as much a physician for the mind as ever he was for the body; and a word of warning about this thing, or that, would often be given gratis, that would keep any of us off the horrid books; although his income must have suffered considerably by his way of doing business. Is this a prosaic record of a prosaic man, I wonder, as once more I think over all my doctor did for me? Nay, I can hardly believe that it can be true he never rushed into battle, as my own young hero did; neither was his name ever heard outside our immediate neighbourhood, for he never reported extraordinary cases to the *Lancet*, or, indeed, had any worthy of such a report; yet when typhus came to the row of cottages by the churchyard Dr. Vansittart worked there night and day, though the inhabitants were, to a man, "on the parish," and he would not receive a sixpence, did they live or die, more than the pittance paid him yearly by the board; and he finally enforced on the lord of the manor the necessity of rebuilding the hovels; regardless that he never again was asked to dine at the manor, until an election was imminent, and his vote, and, above all, his interest, were required by Sir John. I have known him ride as willingly across the heath to Morden to help an old woman take her farewell of a cold and poverty-stricken home, as he would go to the Grange, where Lady Mary knew and valued him as much as I did, and where he and his horse, too, were sure of welcome and a good dinner before they were allowed to go home again to the village.

But I think we none of us really and truly understood what he was until he was no more among us. After thirty years of work in our midst, he said he must retire on his laurels, and give place to a younger man. He was over seventy, and had had a hard life, and his son had sent for him and his mother to join him on the other side of the world, where he, too, had now an honoured and happy home. The mention of that son was a blow to a great many of the villagers,

who had never heard of him ; but now they understood all about it, and forgave him his secrecy, because of the happy light that shone in his dear kind eyes when he spoke of the lad—who must have been forty, by the way—and the wonders the climate was to do for Mrs. Vansittart, once she was away from the humid moisture that encircled us like a ghostly army as soon as autumn came among us, presaging a damper and more disagreeable season still. I shall never, never forget the dumb misery of the time when I realised I should never see that kindly countenance again. He had closed my mother's eyes, since he had comforted me after my first terrible loss ; and, indeed, had been so much for me, that I could not believe life would go on without him ; but it did, and there among us was his successor, whom we, of course, promptly hated and snubbed, until Dr. Vansittart talked to us about him as none other save Dr. Vansittart ever would have done.

Alas, alas ! our dear, dear old doctor and his wife never reached the home of their prodigal son. The great ship was run down in mid-ocean, and nearly all were downed in the wide and silent sea ; and I wonder much if, when he opened his eyes in heaven and found he was not yet to meet him who had given so much trouble, he at once whispered his faith that all must be for the best ; even the delay in again meeting the child, who was still a child to him, and the thought of whom had carried him almost joyfully over the partings with his old patients, that quite broke our hearts and must have lacerated his own.

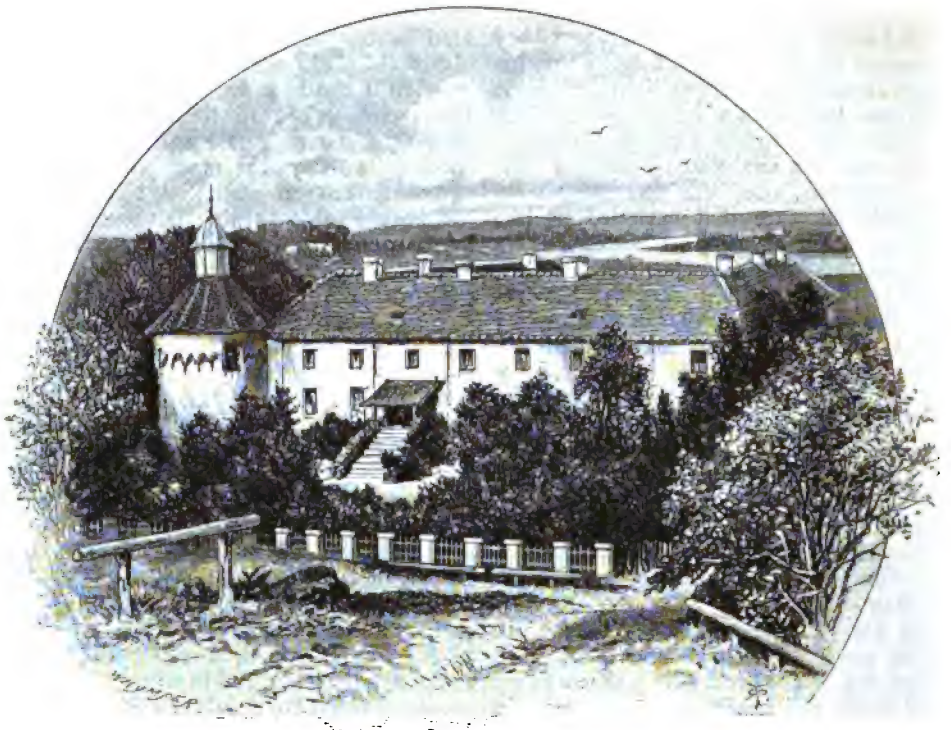
Had he not been too full of hope and joy about the lad ? Ah ! in those wide and wonderful courts I know he would receive his reward—a reward for all the kindness shown to the poor and suffering, to those from whom he would never receive an acknowledgment on earth. A village doctor—a prosaic subject truly ; but there are few heroes whose names ring round the world as worthy of the name as the Christian gentleman who lived in our midst, a bright and shining example to us all for those long thirty years ; and when I remember how even now we cannot speak of him to the women at the Clothing Club, or to the bigger children at Sunday-school, without tears being shed on either side ; and how what he said and did yet influence us all in our daily lives and in our conduct towards each other, I cannot help thinking that of him can be said, what was said of Another than he, that “being dead yet he speaketh,” and that when we meet in another world some of us will feel astonished to know how near he stands to his Master, whose work he did unfailingly, unfalteringly, and in whom he trusted, ay, even though He should see fit to slay him, in the moment of realising that, as far as his son had been concerned, his prayers had at last been answered. We can lay no wreath of laurels on his unknown grave in the depths of the sea ; in place of that let me put this short, feeble description of him on paper, hoping thus to perpetuate for a few years longer the memory of a man we all loved in our village, albeit he was nothing more than an old doctor.

In Memoriam—HORATIUS BONAR, D.D.

DIED AUGUST 7TH, 1889.

SINGER, at length “thy travelling days are done,”
 And thou who heard'st “the voice of Jesus say,
 Come unto me and rest,” hast ceased thy lay.
 Into the land of silence thou art gone !
 But still thy pure harp's high and holy tone—
 Harp strung in stern old Covenanters' day—
 Sounds out to cheer the pilgrim on his way
 With echoes of the song about the Throne.
 Still, wheresoe'er the children's hymn may rise,
 Or the great congregation's voice upswell
 In plenitude of praise, thy clear heart's chord
 Shall vibrate, till we hear in Paradise
 How all on earth, in sea, and Heaven that dwell,
 With one loud “Alleluia” bless the Lord.

H. D. RAWNSLEY.



Castle Neuenburg.

WASHED BY THE BALTIC.

Sketches of Life in Courland.

By MRS. PEREIRA.

PART II.

THE worldly position of the country doctor has many points in common with that of the pastor. A physician is appointed to a certain number of estates, the owners of which subscribe in money and kind for his maintenance. The peasants also pay their quota, and have the privilege of appointing a special medico for themselves if they choose to exercise it. The doctor's life is a hard one, for he is expected to visit every estate in the course of each week, on the chance of finding patients in need of his skill; and very skilful indeed are some of these obscure practitioners. The frequently almost impassable state of the roads in winter, and the nearly tropical heat of cloudless summer, furnish no excuse for non-appearance; the doctor is paid, and the doctor must fulfil his part of the bargain. As he is thus contracted for, and no incidental doctor's bills are to be dreaded, but little scruple is felt about invoking the physician's

aid on very trivial grounds. Thus the weekly visitations, however arduous, form but a part of the man of medicine's weekly routine. No doubt the irksomeness of such duties is greatly relieved by the social intercourse which they involve, for at every nobleman's luncheon or dinner table, on a certain day of the week, a place is reserved for the district doctor; he is welcomed as the bringer of little items of gossip from the neighbouring great families, and if there be no urgent case demanding his presence, he need not hurry away before having enjoyed his after-dinner coffee and pipe in the count's or baron's apartments. Then, when he returns home, tired but cheerful, and rich in morsels of news, he finds a warm welcome beneath his own snug if homely roof, where wife and daughters vie with each other in ministering to the comfort of *der gute papa*. Happy homes are indeed to be found among these country doctors: homes made bright

by affection, and elevated by the cultivated intelligences often hidden there. The doctor's house is seldom far from the mansion of one or other of his patrons, and if the children of the patrician correspond in age to those of his humbler neighbour, a certain amount of intimacy among the juveniles is

the result; but like most unequal friendships, this association is often far from being satisfactory to either family. An evening hour at the doctor's is, however, a blessed resource for the tutor or governess from the castle, after the conclusion of the day's duties, and pending the Sunday holiday, a



Doblen Castle.

portion of which will probably be spent in high festivity at the *Pastorât*.

The peasantry form the most interesting, because the least easily comprehended, portion of the population of the Baltic Provinces. They are a distinct race, in no way related to any of their neighbours, either Teutonic,

Slavonic, or Scandinavian. Their language, Lettish, bears no resemblance to the surrounding dialects, though it has borrowed more or less from all. It has a plaintive, pathetic sound, especially when spoken with the prevailing whine which betrays centuries of serfdom. The upper grade of peasants

acquire a fair proficiency in German; but though German is the mother tongue of their masters, the large majority of small farmers and farm-labourers are entirely ignorant of that language.

Lettish is the first dialect which a young Courland noble learns to speak, because Lettish nurses are famed for fidelity to their charges, and are preferred to Germans in that capacity. But when the little patrician has reached the age of three or four, a German governess is provided, to be soon followed by a French or English guardian. When the little victim of many tongues has arrived at the mature age of seven, tutors are engaged and serious study begins, pre-eminently that of the Russian language. The recent law, before referred to, making the use of Russian compulsory, has been the cause of many noble families selling their estates and retiring to Germany. The speech of childhood is soon forgotten. As years go on the noble youth is sent to Dorpat or to some foreign university; and so, when in course of time he succeeds to one of his father's estates—for equal division of lands among sons is the rule, entailed estates (or *majoräte*) the exception—the young master has to learn afresh the vernacular of his dependants. Should the estate be incapable of division, the father bequeaths it to one of his sons, and makes it a point of honour to leave an equivalent in roubles to every one of his other children. This may in part account for the proverbial attachment of the nobles of these regions to their money-bags.

To the superficial observer, the Lettish peasant is the very embodiment of humble respect towards his betters. Should he chance to meet even a total stranger whose dress shows him to be a member of one of the higher orders of society, he will hasten, with something like Oriental marks of deference, to kiss the stranger's sleeve, or, if a lady, the very hem of her garment. There is soft flattery in every tone of the pleading voice, homage in every curve of the lowly bending figure. Towards the lord or lady of the soil, this outward homage approaches a sort of secondary worship. Yet, beneath this display of exaggerated humility there often lurks, as might be expected, a spirit of fierce hatred, of never-ceasing, undying rebelliousness.

It must not be supposed that the Letts, for many years past, have been ignorant of the ordinary branches of elementary education. There are very few of them who cannot read and write, and various works of

fiction, including "Uncle Tom's Cabin," have been translated from English into Lettish. But the immediate result of the sudden emancipation of the serfs, and one which has steadily continued to bear fruit in succeeding years, was a violent revulsion of feeling against the owners of the land. Certain land-laws subsequently passed by the nobles, who have hitherto had the chief voice in internal legislation, combined with grants by the late Czar of crown-lands to the peasantry in the form of allotments, to be held for a given number of years, free of rent, and then re-distributed, have strengthened the peasants' idea that the land is rightfully their own, and that, consequently, the nobles are intruders and usurpers.

The Lutheran clergy are included in the hatred bestowed by the Letts upon the nobles, for they are supposed, but most unjustly, to be in league with the dominant caste to oppress and to defraud. It is an indubitable fact that the nobles have not made the best of their ample opportunities in past years for managing provincial affairs wisely and well, and so far basing their prestige upon the firm ground of a wise, kind, but strict rule. Within their own borders their powers were extensive; each province having its own native governor, and all three being united beneath the sway of a Russian governor-general, stationed at Riga, who dealt chiefly with external affairs concerning the Empire at large. Now that this native power is being rapidly curbed, the outcry against oppression is as loud as if patriotism had been the leading virtue of these hitherto somewhat easy-going nobles.

The Lettish character, like that of all servile races, is distinguished by treachery. And yet, notwithstanding the general feeling of disaffection, domestic servants, especially nurses, are, as a rule, most faithful and devoted to the noble family they serve. But persons in their position are subject to the softening influences of what was so long a patriarchal domestic rule, and time has not yet entirely effaced old feelings and associations. Very different is it with those who live far from the mansion, in solitary hamlets, and in many instances in a state of squalor and wretchedness closely resembling that of the most degraded barbarism. The Emperor is looked upon as the friend of the Lett, and government emissaries do all in their power to cherish this belief, which exists in spite of frequent and oppressive taxation.

Drunkenness is an almost universal vice, and immorality of conduct is common among

the unmarried ; but when once the marriage-tie is assumed, infidelity on the part of husband or wife is of rare occurrence, and when it does take place, is visited by the utmost severity of public opinion. Timidity and personal cowardice form another very marked feature of the Lettish peasant. A sudden fright will often produce epilepsy, and not seldom, instantaneous death.

In sentiment, the Letts are essentially a religious people, but pagan superstitions mingle largely with their Christian belief. Propitiatory libations of every fresh brewing are poured to some spirit of evil, supposed to be hovering in the air and brooding over every homestead, and special cakes from every baking are placed at night on every threshold, for the same exacting bogie. These observances are, no doubt, much appreciated by hungry foxes, or perchance a stray wolf now and then, for every vestige of the offering has invariably disappeared before the next day's dawn. Wolves, be it remarked, are yearly becoming scarcer in Courland, as the human population increases. The "Evil Eye" is firmly believed in, and the shades of night are made hideous by apparitions of spectres, which, no doubt, owe their origin to the lively imaginations and ever alert fears of this timid and credulous folk. Ghost stories in Courland are of the most elaborate character, and lights, fiery wheels, and even music, figure largely in them. The writer can recall a story, the alleged facts of which took place on the eve of a certain Good Friday during her sojourn in Courland, on a neighbouring estate, and which were declared to have been witnessed by several persons at once. In this marvellous record, the ghosts are represented as not only having held a full musical service with organ accompaniment in a private chapel, which is always fast locked up except on very rare occasions, but as forming in procession afterwards, and while unseen bells were chiming, marching by the light of torches to the forest, from whence the sounds of their singing still issued after the thick-growing trees had hidden them from view. All this was firmly credited, not by the Letts alone, but by some of their superiors also. This wondrous legend may have had some connection with the prevailing belief that on Holy Thursday, at midnight, the dead arise to celebrate the sacred season.

The Letts are indefatigable church-goers, and enjoy the privilege of Lutheran services in their own language. In the hottest summer weather, or in the teeth of the freezing

blast, through clouds of dust and storms of snow, over roughest roads, they will come flocking in their rickety *telegas*,* or their trough-like sledges, drawn by shaggy, diminutive horses (for everyone, even the itinerant beggar, drives in Courland), to attend the Sunday or Holy Day service. As one pastor, with or without an assistant, has often to minister to two or three churches belonging to the same extensive parish, it naturally results that service can only be held at each in turn. The Letts find in this circumstance no excuse for non-attendance. With exemplary zeal they repair to each church in turn, never missing a single Sunday. At half-past nine the first rough strains of many barbarous voices announce that worship has begun ; and the long lines of horses tethered to low rails outside the churchyard wall testify to the numbers of persons gathered together within. The building is sure to be crowded to overflowing, the men on one side, the women on the other. The men are for the most part hard-featured and dull-eyed ; the women prematurely toil-worn and withered. The former are dressed in long belted coats of coarse cloth, with boots reaching to the knee ; the latter in short gowns, the gayest of shawls (if in summer) and muslin caps adorned with bright ribbons or huge artificial flowers. Kerchiefs with large showy patterns replace the caps in many instances. If the season be winter, the peaked hood, or *baschlik*, envelops the heads of men and women alike, and every coat has a great fur collar.

The service usually lasts from three to four hours, and includes not only the customary order of worship and a sermon of some length, but occasional offices, such as marriages, baptisms, churchings and the like, besides many special prayers or *Fürbitten*, of which the Letts are very fond, and which they cause to be offered up in every domestic emergency. To our ideas, the subjects of these special prayers would often seem trivial, if not absurd ; they are offered not only for the recovery from sickness, or for the general welfare of a member of the petitioner's family, but also on behalf of a favourite horse or cow, or for the success of some pecuniary speculation.

The accumulation of services at length ended, friendly greetings are exchanged, and there is much kissing of cheeks and hands. Service-books are then carefully enveloped in clean cotton handkerchiefs, and the congregation crowd into the churchyard, where

* A very primitive kind of cart.

not improbably a man will be stationed with a drum, to give notice of a cattle auction to take place on some estate in the ensuing week. And now, alas! for what follows. The bulk of the seemingly earnest, devout flock, most of them communicants, many of them indoor servants of noble houses, or perhaps of the *Pastorat* itself, step across the road to the tavern, there to remain for the rest of the day, dancing and drinking until late in the evening, by which time a goodly proportion will have become hopelessly incapable.

As the Lettish dialect is but partially understood by the upper class of servants and officials, a certain number of German services per year is appointed for each church; and on these occasions the pastor must be in readiness to perform a full service and preach a sermon in German *immediately* after the Lettish *Gottesdienst*, should as many as three, or even *two*, German-speaking persons present themselves and make the claim. This fact amply justifies the remark as to the onerous nature of a pastor's duties in Courland. Incessant ministrations from half-past nine in the morning to about three o'clock in the afternoon, in two different languages, may reasonably be considered heavy Sunday duty, yet the pastors seem to take it as a matter of course.

The Letts themselves are beginning to take their places in the ranks of professional men, having previously studied at Dorpat side by side with the sons of the nobles. One of these peasant pastors displayed true nobility of soul in his new position. When promoted to a living on a large estate, he took with him to his *Pastorat* his father and mother, who of course had remained upon the lowly level from which their son had raised himself. Yet, although the old people could speak nothing but Lettish, thus proving themselves to belong to the humblest ranks of even the peasantry, their son always accorded to them the places of honour at hearth and at board; and when the noble patron honoured the pastor with a visit, the aged couple still held their customary place.

Both marriages and funerals are solemnized with as much ceremony and feasting as the means of the relatives will allow. Nay, among the well-to-do peasantry it is not uncommon to combine wedding festivities with funeral obsequies; for when a child dies the parents, if they can afford to do so, celebrate the marriage rejoicings which would in all likelihood have taken place had the child lived to grow up. Under these circum-

stances the proceedings last for two or even three days.

It may not be inappropriate to conclude these superficial sketches with accounts of two ceremonies at which the writer was present. The description of the first is taken from the diary in which it was noted down at the time. The contracting parties were a young blacksmith on a nobleman's estate, and a housemaid from the château.

"May 10th.*

—April 28th. —Having all dressed in gay, fresh costumes, we went down at eleven o'clock to the 'vaulted chamber,' a large room with low, arched roof, used as a Lettish servants' hall (for the German servants will not consort with the Letts). There Denschewitz, the Count's steward, a noble-looking old man arrayed in blue coat, grey waistcoat and small-clothes, spotless white stockings and buckled shoes, delivered an address to the bride and bridegroom. Very picturesque did he look, standing among the motley group which composed the bridal party, and his manner as he spoke was full of earnestness, but most simple and unaffected. This preliminary little sermon is always entrusted to some venerable friend of the bride's family, and forms the first solemn ceremony of the day. It is called 'opening the door,' and is esteemed hardly second in importance to the service in church, performed by the pastor himself. When Denschewitz had concluded, we all ascended to the upper regions, to find no less than five carriages in waiting. We drove off to the merry sounds of music furnished by a small brass band stationed near the avenue. The first carriage contained the Countess, the bride, Comtesse L., and myself; the second conveyed the Count and the bridegroom. On arriving at the church we had to wait two hours for the conclusion of the Lettish service, which the junior pastor was intoning in a deep rich voice. The Count and Countess led Indrik and Lage to the altar. Anliese, the bride's mother, in obedience to the Lettish code of propriety, had remained at home. The marriage service was short, consisting of a few prayers, and the interchange of rings, and of the necessary questions and answers. On our return to the *Schloss*, where the same band played a joyous welcome, Denschewitz delivered another address, and a psalm was sung. After this, dinner was served. It is usual on these occasions for the nobleman, with his consort and family, to sit down to the humble banquet on

* O.A. and new style.

this one great day in a peasant's life, but such was not the custom at the château of Count —. Dancing followed dinner, and this pastime was continued until supper. After supper, a deputation from the servants' hall appeared at the door of the great saloon with the request that I, in the absence of the Countess, who was indisposed, would go down and perform the ceremony of 'putting on the cap.' Such an invitation is intended to confer high honour upon the person to whom it is given. On entering the dancing-room I found that all the unmarried men had withdrawn. They soon re-entered, however, each bearing a lighted candle, and stationed themselves at intervals round the room. All the unmarried women then took their turn in walking a polonaise with the bride, to the sound of soft music, and on leaving her each one kissed her cheek. The polonaise ended, there was a sudden rush. The maidens closed in round the bride, and, joining hands, tried to hold her fast, while the matrons strove to break the circle and carry off their new sister. The mock struggle lasted for some time; then the matrons triumphed, and led their captive to a chair. I gently lifted the veil and wreath of myrtle from the luxuriant dark hair, and replaced it with the cap of matronhood. Loud applause greeted this crowning act of the day (a *crowning* act, both literally and metaphorically), and the young wife, still seated, was borne round the room in her chair to receive the homage of all present. And so ended a day of childlike happiness and innocent mirth, which would be looked back to by the chief actors in it as the one red-letter day of their toilsome, monotonous lives. A pair of knitted worsted gloves was presented to me by Anliese in return for my services in 'putting on the cap.' Not an elegant, but a very useful gift, as gloves of this kind are, when drawn over kid ones, the greatest possible protection from cold when driving through the winter snows."

Not long after these homely rejoicings, the writer had an opportunity of witnessing the funeral of a little child, the only son of the major-domo of the mansion. The interment was fixed for eight o'clock in the morning, owing to the intense heat of the August sun, which would have rendered it dangerous to stand bare-headed at a more advanced hour. At half-past seven the funeral party assembled in the large, desolate-looking, scantily-

furnished apartment, destitute of every sign of domestic comfort, which might serve as a model for the living-room of upper servants on any large estate. The little coffin, with a lining of glazed white paper stamped and pinked at the edges, stood upon a table covered with a white sheet. On the lid of the coffin were laid the only treasures once possessed by the tiny occupant—a small Bible, the recent gift of a god-parent, and a gilt-edged psalm-book.

When all the guests were gathered together, Denschewitz spoke a few words of religious consolation, and offered up a prayer. Then a dirge was sung while the coffin was slowly carried from the room. The Probst received the party at the church; not on the threshold, however, with words of sacred hope upon his lips, but in the pulpit, and the service began with a burial hymn of many verses, sung and played by the indefatigable *Küster* G. An oration was pronounced, prayers were said at the grave, and the whole ceremony seemed long and wearisome. I afterwards learned that the attendance of the Probst would cost the parents of the child a fee of five roubles. The major-domo was an ambitious man; among people of his class, and below it, the ministrations of a pastor are often dispensed with, and his place is taken by the nearest male friend of the dead person. Some portion of the service resembled our own burial office; at the words "dust to dust," each person present cast earth upon the coffin. When, at length, the Probst had pronounced the blessing and turned away, several of the mourners made extempore prayers. At last, when all was done, and the solemnities had lasted much more than an hour, the mourners moved away. The venerable Denschewitz had taken a few steps, when he suddenly returned to the grave, and looking down upon the little coffin, he exclaimed with infinite tenderness and pathos, "Farewell, little Conrad; we'll soon come back to thee!" Kind old man! He thought the sleeping babe would feel lonely in its narrow bed, and sought to reassure it.

Many a time has the writer passed that little spot of earth since then, bound on many very various errands, but never without seeming to hear, in fancy, the sound of the good old peasant's solemn words, with their echo of still deeper meaning: "Farewell, little Conrad; we'll soon come back to thee!"

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—THE PLANT AUNT MARGUERITE GREW.

AS Duncan Leslie walked up the steep path leading to the old granite house he could not help thinking of the absurdity of his act, and wondering whether Louise Vine and her father would see how much easier it would have been for him to call at Van Helder's.

"Can't help it," he said. "The old man must think what he likes. Laugh at me in his sleeve? Well, let him. I shan't be the first man in love who has been laughed at."

"In love, man, in love! How stupid it sounds; and I suppose I am weak."

"Human nature!" he said after a pause; and he walked very fast.

Then he began to walk very slowly, as a feeling of hesitation came over him, and he asked himself whether the Vines would not feel his coming as an intrusion and be annoyed.

"She can't be annoyed," he said half aloud. "She may think it unfortunate, but she knows I love her, and she is too true and sweet a woman to be hard upon me."

With the full intention of going boldly to the house, and trying to act in a frank, manly way, letting Louise see that he was going to be patient and earnest, he again strode on rapidly, but only to hesitate again and stop by one of the great masses of rock which occurred here and there along the shelf-like slope cut from the side of the towering hill.

Here he rested his arms upon the shaggy stone and stood gazing out to sea, the darkness looking wonderfully transparent and pure. From where he stood the harbour was at his feet, and he could see a spark-like light here and there in cottage or boat, and a dull glow from some open doorway on the opposite side of the estuary.

The red light at the end of the east pier sent a ruddy stain out to sea, and there was another light farther out just rocking gently to and fro, and as it caught his eye he shuddered, for it shone out softly, as did the light of the lugger on the night when Harry Vine took that terrible leap.

"Poor weak boy," said Leslie to himself. And then, "The more need for her to have one in whom she can confide; only I must be patient—patient."

He turned with a sigh, and began to walk back, for in his indecision the feeling was in him strong now that a call would be an intrusion, and that he must be content to wait. By the time he was fifty yards down the path the desire to see Louise again was stronger than ever, and he walked back to the stone, leaned over it, and stood thinking. After a few minutes he turned sharply round and looked, for he heard a heavy step as of a man approaching, but directly after, as he remained quiescent, he just made out that it was not a man's step, but that of a sturdy fisherwoman, who seemed in the gloom to resemble Poll Perrow, but he could not be sure, and forgot the incident as soon as she passed. By the time the steps had died out, Duncan Leslie's mind was fully made up; and, following the woman, he walked firmly up to the gateway, entered, and, reaching the hall door, which stood open, he rang. He waited for some time listening, to a low murmur of voices in the dining-room, and then rang again. There was no reply, consequent upon the fact that Liza was at the back gate, to which she had been summoned by her mother, who had come up in trouble, and was asking her questions whose bearing she could not understand.

Leslie's courage and patience began to fail, but he still waited, and then at last changed colour, feeling the blood rush to his cheeks, for there was a peculiarity in the conversation going on in the dining-room, and it seemed to him that some one was agitated and in pain.

He turned away so as to force himself not to hear, feeling that he was an interloper, and then, in spite of himself, he returned to find that the sounds had grown louder, and as if involuntarily agitated and troubled more than he would have cared to own, he rang again and then entered the hall.

He hesitated for a few moments, and then certain from the voices that there was something strange, and divining wrongly or rightly from the tones of one of the voices—a voice which thrilled him as he stood there trembling with excitement, that the woman he loved needed help, he threw aside all hesitation, and turned the handle of the door.

The words which fell upon his ear, the scene he saw of Louise kneeling at some strange, rough-looking man's feet, sent the blood surging up to his brain, rendering him

incapable of calm thought, and turned the ordinarily patient, deliberative man into a being wrought almost to a pitch of madness.

It did not occur to him that he was an intruder, and that he had no right to make such a demand, but taking a stride forward, he exclaimed—

"Louise! Who is this man?" as the lamp was swept from the table, and they were in darkness.

For a few moments no one spoke, and Louise stood clinging to her brother, trembling violently and at her wit's end to know what to do.

The simple way out of the difficulty would have been to take Duncan Leslie into their confidence at once; but in her agitation, Louise shrank from that. She knew his stern integrity; she had often heard of his firmness with his mine people; and she feared that in his surprise and disgust at what seemed to her now little better than a trick played by her brother to deceive them, Leslie would turn against him and refuse to keep the secret.

On the other hand, Harry, suffering from a fresh access of dread, but now strung up and excited, placed his lips to her ear and bade her be silent on her life.

The silence was for a few moments terrible, and then Harry's breath could be heard coming and going as if he had been hunted, while Louise, in her agony of excitement, sought vainly for words that should put an end to the painful encounter.

No one moved; and in the midst of the nervous strain a sharp puff of wind came sweeping up from the sea, like the *avant garde* of a storm, and the casement window was blown to with a loud clang.

Harry started as if he had felt that his retreat was cut off, but he kept his face averted, and dragged his rough hat down over his eyes, though the action was unnecessary, for the darkness was too great for him to be recognised.

As he started Louise clung to him, and for the moment he struggled to escape from her, but he clung to her the next instant, and quivered with fear as the silence was broken by Leslie's voice, so cold, deep, and harsh that it seemed as if a stranger was speaking.

"I suppose I have no right to interfere," he said; "but there are times when a man forgets or puts aside etiquette, and there are reasons here why I should speak. Miss Vine, where is your father?"

Louise made an effort to reply, but there was only a spasmodic catching of her breath.

"Send him away. Tell him to go," whispered Harry.

"I said, where is your father, Miss Vine?" said Leslie again more coldly.

"At—at Mr. Van Heldre's," she murmured at last. "Mr. Leslie—pray——"

"I am your father's friend, and I should not be doing my duty—Ah! my duty—to myself," he cried angrily, "if I did not speak plainly. Does Mr. Vine know that this gentleman is here?"

"No," said Louise, in an almost inaudible voice, and in the contagion of her brother's fear she seemed to see him once more hunted down by the officers of justice; and the terrible scene on the pier danced before her eyes.

"So I suppose," said Leslie coldly.

"Send him away," whispered Harry hoarsely.

"It is not in Miss Louise Vine's power to send me away, sir," cried Leslie fiercely; and the poor trembling girl felt her brother start once more.

"You, sir, are here, by her confession, clandestinely. You are a scoundrel and a cur, who dare not show your face, or you would not have dashed out that light."

Harry made a harsh guttural sound, such as might be uttered by a beast at bay.

"Who are you? I need not ask your object in coming here. I could not help hearing."

"Tell him to go away," said Harry sharply, speaking in French to disguise his voice.

"Mr. Leslie, pray, pray go. This is a private visit. I beg you will go."

"Private enough," said Leslie, bitterly; "and once more I say you may think I have no right to interfere. I give up all claims that I might have thought I had upon you, but as your father's friend I will not stand calmly by and see wrong done his child. Speak out, sir; who are you? Let's hear your name, if you are ashamed to show your face."

"Tell him to go away," said Harry again.

Leslie writhed, for Aunt Marguerite's hints about the French gentleman of good descent came up now as if to sting him. This man he felt, in his blind rage, was the noble suitor who in his nobility stooped to come in the darkness to try and persuade a weak girl to leave her home; and as he thought this it was all he could do, hot blooded, madly jealous and excited, to keep from flinging himself upon the supposed rival, the unworthy lover of the woman he had worshipped with all the strength of a man's first passion.

"I can't talk to him in his wretched tongue," cried Leslie, fiercely; "but I understand his meaning. Perhaps he may comprehend mine. No. I shall not go. I shall not leave this room till Mr. Vine returns. He can answer to your father, or I will, if I have done wrong."

"Mr. Leslie!" cried Louise, "you don't know what you are doing—what you say. Pray—pray go."

"When my old friend George Vine tells me I have done wrong, and I have seen you safe in his care."

"No, no. Go now, now!" cried Louise.

Leslie drew a deep breath and his heart beat heavily in the agony and despair he felt. She loved this man, this contemptible wretch who had gained such ascendancy over her that she was pleading in his behalf, and trying to screen him from her father's anger.

"Mr. Leslie. Do you hear me?" she cried, taking courage now in her despair and dread lest her father should return.

"Yes," he said coldly, "I hear you, Miss Vine; and it would be better for you to retire, and leave this man with me."

"No, no," she cried excitedly. "Mr. Leslie! You are intruding here. This is a liberty. I desire you to go."

"When Mr. Vine comes back," said Leslie sternly. "If I have done wrong then no apology shall be too humble for me to speak. But till he comes I stay. I have heard too much. I may have been mad in indulging in those vain hopes, but if that is all dead there still remains too much honour and respect for the woman I knew in happier times for me to stand by and let her wrong herself by accompanying this man."

"Mr. Leslie, you are mistaken."

"I am not."

"Indeed—indeed!"

"Prove it then," he cried, in stern judicial tones. "I am open to conviction. You love this man?" Louise was silent. "He was begging you to accompany him in flight." Louise uttered a low wail. "Hah!" ejaculated Leslie, "I am right."

"No, no; it is all a misapprehension," cried Louise, excitedly. "Mr. Leslie, this—"

"Hold your tongue," whispered Harry hoarsely, and she moaned as she writhed in spirit.

"There are reasons why my father should not know of this visit."

"So I suppose," said Leslie sternly; "and you ask me to be a partner by giving way to a second blow to that true-hearted, trusting man. Louise Vine, is it you who are speak-

ing, or has this man put these cruelly base words in your mouth?"

"What can I say? What can I do?" wailed Louise, wringing her hands, as with every sense on the strain she listened for her father's step.

Harry, who now that the first shock had passed was rapidly growing more calm and calculating, bent down over his sister, and whispered to her again in French to go quickly, and get her hat and mantle.

"He will not dare to stop us," he said.

Louise drew a long breath full of pain, for it seemed to be the only way to save her brother. She must go; and, taking a step or two she made for the door.

"No," said Leslie calmly, "it is better that you should stay, Miss Vine."

Harry was at her side in a moment.

"Never mind your hat," he whispered in French, "we must go at once."

"Stand back, sir!" cried Leslie, springing to the door. "Your every act shows you to be a base scoundrel. You may not understand my words, but you can understand my action. I am here by this door to keep it till Mr. Vine returns. For the lady's sake, let there be no violence."

"Mr. Leslie, let us pass!" cried Louise imperiously, but he paid no heed to her, continuing to address his supposed rival in calm, judicial tones, which did not express the wild rage seething in his heart.

"I say once more, sir, let there be no violence—for your own sake—for hers."

Harry continued to advance, with Louise's hand in his, till Leslie had pressed close to the door.

"Once more I warn you," said Leslie, "for I swear by Heaven you shall not pass while I can lift a hand."

At that moment, in the obscurity, Louise felt her hand dropped, and she reeled to the side of the room, as now, with a fierce, harsh sound, Harry sprang at Leslie's throat, pushed him back against the door in his sudden onslaught, and then wrenched him away.

"Quick, Louise!" he cried in French. "The door!"

Louise recovered herself and darted to the door, the handle rattling in her grasp. But she did not open it. She stood as if paralysed, her eyes staring and lips parted, gazing wildly at the two dimly-seen shadows which moved here and there across the case-ment frames in a curiously weird manner, to the accompaniment of harsh, panting sounds, the dull tramping of feet, heavy breathing and the quick, sharp ejaculations of angry men.

Then a fresh chill of horror shot through her, as there was a momentary cessation of the sounds, and Leslie panted,

"Hah! then you give in, sir!"

The apparent resignation of his adversary had thrown him off his guard, and the next moment Harry had sprung at him, and with his whole weight borne him backwards, so that he fell with his head upon the bare patch of the hearthstone.

There was the sound of a terrible blow, a faint rustling, and then, as Louise stood there like one in a nightmare, she was roused to action by her brother's words.

"Quick!" he whispered, in a hoarse, panting way. "Your hat and mantle. Not a moment to lose!"

The nightmare-like sensation was at an end, but it was still all like being in a dream to Louise as, forced against her own will by the effort of one more potent, she ran up to her own room, and catching up a bonnet and a loose cloak, she ran down again.

"You have killed him," she whispered.

"Oh! stunned. Quick, or I shall be caught."

He seized her wrist, and hurried her out of the front door just as Liza went in at the back, after a long whispered quarrel with her mother, who was steadily plodding down towards the town, as brother and sister stepped out.

"What's that? some one in front?" whispered Harry, stopping short. "Here, this way."

"Harry!" moaned his sister, as he drew her sidewise and began to climb up the rough side of the path so as to reach the rugged land above.

"It is the only chance," he said hastily. "Quick!"

She followed him, half climbing, half dragged, till she was up on the granite-strewn waste, across which he hurried her, reckless of the jagged masses of rock that were always cropping up in their way, and of the fact that in three places farther along, once fenced in by stones, which had since crumbled down, were, one after the other, the openings to three disused mines, each a terrible yawning chasm, with certain death by drowning for the unfortunate who was plunged into their depths.

CHAPTER XLIX.—AFTER THE GREAT SORROWS.

"No, no, no, Mr. Vine—I mean no, no, no, George Vine," sobbed Mrs. Van

Heldre; "I did, I know, feel bitter and full of hatred against one who could be so base as to raise his hand against my loving, forbearing husband; but that was when I was in misery and despair. Do you think that now God has blessed us by sparing his life and restoring him to us, I could be so thankful, so hard and wicked as to bear malice?"

"You are very, very good," said Vine sadly.

"I wish I was," said Mrs. Van Heldre, with a comic look of perplexity on her pretty elderly countenance, "but I'm not, George, I'm a very curious woman."

"You are one of the best and most amiable creatures that ever existed," said Vine, taking her hand and kissing it.

"I try to be good-tempered and to do my best," said the little woman with a sigh, "but I'm very weak and stupid; and I know that is the one redeeming point in my character, I can feel what a weak woman I am."

"Thank God you are what you are," said Vine reverently. "If I had had such a wife spared to me all these years, that terrible catastrophe would not have occurred."

"And you, George Vine, thank God, too, for sparing to you the best and most loving daughter that ever lived. Now, now, now, don't look like that. I wanted to tell you how fond and patient John always has been with me, and Maddy too, when I have said and done weak and silly things. For I do, you know, sometimes. Ah, it's no use for you to shake your head, and pretend you never noticed it. You must."

"I hope you will never change," said Vine with a sad smile.

"Ah, that's better," cried Mrs. Van Heldre. "I'm glad to see you smile again, for Louy's sake, for our sake; and now, once for all, never come into our house again, my dear old friend and brother, looking constrained. John has had long, long talks with me and Maddy."

"Yes," cried Vine excitedly. "What did he say?"

Mrs. Van Heldre took his hand and held it. "He said," she whispered slowly, "that it grieved and pained him to see you come to his bedside looking as if you felt that we blamed you for what has passed. He said you had far more cause to blame him."

"No, no," said Vine hastily. "I do not blame him. It was fate—it was fate."

"It wasn't anything of the kind," said Mrs. Van Heldre sharply; "it was that stupid, obstinate, bigoted, wrong-headed old fellow Crampton."

"Who felt that he owed a duty to his master, and did that duty."

"Oh!" sighed the little woman with a look of perplexity in her puckered-up forehead, "I told you that I was a very stupid woman. I wanted to make you more cheerful and contented, and see what I have done!"

"How can I be cheerful and contented, my good little woman?" said Vine sadly. "There, there! I shall be glad when a couple of years have gone."

"Why?" said Mrs. Van Heldre sharply.

"Because I shall either be better able to bear my burden or be quite at rest."

"George Vine!" exclaimed Mrs. Van Heldre reproachfully. "Is that you speaking? Louise—remember Louise."

"Ah, yes," he said sadly, but sat gazing dreamily before him. "Louise. If it had not been for her——"

He did not finish his sentence.

"Come, my dear. John will be expecting you for a long chat. Try and be more hopeful, and don't go up to him looking like that. Doctor Knatchbull said we were to make him as cheerful as we could, and to keep him from thinking about the past. He did say, too, that we were not to let you see him much. There——"

Poor little Mrs. Van Heldre looked more perplexed than ever, and now burst into tears.

"He said that? The doctor said that?"

"Yes; but did you ever hear such a silly woman in your life? To go and blurt out such a thing as that to you!"

"He was quite right—quite right," said Vine hastily; "and I'll be very careful not to say or do anything to depress him. Poor John! Do you think he is awake now?"

"No," said Mrs. Van Heldre, wiping her eyes. "Maddy is with him, and she will come down directly he wakes."

At that moment there was a ring, and on the door being opened the servant announced Luke Vine.

"Hallo!" he said, coming in after his usual uncerecermonious fashion. "How is he?"

"Very, very much better, Luke Vine," said Mrs. Van Heldre. "George is going up to see him as soon as he wakes."

"George? My brother George? Oh, you're there, are you? How are you, George? How's the girl?"

"Sit down, Luke Vine."

"No, thank you, ma'am. Sit too much as it is. Don't get enough exercise."

"You shall go up and see John, as soon as he wakes."

"No, thankye. What's the use? I couldn't do him any good. One's getting old now. No time to spare. Pity to waste what's left."

"Well, I'm sure," said Mrs. Van Heldre bridling. "Of all men to talk like that, you ought to be the last. I'll go up and see whether he is awake."

"Poor little woman," said Uncle Luke, as she left the room. "Always puts me in mind, George, of a pink and white bantam hen."

"As good a little woman as ever breathed, Luke."

"Yes, of course; but it's comic to see her ruffle up her feathers and go off in a huff. How's Lou?"

"Not very well, Luke. Poor girl, she frets. I shall have to take her away."

"Rubbish! She'll be all right directly. Women have no brains."

George Vine looked up at him with an air of mild reproof.

"All tears and doldrums one day; high jinks and coquetry the next. Marry, and forget all about you in a week."

"Luke, my dear brother, you do not mean this."

"Don't soap, George. I hate to be called my dear brother. Now, do I look like a dear brother?"

"I shall never forget your goodness to us over our terrible trouble."

"Will you be quiet? Hang it all, George! don't be such an idiot. Let the past be. The poor foolish boy is dead; let him rest. Don't be for ever digging up the old sorrow, to brood over it and try to hatch fresh. The eggs may not be addled, and you might be successful. Plenty of trouble without making more."

"I do not wish to make more, Luke; but you hurt me when you speak so lightly of Louise."

"A jade! I hate her."

"No, you do not."

"Yes, I do. Here's Duncan Leslie, as good a fellow as ever stepped, who has stuck to her through thick and thin, in spite of my lady's powder, and fan, and her insults."

"Marguerite has been very sharp and spiteful to Mr. Leslie," said George Vine sadly.

"She's mad. Well, he wants to marry the girl, and she has pitched him over."

"Has Louise refused him?"

"He doesn't say so; but I saw him, and that's enough. Of course I know that at present—et cetera, et cetera; but the girl

wants a husband: all girls do. There was one for her, and she is playing *stand off* with him. Just like woman. He! he! he! he!" He uttered a sneering laugh. "Going to marry Madge's French count, I suppose—Monsieur le Comte de Mythville. There, I can't help it, George, old lad; it makes me wild. Shake hands, old chap. Didn't mean to hurt your feelings; but between ourselves, though I've never shown it to a soul, I was rather hit upon the idea of Leslie marrying Louise."

"I had thought it possible," said George Vine, with a sigh.

"Her fault. Hang it all, George, be a man, and bestir yourself."

"I am trying, brother Luke."

"That's right, lad; and for goodness' sake put down your foot and keep Margaret in her place. Louy is soft now with trouble, and that wicked old woman will try to work her and mould her into what shape she pleases. You've had enough of Margaret."

"I have tried to do my duty by our sister."

"You've done more, my lad. Now take care that she leaves Louy alone. You don't want another old maid of her pattern in the family."

"John is awake now, George Vine," said Mrs. Van Heldre, re-entering the room.

"Will you go up?"

"Yes, I'll go up," said George Vine quietly.

"Well, aren't I to be asked to see him?" grumbled Uncle Luke.

"Oh, what a strange man you are!" said Mrs. Van Heldre; "you know I wanted you to go up."

"No, I don't; I know you asked me to go up. Different thing altogether."

"I did want you to go. I felt that it would cheer up poor John."

"Well, don't be cross about it, woman. Ask me again."

Mrs. Van Heldre turned with a smile to George Vine, as much as to say, "Did you ever hear such an unreasonable being?"

"Rum one, aren't I, John's wife, eh?" said Uncle Luke grimly. "Good little woman, after all."

"After all!" ejaculated Mrs. Van Heldre, as she followed them into the room, and then stopped back. "Too many of us at once can't be good, so I must stay down," she added, with a sigh.

Crossing to the table where her bird's cage was standing, she completely removed the cover, now displaying a pink and grey ball of feathers upon the perch, her action having

been so gentle that the bird's rest was not disturbed.

"Poor little prisoner!" she said gently. "There, you may wake up to-morrow morning and pipe and sing in the bright sunshine, for we can bear it now—thank God! we can bear it now."

CHAPTER L.—THE DISCOVERY.

MADELAINE rose as the brothers entered the room, and before coming to the bed, where Van Heldre lay rapidly mending now, George Vine took the girl's hands, looked down in her pale face, which sorrow seemed to have refined, and bent down and kissed her.

"How are you, Maddy?" said Luke Vine, gruffly; and he was going on to the bed, but Madelaine laid her hand upon his shoulder, leant towards him, and kissed him.

"Hah! yes, forgot," he said, brushing her forehead roughly with his grey beard; and then, yielding to a sudden impulse, kissing the girl tenderly, "How I do hate girls!" he muttered to himself, as he went straight to the window and stood there for a few moments.

"Poor lad!" he said to himself. "Yes, hopeless, or a girl like that would have redeemed him."

He turned back from the window.

"Room too hot and stuffy," he said.

"Well, how are you, John?"

"Getting well fast," replied Van Heldre, shaking hands. "Splendid fish that was you sent me to-day; delicious."

"Humph! all very fine! Shilling or fifteenpence out of pocket," grumbled Uncle Luke.

"Get out!" said Van Heldre, after a keen look at George Vine. "Poll Perrow wouldn't have given you more than ninepence for a fish like that. It's wholesale, Luke, wholesale."

"Ah! you may grin and wink at George," grumbled Uncle Luke, "but times are getting hard."

"They are, old fellow, and we shall be having you in the workhouse, if we can't manage to get you to the Victoria Park place."

"Here, come away, George," snarled Uncle Luke. "He's better. Beginning to sneer. Temper's getting very bad now, I suppose, my dear?" he added to Madelaine.

"Terrible. Leads me a dreadful life, Uncle Luke," she said, putting her arm round Van Heldre's neck to lay her cheek against his brow for a moment or two before turning to leave the room.

"Cant and carny," said Uncle Luke. "Don't you believe her, John Van; she'll be coming to you for money to-morrow—bless her," he added *sotto voce*; then aloud, "What now?"

For Madelaine had gone behind his chair, and placed her hands upon his shoulders.

"It's all waste of breath, Uncle Luke," she said gently. "We found you out a long time ago, Louise and I."

"What do you mean?"

"All this pretended cynicism. It's a mere disguise."

"An ass in the lion's skin, eh?"

"No, Uncle Luke," she whispered, with her lips close to his ear, so that the others should not catch the words, "that is the wrong way, sir. Reverse the fable."

"What do you mean, hussy?"

"The dear old lion in the ass's skin," she whispered; "and whenever you try to bray it is always a good honest roar."

"Well, of all——"

He did not finish, for Madelaine had hurried from the room, but a grim smile came over his cynical countenance, and he rubbed his hands softly as if he was pleased. Then, drawing his chair nearer to the bed, he joined in the conversation at rare intervals, the subjects chosen being all as foreign as possible from the past troubles, till Mrs. Van Heldre came softly into the room.

"I am Doctor Knatchbull's deputy," she said; "and my orders are not to let John excite himself."

"All nonsense, my dear," said Van Heldre.

"She is quite right, John," said George Vine, rising.

"Quite right," said Uncle Luke, following his brother's example. "Keep him quiet. Make haste and get well. Good night. Come, George."

He was at the door by the time he had finished his speech, and without pausing to shake hands began to descend.

Madelaine came out of the drawing-room as the old man reached the hall.

"What do you think of him?" she said eagerly.

"Going backwards—dying fast," he said shortly.

"Oh!"

"Don't be a little goose," he cried, catching her in his arms as she reeled. "We all are; especially people over fifty. Bonny little nurse. You've done wonders. Good night, my dear; God bless you!"

She returned his loving fatherly kiss, given hastily, as if he were ashamed of his weak-

ness, and then he strode out into the dark night.

"Poor Uncle Luke!" she said softly. "I was right. He must have had some shock to change his life like this. Good night, dear Mr. Vine. My dearest love to Louy."

"Good night, my darling," he whispered huskily, and the next minute he was walking slowly away beside his brother in the direction of the turning up to the granite house.

"Good night, Luke," said George Vine. "It is of no use to say come up."

"Yes, it is," said Uncle Luke snappishly. "I want to see Louy, and have a decent cup of tea."

"I am very glad," said his brother warmly. "Hah! that's right. Come more often, Luke. We are getting old men now, and it's pleasant to talk of the days when we were boys."

"And be driven from the place by Madge with her pounce-box and her civet-cat airs. You kick her out, and I'll come often."

"Poor Marguerite!"

"There you go; encouraging the silly French notions. Why can't you call her Margaret, like a British Christian?"

"Let her finish her span in peace, brother," said George Vine, whose visit to his old friend seemed to have brightened him, and made voice and step elastic. "We are crotchety and strange too, I with my mollusk hobby, you with your fishing."

"If you want to quarrel, I'm not coming up."

"Yes you are, Luke. There, come often, and let poor Margaret say what she likes. We shall have done our duty by her, so that will be enough for us."

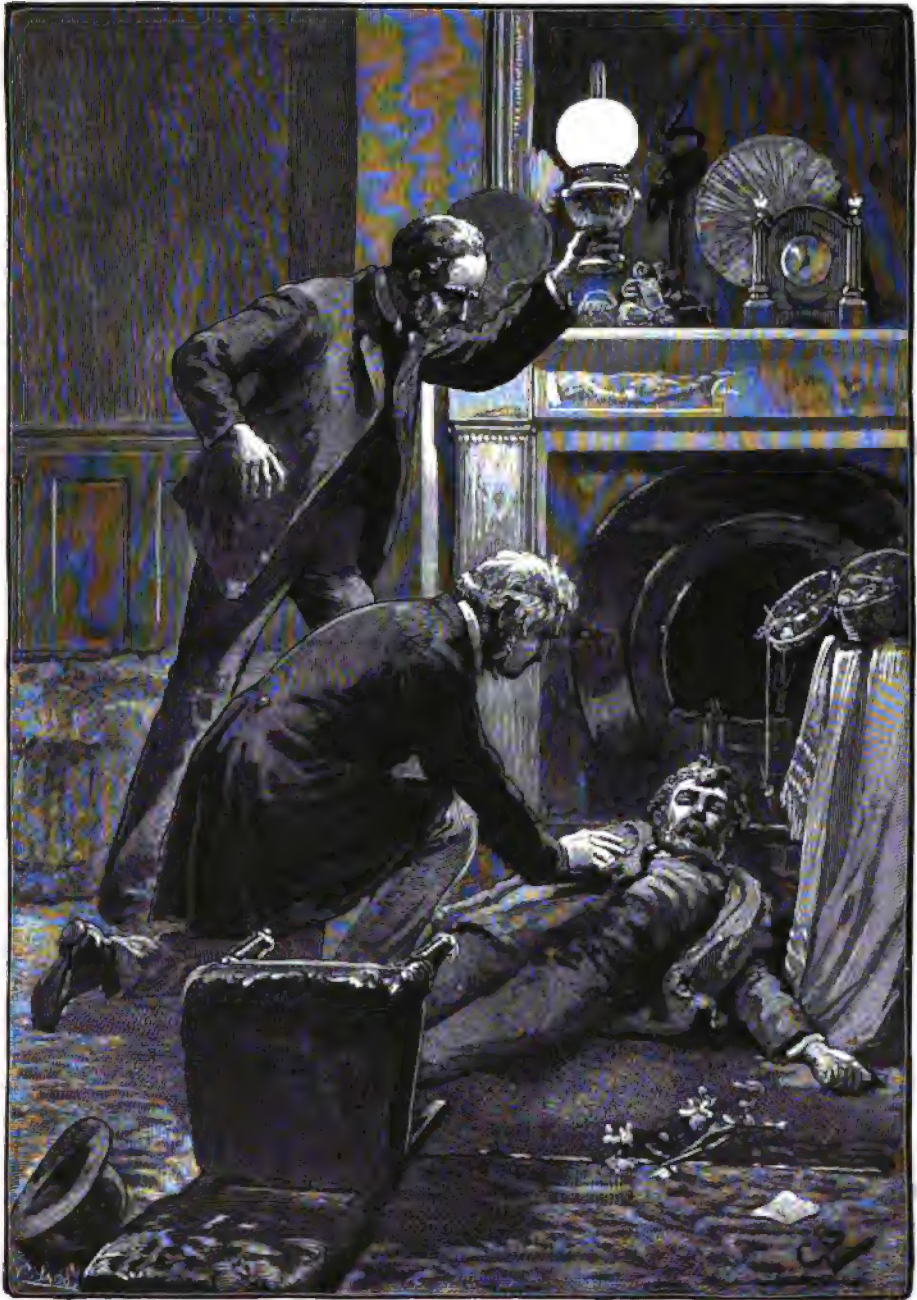
"Hang duty! I'm getting sick of duty. No matter what one does, or how one tries to live in peace and be left alone, there is always duty flying in one's face."

"Confession of failure, Luke," said his brother, taking his arm. "You had given up ordinary social life, invested your property, sent your plate to your banker's and settled down to the life of the humblest cottager to, as you say, escape the troubles of every-day life."

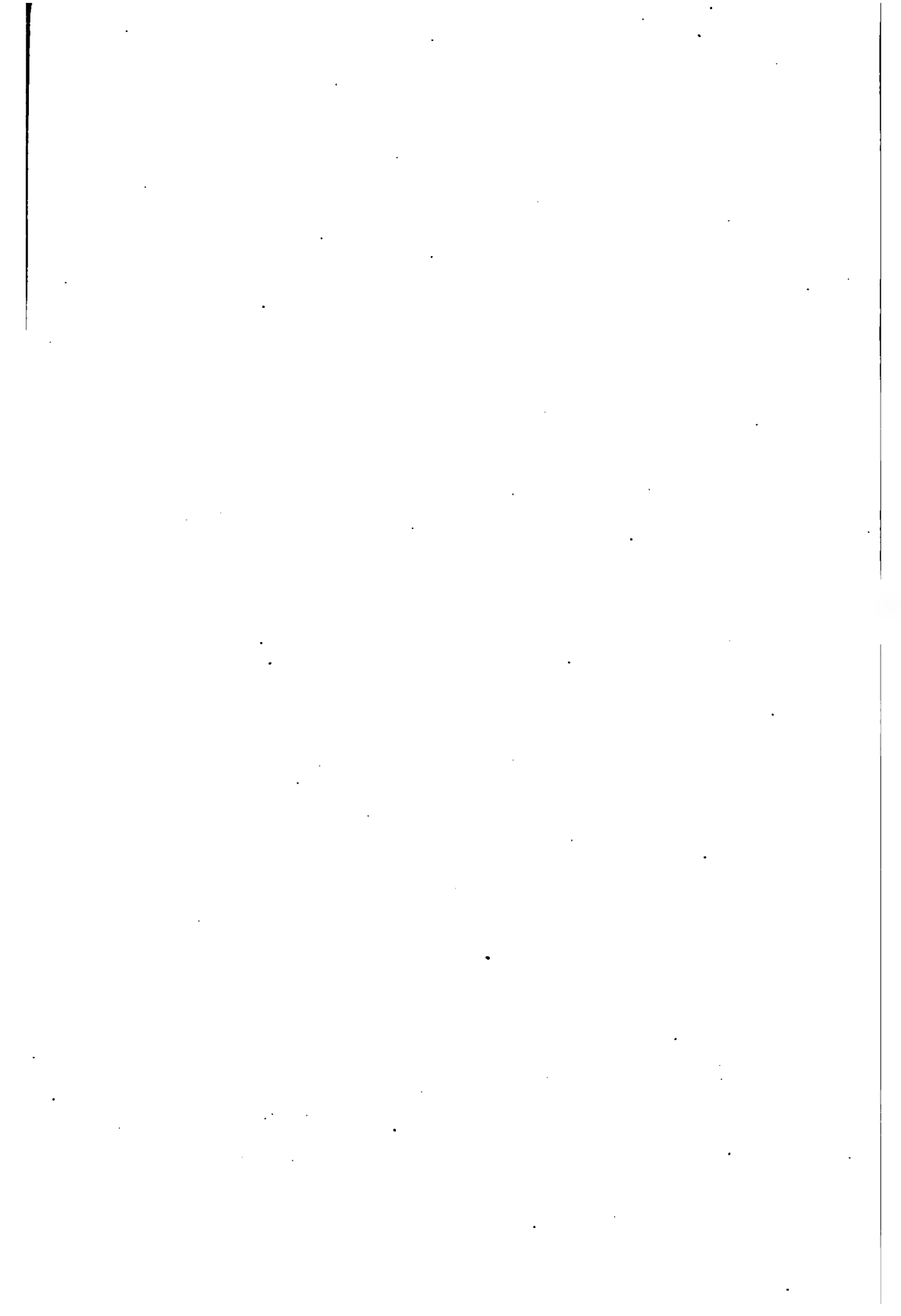
"Yes, and I've escaped 'em—roguish tradespeople, household anxieties, worries out of number."

"In other words," said Vine, smiling, "done everything you could to avoid doing your duty, and for result you have found that trouble comes to your cottage in some form or another as frequently as it does to my big house."

Uncle Luke stopped short, and gave his stick a thump on the path.



"Duncan Leslie!" cried Uncle Luke.



"I have done, Luke," said Vine quietly. "Come along; Louise will think we are very long."

"Louise will be very glad to have had an hour or two to herself without you pottering about her. Hah! what idiots we men are, fancying that the women are looking out for us from our point of view when they are looking out from theirs for fear of being surprised, and——"

"Here we are, Luke. Come in, my dear boy."

Uncle Luke grunted.

"Oh, I don't know," he said, "it's getting late. Perhaps I had better not come in now."

"The tea will be waiting," said his brother, holding his arm lightly as he rang.

"Horribly dark for my walk back afterwards," grumbled Uncle Luke. "Really dangerous place all along there by the cliff. No business to be out at night. Ought to be at home."

"Tea ready, Liza?" said George Vine, as the door was opened, and the pleasant glow from the hall shone upon them in a way that, in spite of his assumed cynicism, looked tempting and attractive to Uncle Luke.

"Miss Louise hasn't rung for the urn yet, sir."

"Hah! that will do. Give me your hat, Luke."

"Bah! nonsense! Think I can't hang up my own hat now."

George Vine smiled, and he shook his head at his brother with a good-humoured smile as he let him follow his own bent.

"That's right. Come along. Louy dear, I've brought Uncle Luke up to tea. All dark? Liza, bring the lamp."

Liza had passed through the baize-covered door which separated the domestic offices from the rest of the house, and did not hear the order.

"Louy! Louy dear!"

"Oh! I don't mind the dark," said Uncle Luke. "Here, why don't the girl let in some air these hot nights?" he continued, as he crossed the room towards the big embayment, with its stained glass heraldic device.

Crack! crackle!

"Hullo here! broken glass under one's feet," said Luke Vine, with a chuckle. "This comes of having plenty of servants to keep your place clean."

"Glass?"

"Yes, glass. Can't you hear it?" snarled Uncle Luke, who, as he found his brother resume his old demeanour, relapsed into his

own. "There! glass—glass—glass crunching into your Turkey carpet."

As he spoke he gave his foot a stamp, with the result that at each movement there was a sharp crackling sound.

"It's very strange. Louise!"

"Oh!"

A low, piteous moan.

"What's that?" cried Uncle Luke sharply.

George Vine stood in the darkness paralysed with dread. Some fresh trouble had befallen his house—some new horror assailed him; and his hand wandered vaguely about in search of support as a terrible feeling of sickness came over him, and he muttered hoarsely, "Louise! my child! my child!"

Luke Vine was alarmed, but he did not lose his presence of mind.

"Margaret—a fit," he said to himself, as, turning quickly, his foot kicked against another portion of the lamp-globe, which tinkled loudly as it fell to pieces."

He brushed by his brother, hurrying out into the hall, to return directly bearing the lamp which stood on a bracket, and holding it high above his head as he stepped carefully across the carpet.

"There! there!" whispered George Vine, pointing towards the fire-place, where he could see a figure lying athwart the hearthrug.

Then, as Luke held the light higher, George Vine seemed to recover his own presence of mind, and going down on one knee as he bent over, he turned the face of the prostrate man to the light.

"Duncan Leslie!" cried Uncle Luke excitedly, as he quickly set down the lamp and knelt on the other side. "Where's Louy? The poor boy's in a fit."

"No, no," whispered his brother hoarsely. "Look! look!"

Luke drew in a quick, hissing breath.

"Call Louy," he said sharply. "Tell her to bring something to bind up his head—scissors, sponge, and water."

"Has he been struck down?" faltered George Vine, with the thought of his old friend rushing to his mind.

"No, no. Don't talk. Here, your handkerchief, man," said Luke, who was far the more matter-of-fact. "A fall. Head cut. Slip on the cliff, I suppose, and he has come here for help."

Taking the handkerchief passed to him by his brother, he rapidly bound it round the place where a deep cut was slowly welling, while George Vine dragged sharply at the bell, and then ran to the door and called, "Louise! Louise!"

Liza came hurrying into the hall, round-eyed and startled.

"Where is your mistress?" cried Vine.

"Miss Louise, sir? Isn't she there?"

"No. Go up to her room and fetch her. Perhaps she is with Miss Vine."

"I'll go and see, sir," said the girl wonderingly; and she ran up-stairs.

"Help me to get him on the sofa, George," said Uncle Luke; and together they placed the injured man with his head resting on a cushion.

"Now, then, I think we had better have Knatchbull. He must have had a nasty fall. Send your girl; or no, I'll go myself."

"No," said Leslie feebly; "don't go."

"Ah! that's better. You heard what I said?"

"Yes; what you said."

It was a feeble whisper, and as the brothers bent over the injured man, they could see that he was gazing wildly at them with a face full of horror and despair.

"I'll trot down and fetch Knatchbull," whispered Uncle Luke.

"No."

The negative came from Leslie, who was lying back with his eyes closed, and it was so decisive that the brothers paused.

At that moment Liza entered the room.

"She isn't upstairs, sir.—Ow!"

The girl had caught sight of Leslie's ghastly face, and she uttered an excited howl and thrust her fingers into her ears.

Leslie looked up at George Vine vacantly for a moment, and then light seemed to come to his clouded brain, and his lips moved.

"Say it again," said Vine, bending over him.

"Send—her—away," whispered the injured man.

"Yes, of course. Liza, go and wait—no; get a basin of water, sponge, and towel, and bring them when I ring."

The girl looked at him wildly, but she had not heard his words; and Uncle Luke put an end to the difficulty by taking her arm and leading her into the hall.

"Go and get sponge and basin. Mr. Leslie has fallen and hurt himself. Now, don't be stupid. You needn't cry."

The girl snatched her arm away and ran through the baize door.

"Just like a woman!" muttered Uncle Luke as he went back; "no use when she's wanted. Well, how is he?"

Leslie heard the whisper, and turned his eyes upon him with a look of recognition.

"Better," he whispered. "Faint—water."

George Vine opened the cellarette, and gave him a little brandy, whose reviving power proved wonderful. But after heaving a deep sigh, he lay back with his forehead puckered.

"Hadn't I better fetch Knatchbull, my lad?" said Uncle Luke gruffly, but with a kindly ring in his voice. "Cut on the back of your head. He'd soon patch it up."

"No. Better soon," said Leslie in a low voice. "Let me think."

"Be on the look out," whispered Uncle Luke to his brother. "Better not let Louise come in."

Leslie's eyes opened quickly, and he gazed from one to the other.

"Better not let her see you till you are better," said Uncle Luke, taking the injured man into their confidence.

A piteous sigh escaped from Leslie, and he closed his eyes tightly.

"Poor boy!" said Uncle Luke, "he must have had an ugly fall. Missed his way in the dark, I suppose. George, you'll have to keep him here to-night."

"Yes, yes, of course," said George Vine uneasily, for his ears were on the strain to catch his child's step, and her absence troubled him.

All at once Leslie made an effort to sit up, but a giddy sensation overcame him, and he sank back, staring at them wildly.

"Don't be alarmed," said George Vine kindly. "You are faint. That's better."

Leslie lay still for a few moments, and then made a fresh effort to sit up. This time it was with more success.

"Give him a little more brandy," whispered Uncle Luke.

"No; he is feverish, and it may do harm. Yes," he said to Leslie, as the injured man grasped his arm, "you want to tell us how you fell down."

"No," said Leslie quickly, but in a faint voice, "I did not fall. It was in the struggle."

"Struggle?" cried Uncle Luke. "Were you attacked?"

Leslie nodded quickly.

"Where? Along the road?"

"No," said Leslie hoarsely; "here."

"Here?" exclaimed the brothers in a breath; and then they exchanged glances, each silently saying to the other, "The poor fellow is wandering."

"There," said Leslie, "I can think clearly now. It all seemed like a dream. You must know, Mr. Vine. I must tell you," he added piteously. "Mr. Vine, what do you propose doing?"

"Hush!" said George Vine, laying his hand upon the young man's shoulder, "you are ill and excited now. Don't talk at present. Wait a little while."

"Wait?" cried Leslie, growing more excited. "You do not know what you are saying. How long have I been lying here? What time is it?"

"About nine," said Vine kindly. "Come, come, lie back for a few moments. We'll get some cold water, and bathe your temples."

"Man, you will drive me mad," cried Leslie. "Do you not—no, you have not understood yet. Louise—Miss Vine!"

George Vine staggered as if he had been struck, and his brother caught his arm as he stood there gasping, with his hand to his throat.

"What do you mean?" cried Uncle Luke sternly.

"I am sick and faint," said Leslie, pressing his hands to his brow, as if unable to think clearly. "I remember now. I came in to ask about Mr. Van Heldre, and a stranger was with Miss Vine. I tried to stop him—till you returned. We struggled, and he threw me. I recollect no more."

"You're mad!" said Uncle Luke savagely. "Where is Louise?"

His brother caught hold of the back of a chair to support himself, and his lips moved, but no sound came.

"Yes, I can recollect it all clearly now," panted Leslie. "You must know!"

And he told them all.

They heard him in silence, devouring his words, and from time to time exchanging a hurried glance of inquiry.

"Bah!" ejaculated Uncle Luke, as the young man finished. Then, changing his manner, "Yes, of course. There, lie back, my lad, and tell us again after you've had a rest."

"No, no," cried Leslie passionately, "it is wasting time. She was forced to go. She was imploring him to let her stay when I came in, and they must be miles away by now. For heaven's sake do something before it is too late."

"A Frenchman?" said Uncle Luke eagerly.

"Yes; he spoke to her in French, as well as in English."

"And did my niece speak to him in French?"

"No; she was appealing to him in English, but he spoke at times in French."

"Do you hear this, George? Has Louise a French friend?"

"No," cried her father angrily, "it is a delusion."

"I would to heaven it were," groaned Leslie, "I would to heaven it were!"

George Vine crossed to the bell-pull, and rang sharply, repeating the summons before Liza had time to enter the room.

"When did you see your mistress last?" he said sharply.

"When I took in the lamp, sir."

Liza knew no more, and was dismissed, after staring wonderingly from one to the other.

"Stop!" cried Uncle Luke. "Go up and ask Miss Vine if my niece has been with her."

Liza returned with an answer in the negative; and as soon as they were alone, Leslie said piteously,

"You disbelieve me."

"No, no, my lad," said Uncle Luke; "we only think you are suffering from your fall, and distrust what you have, or think you have, seen."

"Think!" said Leslie angrily.

"You say some man was with my niece—a Frenchman."

"Yes; I am bound to tell you for her sake."

"It is not true," cried George Vine fiercely.

They looked at him with surprise, for he seemed transformed from the quiet, mild-looking man to one full of fierce determination as he stood there with flashing eyes.

"My daughter knew no Frenchman."

Leslie winced as if stung, for the mental suggestion was there that Louise had hoodwinked her father and kept up some clandestine engagement with this man.

"Do you hear me?" cried Vine angrily. "I say it is not true. Mr. Leslie, you have been deceived, or you have deceived yourself. I beg your pardon. You are not yourself. It is useless to discuss this further. Luke, all this seems mysterious because we have no key to the puzzle. Oh! puzzle! it is no puzzle. Louise will be here shortly. Mr. Leslie, be advised; lie still for an hour, and then my brother and I will see you home. Or, better still, let me offer you the hospitality of my house for the night."

The cloud that had obscured Leslie's brain had now passed away, leaving his mental perceptions clear; while his temper was exacerbated by the injury he had received, and by the agony he suffered on account of Louise. In place of lying back, he rose from the couch and faced George Vine, with

his lips quivering and an angry look in his eyes.

"Look," he said hoarsely, "I am weak and helpless. If I take a few steps I shall reel and fall, or I would do what I tried to do before, act on her behalf. You mock at my words. You, her father, and stand there wasting time; valuable time, which, if used now, might save that poor girl from a life of misery. Do you hear me? I tell you she has gone—fled with that man. He forced her to go with threats. Do you not hear me?"

"Leslie, my lad," said Uncle Luke, "be calm, be calm."

"You are as mad and blind as he!" cried Leslie. "Heaven help me, and I am as weak as a child."

He strode towards the door, and proved the truth of his words, for he tottered, and would have fallen but for Uncle Luke.

"There, you see," he cried fiercely, "I can do nothing, and you, uncle and father, stand blind to the misery and disgrace which threaten you."

"Silence!" cried George Vine; "I can hear no more."

He turned upon Leslie fiercely.

"Your words, sir, are an insult to me, an insult to my child. I tell you I can hear no more. What you say is false. My daughter could not leave my house like this. Go, sir, before I say words which I may afterwards repent, and—and——"

"George, man, what is it?" cried Uncle Luke, as his brother's words trailed off, and he stopped suddenly in the agitated walk he had kept up to and fro while he was addressing Leslie.

There was no answer to the agitated question, for George Vine was gazing down at something beside the table, lying half covered by the dragged-aside cloth.

Whatever it was it seemed to act as a spell upon the old naturalist, whose eyes were fixed, and his whole aspect that of one suddenly fixed by some cataleptic attack.

"What is it? Are you ill?" cried Uncle Luke excitedly as he stepped forward. "Hah, a letter!"

He was in the act of stooping to pick it up, but his act seemed to rouse his brother from his lethargy, and he caught him by the arm.

"No, no," he whispered; and slowly putting his brother back, he stooped and stretched out his hand to pick up the half-hidden letter.

They could see that his hand trembled violently, and the others stood watching

every act, for the feeling was strong upon both that the letter which Vine raised and held at arm's length contained the explanation needed.

George Vine held the letter toward the shaded lamp, and then passed his left hand over his eyes, and uttered a hoarse sigh, which seemed as if torn from his heart.

"I—I can't read," he whispered—"eyes dim to-night, Luke. Read."

Uncle Luke's hand trembled now as he took the missive, and slowly tore open the envelope; but as he drew out the letter it was snatched from his hands by his brother, who held it beneath the lamp-shade and bent down to read.

He raised himself up quickly and passed his hand across his eyes, as if to sweep away some film which hindered his reading, and the silence in that room was terrible as he bent down again.

A strong pang of suffering shot through Duncan Leslie as he saw the old man's lips quivering, while he read in a slow, laborious way, the few lines contained in the note, and then, after once more making an effort to clear his vision, he seemed to read it again.

"George—brother—why don't you speak?" said Uncle Luke at last.

George Vine looked up in a curiously dazed way.

"Speak?" he said huskily; "speak?"

"Yes; is that from Louise?"

He bowed his head in assent.

"Well, what does she say, man? What does it mean?"

George Vine looked in his brother's eyes once more—the same curiously dazed look as if he hardly comprehended what was taking place. Then he slowly placed the note in Luke's hands.

There was no slow, dazed manner here, for the old cynic was full of excitement, and he seemed to read the note at a glance.

"Gone!" he said. "Then she has gone?"

"Yes," said his brother slowly; "she has gone."

"But this man, George—this man, Leslie. Don't stare, man, speak."

"What do you wish me to say, sir?" said Leslie, hoarsely.

"Who was he? What was he like?"

"I could not see his face, he kept it averted. I can tell you no more, sir. I tried to force him to stay till Mr. Vine's return, as I before told you, and you saw the result."

"A Frenchman?"

"He spoke in French."

"George, had you any suspicion of this?"

"No."

"You never heard word?"

"I never heard word."

"But it must have been going on for long enough. And you knew nothing whatever?"

"And I knew nothing whatever," said George Vine, his words coming slowly and in a voice which sounded perfectly calm.

"Then you know from what black cloud this bolt has come?"

"I—I know nothing," said Vine, in the same slow, strange way.

"Then I can tell you," cried Luke, furiously. "If ever man nursed viper at his fireside, you have done this, for it to sting you to the heart. Hah!" he cried, as the door opened and Aunt Marguerite sailed in, drawing herself up in her most dignified way, as she saw who was present, and then ignoring both strangers, she turned to her brother.

"What is the meaning of these inquiries?" she said sternly. "Where is Louise?"

"Ask your own heart, woman," cried Uncle Luke, furiously. "Gone—gone with some wretched French impostor of your introduction here."

Aunt Marguerite gazed at him angrily.

"I say where is Louise?" she cried excitedly.

"Mr. Leslie," said George Vine, after drawing a long breath, his sister's shrill voice having seemed to rouse him; "you will forgive a weak, trusting old man for what he said just now?"

"Forgive you, Mr. Vine!"

"I was sure of it. Thank you. I am very weak."

"But Louise?" cried Aunt Marguerite.

"Read her letter. Gone!" cried Uncle Luke fiercely, as he thrust the note in the old woman's face.

"Gone!" said George Vine, staring straight before him with the curious look in his eyes intensified, as was the stony aspect of his face. "Gone! Thank God—thank God!"

"George, what are you saying?" cried Uncle Luke excitedly.

"I say thank God that my dear wife was not spared to me to see the blow that has fallen upon my home to-night."

Brother, sister, Duncan Leslie stood gazing at the silvered head, dimly seen above the shaded lamp. The face was unnaturally calm and strange; and weak as he was, Dun-

can Leslie sprang forward. He had seen what was coming, and strove vainly to save the stricken man, for George Vine seemed to have been robbed of all power, and fell with a weary moan senseless at his brother's feet.

CHAPTER LI.—BROKEN WITH THE FIGHT.

"BETTER stop where you are, man," said Uncle Luke.

"No," said Leslie, as he stood gazing straight before him as one who tries to see right on into the future along the vista of one's own life.

"But it is nearly one o'clock. Sit down there and get a nap."

"No. I must go home," said Leslie slowly, and in a measured way, as if he were trying to frame his sentences correctly in carrying on the conversation while thinking of something else.

"Well, you are your own master."

"Yes," said Leslie. "How is he?"

"Calmer now. He was half mad when he came to, and Knatchbull was afraid of brain fever, but he gave him something to quiet the excitement. Better have given you something too."

"What are you going to do?" said Leslie, turning upon the old man suddenly, and with a wild look in his eyes.

"Do nothing rashly," said Uncle Luke.

"But time is flying, man."

"Yes. Always is," said Uncle Luke, coolly, as he watched his companion with half-closed eyes.

"But——"

"That will do. I cannot discuss the matter to-night, my head's in a whirl. Do nothing rashly is a capital maxim."

"But we are wasting time."

"Look here, young man," said Uncle Luke, taking Leslie by the lapet of the coat. "I'm not blind. I dare say I can see as far through you as most people can. I am an old man, and at my time of life I can be calm and dispassionate, and look on at things judicially."

"Judicially?" said Leslie bitterly; "any child could judge here."

"Oh, no," said the old man; "big child as you are, you can't."

"What do you mean?"

"That you are only a big stupid boy, Duncan Leslie."

"Don't insult me in my misery, man."

"Not I, my lad. I like you too well. I am only playing the surgeon, hurting you to

do you good. Look here, Leslie, you are in pain, and you are madly jealous."

"Jealous!" cried the young man scornfully, "of whom?"

"My niece—that man—both of them."

"Not I. Angry with myself, that's all, for being an idiot."

"And because you are angry with yourself, you want to follow and rend that man who knocked you down; and because you call yourself an idiot for being deeply attached to Louise, you are chafing to go after her, and at any cost bring her back to throw yourself at her feet, and say, 'Don't have him, have me.'"

"Ah!" cried Leslie furiously. "There, you are an old man and licensed."

"Yes, I am the licensed master of our family, Leslie, and I always speak my mind."

"Yes, you sit there talking, when your duty is to follow and bring your niece back from disgrace," cried the young man furiously.

"Thank you for teaching me my duty, my lad. You have had so much more experience than I. All the same, Duncan Leslie, my hot-headed Scot, I am going to sleep on it, and that's what I advise you to do. There: be reasonable, man. You know you are not in a condition for dispassionate judgment."

"I tell you any one could judge this case," said Leslie hotly.

"And I tell you, my dear boy, that it would have puzzled Solomon."

"Will you go in search of her directly?"

"Will I go out in the dark, and run my head against the first granite wall? No, my boy, I will not."

"Then I must."

"What, run your head against a wall?"

"Bah!"

"Look here, Leslie, I've watched you, my lad, for long enough past. I saw you take a fancy to my darling niece Louy; and I felt as if I should like to come behind and pitch you off the cliff. Then I grew more reasonable, for I found by careful watching that you were not such a bad fellow after all, and what was worse, it seemed to me that, in spite of her aunt's teaching, Louy was growing up into a clever sensible girl, with only one weakness, and that a disposition to think a little of you."

Leslie made an angry gesture.

"Come, my lad, I'll speak plainly and put aside all cynical nonsense. Answer me this: How long have you known my niece?"

"What does that matter?"

"Much. I'll tell you. About a year, and at a distance. And yet you presume, in your hot-headed, mad, and passionate way, to sit in judgment upon her and to treat my advice with contempt."

"You cannot see it all as I do."

"Thank goodness!" muttered Uncle Luke.

"You did not witness what I did to-night."

"No. I wish I had been there."

"I wish you had," said Leslie, bitterly.

"Now you are growing wild again. Be calm, and listen. Now I say you have known our child a few months at a distance, and you presume to judge her. I have known her ever since she was the little pink baby which I held in these hands, and saw smile up in my face. I have known her as the patient, loving, unwearying daughter, the forbearing niece to her eccentric aunt—and uncle, my lad. You ought to have said that. I have known her these twenty years as the gentle sister who fought hard to make a sensible man of my unfortunate nephew. Moreover, I have known her in every phase, and while I have openly snarled and sneered at her, I have in my heart groaned and said to myself, what a different life might mine have been had I known and won the love of such a woman as that."

"Oh, yes, I grant all that," said Leslie, hurriedly; "but there was the vein of natural sin within."

"Natural nonsense, sir!" cried Uncle Luke, angrily. "How dare you! A holier, truer woman never breathed."

"Till that scoundrel got hold of her and cursed her life," groaned Leslie. "Yes, trample on me. I suppose I deserve it."

"Yes," cried the old man, "if only for daring to judge her, when I tell you that with all my knowledge of her and her life, I dare not. No, my lad, I'm going to sleep on it, and in the morning see if I can't find out the end of the thread, of the clue which will lead us to the truth."

"There is no need," groaned Leslie. "We know the truth."

"And don't even know who this man is. No, indeed, we do not know the truth. All right, my lad, I can read your looks. I'm a trusting, blind, old fool, am I? Very well, jealous pate, but I warn you, I'm right and you're wrong."

"Would to heaven I were! I'd give ten years of my life that it could be proved."

"Give ten years of nonsense. How generous people are at making gifts of the impossible! But look here, Duncan Leslie, I'll

have you on your knees for this when we have found out the mystery; and what looks so black and blind is as simple as A B C. Trash! bolt with some French adventurer? Our Louy! Rubbish, sir! Everything will be proved by-and-by. She couldn't do it. Loves her poor old father too well. There, once more take my advice, lie down there and have a nap, and set your brain to work in the sunshine, not in the dark."

"No."

"Going?"

"Yes, I am going. Good night, sir."

"Good night, you great stupid, obstinate, thick-headed Scotchman," growled Uncle Luke, as he let him out, and stood listening to his retiring steps. "I hope you'll slip over the cliff and half kill yourself. There's something about Duncan Leslie that I like after all," he muttered, as he went back to the dining-room; and, after a few minutes' thought, he went softly up to his brother's chamber, to find him sleeping heavily from the effect of the sedative given by the doctor.

Uncle Luke stole out quietly, shook his fist at his sister's door, and then went below to sit for a while studying Louise's letter, before lying down to think, and dropping off to sleep with the comforting self-assurance that all would come right in the end.

Meanwhile Duncan Leslie had gone down the steep descent, and made his way to the foot of the cliff-path, up which, with brain and heart throbbing painfully, he slowly tramped. The night was dull and cold, and as he ascended toward Luke Vine's rough cottage, he thought of how often he had met Louise on her way up there to her uncle's; and how he had often remained at a distance watching from his own place up at the mine the graceful form in its simple attire, and the sweet, earnest face, whose eyes used once to meet his so kindly, and with so trusting a look.

"Sleep on it!" he said, as he recalled the old man's words. "No sleep will ever make me think differently. I must have been mad—I must have been mad."

He had reached the old man's cottage, and almost unconsciously stopped and seated himself on the rough block of granite which was Uncle Luke's favourite spot when the sun shone.

Before him lay the sea spreading out deep and black, and as impenetrable as to its mysteries as the blank future he sought to fathom; and as he looked ahead, the sea, the sky, the future all seemed to grow more black.

His had been a busy life; school, where he had been ambitious to excel; college, where he had worked still more hard for honours, with the intention of studying afterwards for the bar; but fate had directed his steps in another direction, and through an uncle's wish and suggestions, backed by the fact that he held the mine, Duncan Leslie found himself, when he should have been eating his dinners at the Temple, partaking of them in the far West of England, with a better appetite, and perhaps with better prospects from a monetary point of view.

His had been so busy a life that the love-idleness complaint of a young man was long in getting a hold, but when it did seize him, the malady was the more intense.

He sat there upon the old, worn piece of granite, making no effort to go farther, but letting his memory drift back to those halcyon days when he had first begun to know that he possessed a heart disposed to turn from its ordinary force-pump work to the playing of a sentimental part such as had stranded him where he was, desolate and despairing, a wreck with his future for ever spoiled.

He argued on like that, sometimes with tender recollections of happy days when he had gone back home from some encounter, with accelerated pulses and a sensation of hope and joy altogether new.

He dwelt upon one particular day when he had come down from the mine to find Louise seated where he then was; and, as he recalled the whole scene, he uttered a groan of misery, and swept it away by the interposition of that of the previous evening; and here his wrath once more grew hot against the man who had come between them, for without vanity he could feel that Louise had turned toward him at one time, and that after a while the memory of the trouble which had come upon them would have grown more faint, and then she would once more have listened to his suit.

But for that man— He ground his teeth as he recalled Aunt Marguerite's hints and smiles; the allusions to the member of the French *haute noblesse*; their own connection with the blue blood of Gaul, and his own plebeian descent in Aunt Marguerite's eyes. And now that the French noble had arrived, how noble he was in presence and in act! Stealing clandestinely into the house during the father's absence, forcing the woman he professed to love into obedience by threats, till she knelt at his feet as one who pleads for mercy.

"And this is the *haute noblesse*!" cried Leslie, with a mocking laugh. "Thank heaven, I am only a commoner after all."

He sat trying to compress his head with his hands, for it ached as if it would split apart. The cool night breeze came off the sea, moist and bearing refreshment on its wings; but Duncan Leslie found no comfort in the deep draught he drank. His head burned, his heart felt on fire, and he gazed straight before him into the blackness trying to make out his path. What should he do? Act like a man and cast her off as unworthy of a second thought, or rouse himself to the manly and forgiving part of seeking her out, dragging her from this scoundrel, and placing her back in her stricken father's arms?

It was a hard fight, fought through the darkness of that terrible night, as he sat there on the rock, with the wind sighing from off the sea, and the dull, low boom of the waves as they broke at the foot of the cliff far below.

It was a fight between love and despair, between love and hate, between the spirit of a true, honest man who loved once in his life, and the cruel spirits of suspicion, jealousy, and malignity, which tortured him with their suggestions of Louise's love for one who had tempted her to leave her father's home.

As the day approached the air grew colder, but Duncan Leslie's brow still burned, and his heart seemed on fire. The darkness grew more dense, and the fight still raged.

What should he do? The worse side of his fallible human nature was growing the stronger; and as he felt himself yielding, the greater grew his misery and despair.

"My darling!" he groaned aloud, "I loved you—I loved you with all my heart."

He started, alarmed at his own words, and gazed wildly round as if expecting that some

one might have heard. But he was quite alone, and all was so dark right away ahead! Was there no such thing as hope for one stricken as he? The answer to his wild, mental appeal seemed to come from the far east, for he suddenly became conscious of a pale, pearly light which came from far down where sea and sky were mingled to the sight. That pale, soft light grew and grew, seeming to slowly suffuse the eastern sky, till all at once he caught sight of a fiery flake far on high, of another, and another, till the whole arc of heaven was ablaze with splendour, from which the sea borrowed glistening dyes.

And as he gazed the tears rose to his eyes, and seemed to quench the burning fire in his brain, as a fragment which he had read floated through his memory:—

"Joy cometh in the morning—joy cometh in the morning."

Could joy ever again come to such a one as he? He asked the question half-bitterly, as he confessed that the dense blackness had passed away, and that hope might still rise upon his life, as he now saw that glittering orb of light rise slowly above the sea, and transform the glorious world with its golden touch.

"No, no," he groaned, as he rose to go on at last to his desolate home. "I am broken with the fight. I can do no more, and there is no cure for such a blow as mine. Where could I look for help?"

"Yes; there," he said resignedly. "I'll bear it like a man," and as he turned he rested his hand upon the rough granite wall to gaze down the path, and drew back with a curious catching of the breath, as he saw the light garments of a woman pass a great patch of the black shaly rock.

Madelaine Van Heldre was hurrying up the cliff path, towards where he had passed those long hours of despair.

CHRIST AND THE LEPER.

ST. MARK I. 40—45.

Short Sunday Readings for October.

By THE REV. W. PAGE-ROBERTS, M.A.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read 1 Cor. xv. 24—29.

THE work to which Christ was consecrated was war with evil, and the end of His work will be the extinction of evil. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Holiness can never be "satis-

fied" while evil exists. The God of infinite purity and love can never be "satisfied" so long as any of His creatures continue in sin. Jesus Christ was a perfect satisfaction to Divine justice, for in Him was no sin. When Christ's work is complete in all men, then shall all men be satisfying to Divine justice, and when the sin of the world is taken away

God will be all in all. The work of Christ and the aim of Christ were and are the destruction of every evil. There have been men who have given themselves up to fight against some one particular evil, to save mankind from some one bane or curse; while other men have spent all their power in assailing some other evil. Often the men who take up earnestly one single subject make that one thing everything. They give but little sympathy or help to those who are engaged in the salvation of men from some other evil. They may almost be irritated because the interest which others excite diverts attention from their darling projects; and everything becomes of minor importance compared with saving men, in one case from drunkenness, and possibly in another from vaccination. In our Lord and Master there was no narrowness. He is the universal Saviour, the type and pattern of all other saviours. In every line of salvation He is to be seen taking His place. With physical evil and moral evil, with individual and social and political evil, His Spirit wrestles. It inspires men to-day. Whatever they are doing to destroy the evils which oppress mankind—whether it be in curing disease or in removing its causes; in fighting with the cruelties and tyrannies which make life wretched to so many, with the drunkenness and licentiousness which degrade such vast numbers, and stamp into dishonourable foulness beings who might have been beautiful in the sight of God and man; or whether it be in adding to this life the joys of the life eternal; whatever good work they are doing they are Christ's members, His very hands, working His own work. It is Christ in them which works; it is the hope of glory which inflames them, the glory of a world without evil, in which "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

In the story of the leper, as in similar stories, we see Christ setting Himself against physical disease. "The body is for the Lord and the Lord for the body." And herein is Christ head and chief of the professions and institutions which exist for the cure of bodily sickness. The doctor is a minister of Christ. The hospital is a part of the Church. One of the most noticeable things in the first days of Christianity was its care for the sick. Julian, who did what man could to re-establish the rationalized paganism in which his own spirit found refuge, was compelled to call the attention of his subjects to the hospitals of the hated Christians, in order to shame their disdainful inhumanity. Many

of the hospitals of Europe are dedicated to apostles and saints, and the great hospital at Paris is nobly named Hôtel Dieu. But in Palestine there were no such refuges for the sick in the days of our Lord. A disease which then was common in that land, and still continues to infest it, was leprosy. A few years ago I was camping in the centre of Palestine, just outside the walls of Nablous—the ancient Shechem. On either side were the high hills which make almost a street of this beautiful valley—hills known to ancient history as Ebal and Gerizim, the mounts of blessing and cursing. Curiosity brought people out of the gate of the little town to stare at the strangers' camp; and children, now plucking each other up to advance, and then retreating, as half afraid, flung towards the tent sweet boughs of orange-blossom; and the bright morning sun shone down on the pleasant scene. But there came a file of twenty or more, men, women, and children, whose looks and rags told of misery, and, away from the tents, they seated themselves on the ground, in a dismal semicircle. Into each outstretched hand a charity was dropped by the dragoman, and when I asked the meaning of this unattractive company, I learned that they were lepers. There was no hospital for the leper in our Lord's day. There were no noble priests to solace his misery by the consolations of religion. The law was against him. Driven from home and friends, conspicuous by a peculiar dress, and covering his chin with his hand, he cried, to warn off all who by chance might approach, "Unclean, unclean." It was such an one, bursting through the cruel restrictions of the law, who flung himself before Christ and prayed His mercy.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Galatians vi. 2—12.

"There came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, If thou wilt thou canst make me clean." His manner is to be noticed. It was "kneeling down to Him." Do not think that a man's manner is not of much importance. While it is not true that manners maketh man, it is true that man maketh manners. A bad-mannered man is not necessarily bad inside. But he has some fault inside, or he would not have the bad manner. Shyness, self-consciousness, shame of humble origin or occupation, may make a man clumsy, conceited, affected, defiant; but manners contain a man's history. A man's manners in his religion tell a great deal about his religion.

The behaviour of people in church is a moral revelation. Nods and smiles of recognition, chattering with neighbours, and inspections of the congregation, the covered head on entering and leaving the church, indolent postures in prayer and praise, and inattentive, restless, or sleepy conduct, are the irreligious manners of those who do not see God, or a kind of spiritual vulgarity which does not know how to conduct itself becomingly in that sacred presence.

The earnestness of this kneeling worshipper is also to be noticed. He came "beseeching" him. He had a burden which made him miserable, a wasting hunger which made him cry. This was more than manner. It is well that when we pray in church we should reverently stand or kneel down upon our knees, and not indolently loll and lounge. But a man may kneel and say nothing. He may kneel and want nothing. This is why our prayers in church seem long, and dull, and tame. It is the sermon we come for and not the prayers. The prayers are but the orchestral performance preluding the play, which need not be attended to. As our life is dull and common so are our prayers. There is no great desire in them, no longing strong enough to rise to heaven. "O Christ, hear us," we say, and our spirits are as dead as a gravestone.

What confidence and faith do we also see in this fervent prayer! A soul may cry out its passionate longing in hopeless despair. That for which it would give worlds it knows can never be. Here all is assurance—"If thou wilt thou canst make me clean." On another occasion there came one to Christ in sore distress who could pray but who could scarcely believe. Scepticism often kneels beside us when we pray, and supplies our prayers with *ifs*. "If thou canst do anything have compassion on us and help us." The answer of Jesus gave the secret of all great success whether of prayer or personal purpose. He said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." In a popular life of the late Pope it was said, by way of reproach, "There are no men so impracticable as those who trust in God." That reproach we may make our boast. In some respects the men who trust in God are impracticable. The devil can do nothing with them. His seductions, his bribes, his subtle arguings, his alarms have no effect upon them. Their trust is in God, they are built upon an immoveable rock. When they undertake some good work there is no tiring them, no making them lose heart. You may

persuade them that years of labour have been fruitless, and their strength spent for nought, but they are "impracticable." They are workers together with God, and the work will succeed whether they live to see it or not. They know, as Fichte says, that "in the spiritual world no step is lost." You cannot stop such men. The future is in their hands, and they will make it what they will. Nay, they will make it what God wills. Their prayers insure their answer. With deathless tenacity they cling to their work. They are strong in faith, giving glory to God, and death itself has no dominion over them. "Though he slay me yet will I put my trust in Him"—this is the spirit of the men whose confidence is in God. The future they can leave to heaven. "Impracticable" are they? God make us all such impracticable men, and "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Philipians ii. 1-9.

But if we may learn much from the example of this poor leper, the example of our Lord is more commanding still. He "was moved with compassion." Compared with other great teachers who preceded Him, we see at once that a spirit of tender compassion was His most striking characteristic. Theirs was scorn rather than compassion, at least scorn for the humble, the ignorant, and the slave. "Those powerful spirits who have filled the most prominent places among men, but have not been penetrated by true religious feelings, have at no time been known to bestow much honour or respect upon the race." (*Fichte*.) The great teachers of Ancient Greece, whatever their secret or their rule, addressed themselves to a select and cultivated few, and the general spirit was either a sternly disciplined heartlessness or a gay and graceful selfishness. In the great days of Ancient Rome human suffering was little heeded. Its favourite amusement was to see men murdered. Ladies as well as men assembled in those vast amphitheatres, whose remains excite our wonder and admiration at the present day, to see men fight with wild beasts and with each other, and waited for the death-stroke in breathless excitement. "The manner in which this contagious passion for bloodshed engrossed the whole soul is described by S. Augustine with singular power and truth in his confessions. A Christian student of the law was compelled by the importunity of his friends to enter the amphitheatre. He sat with his eyes closed

and his mind totally abstracted from the scene. He was suddenly startled from his trance by a tremendous shout from the whole audience. He opened his eyes, he could not but gaze on the spectacle. Directly he beheld the blood his heart imbibed the common ferocity; he could not turn away; his eyes were riveted on the arena, and the interest, the excitement, the pleasure grew into complete intoxication. He looked, he shouted, he was inflamed, and he carried away from the amphitheatre an irresistible propensity to return to its cruel enjoyments." (*Milman.*) Christianity for a long time was unable to suppress and eradicate this savage thirst for blood. Horrified by the wrongs which thousands suffered, "Butchered to make a Roman holiday," Telemachus, a young monk, travelled from the East to Rome that he might protest against these disgraceful barbarities. In his Christian enthusiasm he leaped into the arena to separate the combatants, and in his endeavour to stop the slaughter was killed himself. Then the conscience of the savage sightseers was shocked by the death of one consecrated to God, and the Emperor Honorius issued a prohibitory edict, and henceforth man no longer murdered man that others might make merry.

We may fearlessly say that no teacher before Christ ever adopted such a method as His. The poor were His first, His chiefest care. The outcast was made a friend by Him. To every sufferer He could find He stooped with gentle, loving, steadfast words of healing. But though He had such tender compassion for the needy and the miserable, He did not, like some of the Cynic teachers, assault or insult the rich and the great just because they were great. He taught the rich man who came to Him by night as readily as He taught the Magdalene, and that rich man was a mourner at His funeral. And when the nobleman besought Him for his child He had as tender a blessing for him as for the Syrophenician woman. And that spirit of compassion is indeed the holy spirit of Christianity. The legacy our Master of sorrows has left to His church is this spirit of compassion; and we are most Christian when we look around the world for its wounds and miseries and do our best to heal them. It has infected the nations, and even those who disown their obligation to Christ bear witness to His influence. And if I were asked for a proof of the power of Christianity in the British nation I would not point to its hundred or two hundred sects who will not pray together because they do not spell

prayer the same way. I would point to its magnificent and catholic charity and there find a proof of Christ's work and sacrifice and divine spirit. The first asylum for lepers was established by a Christian bishop—S. Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, and the "protection and care of the blighted race of lepers was among the most beautiful offices of the Church during the Middle Ages." (*Milman.*)

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read 1 Peter III. 8—15.

We have noticed the leper's manner in approaching Christ. We may notice Christ's manner in dealing with the leper. Jesus "put forth His hand and touched him." What perfect humanity! He knew what was in man, and was a real brother to him, a brother born for adversity. His loving compassion went straight to men's souls. That poor leper's body was a thing from which men fled away. To come into contact with it was to be polluted. But what does divine compassion do? With no loathing or held breath but with pitying sympathy it touches the sufferer, and the sufferer indeed is touched. The touch touched the heart, and we are sure that if the leper could leap for joy because he was cured, his heart would weep for love of the way in which it was done. "He touched me," he would say, "not merely cured me, but oh, the kindness of it! He put forth His hand and touched me." Again, we may say, how much there is in manner! What a constraining influence it wields! A word from some men is more precious than gold from others. The reason is, the manner manifests the spirit. Men love us for what we are and not for what we give. People must feel that we touch them if they are ever to become devoted to us. There are people for whom nobody cares who are always doing generous actions. They may complain of ingratitude, but they ought to blame themselves. It is the way they do things which makes people dislike them, and their way reveals their spirit. If you give gifts because you think yourself rather important, or wish to become so, to show your power, to be considered benevolent, to be popular and well spoken of, then you do all for yourself. You are not looking at the person who needs your charity, your eyes are not fixed on that sorrow or suffering to which you minister, you are looking all the time at yourself, and see only that most excellent, benevolent person—yourself. You are buying incense to burn to your own honour and glory. People quickly see which

way we are looking, outside or inside, at ourselves or at them. If we are to lessen the misery around us and be creators of content and happiness, we must look away from ourselves and come close to our fellows, because we see them, and are thinking about them, and feeling for them. It is the compassion which is unconscious of manner which clothes itself in a manner made to vanquish.

"For manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of loyal nature and of noble mind."
Tennyson.

There is no good in trying to acquire a manner. If you want a better manner you must get a better heart. In the life of S. Francis of Assisi there is an incident, almost parallel to this of our Lord's life. It falls below it just because it was self-conscious. He did what he did with a struggle, and so went beyond that perfectly-balanced sobriety which we see in the great example. S. Francis had been lavish in his charity, but his refined and sensitive nature shrank away with loathing from the lepers who crossed his path. Once as he rode forth he met one of these wretched beings. "Remembering," says Bonaventura, "that if he would be a soldier of Christ, he must first overcome himself," he dismounted from his horse, went to meet the leper, and when the poor man stretched out his hand for alms he *kissed* it and filled it with money. Here we see touching compassion, but self-consciousness made it almost too touching.

One other object of study remains to be noticed. It is the mighty will which realises itself—"I will; be thou clean." Here, however, we can but very imperfectly imitate our Master. Nevertheless, the men who cure the evils of the world are not the weak, the wishing, the vacillating, not straws caught up by every passing breeze, twirled now this way now that, with no foreseen destination. They are the men who, having fastened upon a work, never let go. They are the men who, having seen a good, set about getting it, and never stop and never lose heart—men who can never be turned out of their path, even if for a time they be impeded, iron men who can no more be beguiled or constrained than the great shot from the cannon's mouth. These are the men who looking out upon the foul places of the world, say, "I will; be thou clean;" and so it comes to pass. Men with a will are wanted to do the work of our charities and Churches. Then

"Leoprous sin will melt from earthly mould,
And hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day."
Milton.

One man to will is worth a hundred to wish. But there is a little incident in this story which must not be overlooked, an example of pardonable almost splendid lawlessness. Jesus said, "See thou say nothing to any man." No doubt it was his duty to obey Christ's command—

"... deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule."
Tennyson.

But was it any wonder that he disobeyed? Infinite compassion had flowed forth upon him, goodness itself had deigned to touch him. Could he hold his peace, and like an ingrate never tell the mighty favour which had been shown him? He could not be silent. His heart was too full to contain itself. "See thou say nothing to any man," said Jesus; "but he went out and began to publish it much, and to blaze it abroad." It may have been wrong, and yet it must have been right. At least we love the man the more for the fault, and we are sure his benefactor pardoned it. He loved much. The publishing and the blazing abroad were the work of a thankful, devoted, adoring heart. He might have said, "If I, once miserable and forsaken, but now happy and touched as a brother, should hold my peace, the stones would immediately cry out. He said, 'See thou say nothing to any man;' but I cannot stop the torrent which pours from the fountain He has unsealed. Moses smote a rock, and it gave forth its plenteous waters, and, Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great deliverer's praise!" What say you to this? cold hearts and formal! Have you no word with which to honour your Saviour? Rather than confess before men that you bow to Him as your Lord, would you put it off with a mock or a sneer? And who art thou to be ashamed of Christ? At least His rule and life stand before the world, challenging comparison, defying equality; and to them the wisest and best in every age have paid their homage. Cold hearts and formal may make no acclaim. Their silence or seeming indifference may prove them to be republicans and traitors in the kingdom of heaven. But they who have taken Christ as the spirit and changeless law of their lives, know that He is something adorable and eternal. Their faces are towards heaven, and as they go they sing on their way, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain For the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ALTHOUGH she had climbed the stairs so slowly poor Swanhild was still out of breath when she reached the door leading into the little parlour; she paused a moment to recover herself, and, hearing voices within, became a degree more miserable, for she had counted upon finding Frithiof alone. Clearly Sigrid must also have returned, and indeed things were even worse than that, for as she opened the door and emerged round the Japanese screen she saw Roy standing by the fire; for this she had been utterly unprepared, and indeed it was very seldom that he came now to the model lodgings.

"At last!" exclaimed Frithiof; "why, Swanhild, where on earth have you been to? We were just thinking of having you cried."

"We were preparing an advertisement to appear in all the papers to-morrow morning," said Roy, laughing, "and were just trying to agree as to the description; you'll hardly believe me, but your guardian hadn't the least notion what colour your eyes are."

Frithiof drew her towards him, smiling.

"Let me see now in case she is ever lost again," he said, but noticing a suspicious moisture in the blue eyes he no longer teased her, but made her sit down on his knee and drew off her gloves.

"What is the matter, dear?" he said; "you look cold and tired; where have you been to?"

"I have been to see Mr. Osmond," said Swanhild; "you know we often go to his church, Sigrid and I, and there was something I wanted to ask him about. Last summer I made a promise which I think was wrong and I wanted to know whether I might break it."

"What did he say?" asked Frithiof, while Sigrid and Roy listened in silent astonishment.

"He said that a wrong promise ought to be broken, and he managed to get me leave to speak from the person to whom I made the promise. And now I am going to tell you about it."

Frithiof could feel how the poor little thing was trembling.

"Don't be frightened, darling," he said, "just tell us everything and no one shall interrupt you."

She gave his hand a grateful little squeeze and went on.

"It happened just after we had come back from the sea last June. I was coming home from school on Saturday morning when just outside the court-yard I met Lady Romiaux. Just for a moment I did not know her, but she knew me directly and stopped me, and said how she had met you and Sigrid at a party and had ever since been so miserable to think that we were so poor, and somehow she had found out our address, and wanted to know all about us, only when she actually got to the door she did not like to come in. And she said she was so glad to see me, and asked all sorts of questions, and when she heard that you meant to pay off the debts she looked so sad, and she said that the bankruptcy was all her fault, and she asked how much I thought you had got towards it and seemed quite horrified to think what a little it was and what years the work would take. And then she said to me that she wanted to help, too, just a little, only that you must never know, and she thought I could easily pay in a five-pound note to your account at the bank, she said, without your knowing anything about it. She made me promise to do it secretly and never to tell that it was from her. You can't think how kindly she said it all, and how dreadfully sad she looked,—I don't think I could possibly have said 'no' to her. But afterwards I began to see that I couldn't very well pay the note into your account at the post-office, for I hadn't got your little book that you always take, and besides I didn't know which office you went to. So I worried about it all the next day, which was Sunday, and in the evening at church it suddenly came into my head that I would put it with your other money inside your waistcoat pocket." Roy made an involuntary movement, Sigrid drew a little nearer, but Frithiof never stirred. Swanhild continued: "So the next morning, when I went into your bedroom to wake you up, I slipped the note into your pocket, and then I thought, just supposing you were to lose it, it seemed so light and so thin, and I pinned it to the lining to make it quite safe. You were sleeping very soundly and were quite hard to wake up. At first I felt pretty happy

about it, and I thought if you asked me if I had put it there when you found it out I should be able to say 'yes' and yet to keep Blanche's secret. But you never said a word about it, and I was sure something had troubled you very much, and I was afraid it must be that, yet dared not speak about it, and I tried to find out from Sigrid, but she only said that you had many troubles which I was too young to understand. It often made me very unhappy, but I never quite understood that I had done wrong till the night you found me reading the paper, and then I thought that I ought not to have made the promise to Lady Romiaux. This is the note which Mr. Osmond brought me from her."

Frithiof took the little crumpled sheet and read it,

"DEAR SWANHILD,—You are quite free to speak about that five-pound note; I never ought to have made you promise secrecy, and, indeed, gave the money just by a sudden impulse. It was a foolish thing to do, as I see now, but I meant it well. I hope you will all forgive me.

"Yours affectionately,
"BLANCHE."

Then Roy and Sigrid read the note together, and Roy grasped Frithiof's hand.

"Will you ever forgive me?" he said. "Cecil was right, and I ought to have known that this miserable affair would one day be explained."

Frithiof still looked half stunned, he could not realise that the cloud had at last dispersed, he was so taken up with the thought of the extraordinary explanation of the mystery—of the childish, silly, little plan that had brought about such strange results.

"Oh, Swanhild!" cried Sigrid, "if only you had spoken sooner how much pain might have been saved."

"Don't say that," said Frithiof, rousing himself, "she has chosen the right time, depend upon it. I can hardly believe it all yet. But, oh! to think of having one's honour once more unstained—and this death in life over!"

"What do you mean? What do you mean?" sobbed poor little Swanhild, utterly perplexed by the way in which her confession had been received.

"Tell her," said Sigrid, glancing at Roy.

So he told her exactly what had happened in the shop on that Monday in June.

"We kept it from you," said Frithiof,

"because I liked to feel that there was at any rate one person unharmed by my disgrace, and because you seemed so young to be troubled with such things."

"But how can it have happened?" said Swanhild; "who took the note really from the till?"

"It must have been Darnell," said Roy. "He was present when Sardoni got the change, he saw James Horner put away the note, he must have managed during the time that you two were alone in the shop to take it out, and no doubt if he had been searched first the other five-pound note would have been found on him. What a blackguard the man must be to have let you suffer for him! I'll have the truth out of him before I'm a day older."

"Oh! Frithiof! Frithiof! I'm so dreadfully sorry," sobbed poor Swanhild. "I thought it would have helped you, and it has done nothing but harm."

But Frithiof stopped down and silenced her with a kiss. "You see the harm it has done," he said, "but you don't see the good. Come, stop crying and let us have tea, for your news has given me an appetite, and I'm sure you are tired and hungry after all this."

"But could it ever have entered anyone's head that such an improbable thing should actually happen?" said Roy as he mused over the story. "To think that Sardoni should get change for his note, and Darnell steal it on the very day that Swanhild had given you that unlucky contribution to the debt-fund!"

"It is just one of those extraordinary coincidences which do happen in life," said Sigrid. "I believe if every one could be induced to tell all the strange things of the kind that had happened we should see that they are after all pretty common things."

"I wonder if there is a train to Plymouth to-night?" said Roy. "I shall not rest till I have seen Darnell. For nothing less than his confession signed and sealed will satisfy James Horner. Do you happen to have a Bradshaw?"

"No, but we have something better," said Sigrid smiling; "on the next landing there is Owen, one of the Great Western guards. I know he is at home, for I passed him just now on the stairs, and he will tell you about the trains."

"What a thing it is to live in model lodgings!" said Roy smiling. "You seem to me to keep all the professions on the premises. Come, Frithiof, do go and interview

this guard and ask him how soon I can get down to Plymouth and back again."

Frithiof went out, there was still a strange look of abstraction in his face. "I scarcely realised before how much he had felt this," said Roy. "What a fool I was to be so positive that my own view of the case was right! Looking at it from my own point of view I couldn't realise how humiliating it must all have been to him—how exasperating to know that you were in the right yet not to be able to convince any one."

"It has been like a great weight on him all through the autumn," said Sigrid, "and yet I know what he meant when he told Swanhild that it had done him good as well as harm. Don't you remember how at one time he cared for nothing but clearing off the debts? Well, now, though he works hard at that, yet he cares for other people's troubles too,—that is no longer his one idea."

And then because she knew that Roy was thinking of the hope that this change had brought into their lives, and because her cheeks grew provokingly hot, she talked fast and continuously, afraid to face her own thoughts, yet all the time conscious of such happiness as she had not known for many months.

Before long Frithiof returned.

"I don't think you can do it," he said. "Owen tells me there is a train from Paddington at 9.50 this evening, but it isn't a direct one and you won't get to Plymouth till 9.28 to-morrow morning. A most unconscionable time, you see."

"Why not write to Darnell?" suggested Sigrid.

"No, no, he would get out of it in some mean way. I intend to pounce on him unexpectedly and in that way to get at the truth," replied Roy. "This train will do very well. I shall sleep on the way, but I must just go to Regent Street and get the fellow's address."

This, however, Frithiof was able to tell him, and they lingered long over the tea-table, till at length Roy remembered that it might be as well to see his father and let him know what had happened before starting for Devonshire. Very reluctantly he left the little parlour, but he took away with him the grateful pressure of Sigrid's hand, the sweet, bright glance of her blue eyes, and the echo of her last words, spoken softly and sweetly in her native language.

"*Farvel! Tak skal De have.*" ("Farewell! Thanks you shall have.") Why had she

spoken to him in Norse? Was it perhaps because she wished him to feel that he was no foreigner but one of themselves? Whatever her reason, it touched him and pleased him that she had spoken just in that way, and it was with a very light heart that he made his way to Rowan-Tree House.

The lamp was not lighted in the drawing-room, but there was a blazing fire, and on the hearth-rug sat Cecil with Lance nestled close to her, listening with all his ears to one of the hero stories which she always told him on Sunday evenings.

"Has father gone to chapel?" asked Roy.

"Yes, some time ago," replied Cecil. "Is anything the matter?"

Something told her that Roy's unexpected appearance was connected with Frithiof, and, accustomed always to fear for him, her heart almost stood still.

"Don't look so frightened," said Roy, as the firelight showed him her dilated eyes. "Nothing is the matter,—I have brought home some very good news. Frithiof is cleared, and that wretched business of the five-pound note fully explained."

"At last!" she exclaimed. "What a relief! But how? Do tell me all."

He repeated Swanhild's story, and then, hoping to catch his father in the vestry before the service began, he hurried off, leaving Cecil to the only companionship she could have borne in her great happiness—that of little Lance. But Roy found himself too late to catch his father, there was nothing for it but to wait, and, anxious to speak to him at the earliest opportunity, he made his way into the chapel that he might get hold of him when the service was over, for otherwise there was no saying how long he might not linger talking with the other deacons, who invariably wanted to ask his advice about a hundred and one things.

He was at this moment giving out the hymn, and Roy liked to hear him do this once more; it carried him back to his boyhood—to the times when there had been no difference of opinion between them. He sighed just a little, for there is a sadness in all division because it reminds us that we are still in the days of schooltime, that life is as yet imperfect, and that by different ways, not as we should wish all in the same way, we are being trained and fitted for a perfect unity elsewhere.

Mr. Boniface was one of those men who are everywhere the same, he carried his own atmosphere about with him, and sitting now in the deacon's seat beneath the pulpit he

looked precisely as he did in his home or in his shop. It was the same quiet dignity that was noticeable in him, the same kindly spirit, the same delightful freedom from all self-importance. One could hardly look at him without remembering the fine old saying, "A Christian is God Almighty's gentleman."

When, by-and-by, he listened to Roy's story, told graphically enough as they walked home together, his regret for having misjudged Frithiof was unbounded. He was almost as impatient to get hold of Darnell as his son was.

"Still," he observed, "you will not gain much by going to-night; why not start to-morrow by the first train?"

"If I go now," said Roy, "I shall be home quite early to-morrow evening, and Tuesday is Christmas eve—a wretched day for travelling. Besides, I can't wait."

Both the father and mother knew well enough that it was the thought of Sigrid that had lent him wings, and Mr. Boniface said no more, only stipulating that he should be just and generous to the offender.

"Don't visit your own annoyance on him, and don't speak too hotly," he said. "Promise him that he shall not be prosecuted or robbed of his character if only he will make full confession, and see what it was that led him to do such a thing. I can't at all understand it. He always seemed to me a most steady, respectable man."

Roy being young and having suffered severely himself through Darnell's wrongdoing, felt anything but judicial as he travelled westward on that cold December night; he vowed that horse-whipping would be too good for such a scoundrel, and rehearsed interviews in which his attack was brilliant and Darnell's defence most feeble. Then he dozed a little, dreamed of Sigrid, woke cold and depressed to find that he must change carriages at Bristol, and finally after many vicissitudes was landed at Plymouth at half-past nine on a damp and cheerless winter morning.

Now that he was actually there he began to dislike the thought of the work before him, and to doubt whether after all his attack would be as brilliant in reality as in imagination. Rather dismally he made a hasty breakfast and then set off through the wet, dingy streets to the shop where Darnell was at present employed. To his relief he found that it was not a very large one, and, on entering, discovered the man he sought, behind the counter and quite alone. As he approached him he watched his face keenly ;

Darnell was a rather good-looking man, dark, pale, eminently respectable; he looked up civilly at the supposed customer, then, catching sight of Roy, he turned a shade paler and gave an involuntary start of surprise.

"Mr. Robert!" he stammered.

"Yes, Darnell; I see you know what I have come for," said Roy quietly. "It was certainly a very strange, a most extraordinary coincidence that Mr. Falck should, unknown to himself, have had another five-pound note in his pocket that day last June, but it has been fully explained. Now I want your explanation."

"Sir!" gasped Darnell; "I don't understand you; I—I am at a loss——"

"Come, don't tell any more lies about it," said Roy impatiently. "We know now that you must have taken it, for no one else was present. Only confess the truth, and you shall not be prosecuted; you shall not lose your situation here. What induced you to do it?"

"Don't be hard on me, sir," stammered the man. "I assure you I've bitterly regretted it many a time."

"Then why did you not make a clean breast of it to my father?" said Roy. "You might have known that he would never be hard on you."

"I wish I had," said Darnell, in great distress; "I wish to God I had, sir, for it's been a miserable business from first to last. But I was in debt, and there was nothing but ruin before me, and I thought of my wife who was ill, and I knew that the disgrace would kill her."

"So you went and disgraced yourself still more," said Roy hotly. "You tried to ruin another man instead of yourself."

"But he wasn't turned off," said Darnell. "And they put it all on his illness, and it seemed as if, after all, it would not hurt him so much. It was a great temptation, and when I had once given way to it there seemed no turning back."

"Tell me just how you took it," said Roy, getting rather more calm and judicial in his manner.

"I saw Mr. Horner give Signor Sardoni the change, sir, and I saw him put the note in the till; and I was just desperate with being in debt and not knowing how to get straight again."

"But wait a minute—how had you got into such difficulties?" interrupted Roy. "And how could a five-pound note help you out again?"

"Well, sir, I had been unlucky in a betting transaction, but I thought I could right

myself if only I could get something to try again with ; but there wasn't a soul I could borrow from. I thought I should get straight again at once if only I had five pounds in hand, and so I did, sir ; I was on my feet again the very next day."

"I might have known it was betting that had ruined you," said Roy. "Now go back and tell me when you took the note."

"I kept on thinking and planning through the afternoon, sir, and then, presently, all was quiet, and only Mr. Falck with me in the shop, and I was just wondering how to get rid of him, when Mr. Horner opened the door of Mr. Boniface's room and called to me. Then I said, 'Do go, Mr. Falck, for I have an order to write to catch the post.' And he went for me, and I hurried across to his counter while he was gone, and took the note out of the till and put it inside my boot ; and when he came back he found me writing at my desk just as he had left me. He came up looking a little put out, as if Mr. Horner had rubbed him the wrong way, and he says to me, 'It's no use ; you must go yourself, after all.' So I went to Mr. Horner, leaving Mr. Falck alone in the shop."

"Were you not afraid lest he should open the till and find out that the note was gone ?"

"Yes, I was very much afraid. But all went well, and I intended to go out quickly at tea-time—it was close upon it then—and do what I could to get it straight again. I thought I could invent an excuse for not returning to the shop that night ; say I'd been taken suddenly ill, or something of that sort. It was Mr. Falck's turn to go first ; and while he was out, as ill-luck would have it, Mr. Horner came to take change from the till, and then all the row began. I made sure I was ruined, and no one was more surprised than myself at the turn that affairs took."

"But," exclaimed Roy, "when you were once more out of debt, how was it that you did not confess, and do what you could to make up for your shameful conduct ?"

"Well, sir, I hadn't the courage. Sometimes I thought I would ; and then, again, I couldn't make up my mind to ; and I got to hate Mr. Falck, and I hated him more because he behaved well about it ; and I got into the way of spiting him and making the place disagreeable to him ; and I hoped that he would leave. But he stuck to his post through it all ; and I began to think it would be safer that I should leave, for I felt afraid

of him somehow. So at Michaelmas I took this situation. And oh ! sir, for my wife's sake don't ruin me ; don't expose all this to my employer !"

"I promised you just now that you should not be exposed ; but you must write a few words of confession to my father ; and be quick about it, for I want to catch the express to London."

Darnell, who was still pale and agitated, seized pen and paper, and wrote a few words of apology and a clear confession. To write was hard ; but he was in such terror lest his employers should return and discover his miserable secret that he dared not hesitate—dared not beat about the bush.

Roy watched him with some curiosity, wondering now that he had not suspected the man sooner. But, as a matter of fact, Darnell had been perfectly self-possessed until his guilt was discovered ; it was the exposure that filled him with shame and confusion, not the actual dishonesty.

"I don't know how to thank you enough, sir, for your leniency," he said, when he had written, in as few words as possible, the statement of the facts.

"Well, just let the affair be a lesson to you," said Roy. "There's a great deal said about drunkenness being the national sin, but I believe it is betting that is at the root of half the evils of the day. Fortunately, things are now set straight as far as may be, yet remember that you have wronged and perhaps irrevocably injured a perfectly innocent man."

"I bitterly regret it, sir ; I do, indeed !" said Darnell.

"I hope you do," said Roy ; "I am sure you ought to."

And while Darnell still reiterated thanks, and apologies, and abject regrets, Roy stalked out of the shop and made his way back to the station.

"To think that I believed in that cur, and doubted Falck !" he said to himself with disgust. "And yet, could any one have seemed more respectable than Darnell ? more thoroughly trustworthy ? And how could I disbelieve the evidence that was so dead against Frithiof ? Sigrid and Cecil trusted him, and I ought to have done so too, I suppose ; but women seem to me to have a faculty for that sort of thing which we are quite without."

Then, after a time, he remembered that the last barrier that parted him from Sigrid was broken down ; and it was just as well that he had the railway carriage to himself,

for he began to sing so jubilantly that the people in the next compartment took him for a schoolboy returning for his Christmas holidays.

It had been arranged that if he could catch the express from Plymouth he should meet his father at the shop, and arriving at Paddington at half-past six he sprang into a hansom and drove as quickly as possible to Regent Street.

Frithiof just glanced at him inquiringly as he passed through the shop, then, reassured by the expression of his face, turned once more to the fidgety and impatient singing-master who, for the last quarter of an hour, had been keeping him hard at work in hunting up every conceivable song that was difficult to find, and which, when found, was sure to prove unsatisfactory.

He wondered much what had passed at Plymouth, and when at last he had got rid of his customer, Roy returned to the shop with such evident excitement and triumph in his manner that old Foster thought he must be taking leave of his senses.

"My father wants to speak to you, Frithiof," he said.

And Frithiof followed him into the little inner room which had been the scene of such disagreeable interviews in the past. A strange, dreamlike feeling came over him as he recalled the wretched summer day when the detective had searched him, and in horrible, bewildered misery he had seen the five-pound note lying on that same leather-covered table, an inexplicable mystery and a damning evidence against him.

But visions of the past faded as Mr. Boniface grasped his hand. "How can I ever apologise enough to you, Frithiof!" he said. "Roy has brought back a full confession from Darnell, and the mystery is entirely cleared up. You must forgive me for the explanation of the affair that I was content with last summer—I can't tell you how I regret all that you have had to suffer."

"Here is Darnell's letter," said Roy, handing it to him.

And Frithiof read it eagerly, and asked the details of his friend's visit to Plymouth.

"Will this satisfy Mr. Horner, do you think?" he said, when Roy had told him all about his interview with Darnell.

"It cannot fail to convince every one," said Mr. Boniface. "It is proof positive that you are free from all blame, and that we owe you every possible apology and reparation."

"You think that Mr. Horner will be content, and will really sign the fresh deed of partnership?" said Frithiof.

"He will be forced to see that your honour is entirely vindicated," said Mr. Boniface. "But I shall not renew the offer of partnership to him. He has behaved very ill to you, he has been insolent to me, and I am glad that, as far as business goes, our connection is at an end. All that is quite settled. And now we have a proposal to make to you. We want you, if nothing better has turned up, to accept a junior partnership in our firm."

Frithiof was so staggered by the unexpectedness of this offer that for a moment or two he could not say a word.

"You are very good," he said at length. "Far, far too good and kind to me. But how can I let you do so much for me—how can I let you take as partner a man who has no capital to bring into the business?"

"My dear boy, money is not the only thing wanted in business," said Mr. Boniface, laying his hand on Frithiof's shoulder. "If you bring no capital with you, you bring good abilities, a great capacity for hard work, and a high sense of honour; you will bring, too, what I value very much—a keen sympathy with those employed by you, and a real knowledge of their position and its difficulties."

"I dare not refuse your offer," said Frithiof. "I can't do anything but gratefully accept it, but I have done nothing to deserve such kindness from you."

"It will be a comfort to me," said Mr. Boniface, "to feel that Roy has some one with whom he can work comfortably. I am growing old, and shall not be sorry to do a little less, and to put some of my burden on to younger shoulders."

And then, after entering a little more into detail as to the proposed plan, the three parted, and Frithiof hurried home eager to tell Sigrid and Swanhild of the great change that had come over their affairs.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CHEERFULNESS reigned once more in the model-lodgings. As Frithiof opened the door of the parlour he heard such talking and laughter as there had not been for some time past, despite Sigrid's laudable endeavours. Swanhild came dancing to meet him.

"Look! look!" she cried, "we have got the very dearest little Christmas tree that ever was seen. And Madame Lechartier has promised to come to tea to-morrow after-

noon, and we are going out presently to buy the candles for it."

"Unheard-of extravagance," he said, looking at the little fir-tree upon which Sigrid was fastening the candle-holders.

"Only a shilling," she said apologetically. "And this year we really couldn't do without one. But you have brought some good news—I can see it in your face. Oh, tell me, Frithiof—tell me quickly just what happened."

"Well, Darnell has made a full confession for one thing," he replied. "So the last vestige of the cloud has disappeared. You can't think now nice the other men were when they heard about it! Old Foster gave me such a handshako that my arm aches still."

"And Mr. Boniface?"

"You can fancy just what he would be as far as kindness and all that goes. But you will never guess what he has done. How would you like to count our savings towards the debt-fund by hundreds instead of by units?"

"What do you mean?" she cried.

"I mean that he has offered me the junior partnership," said Frithiof, watching her face with keen delight, and rewarded for all he had been through by her rapture of happiness and her glad surprise.

As for Swanhild, in the reaction after the long strain of secret anxiety which had tried her so much all the autumn, she was like a wild thing; she laughed and sang, danced and chattered, and would certainly never have eaten any supper had she not set her heart on going out to buy Christmas presents at a certain shop in Buckingham Palace Road, which she was sure would still be open.

"For it is just the sort of shop for people like us," she explained, "people who are busy all day and can only do their shopping in the evening."

So presently they locked up the rooms and all three went out together on the merriest shopping expedition that ever was known. There was a feeling of Yuletide in the very air, and the contentment and relief in their own hearts seemed to be reflected on everyone with whom they came in contact. The shops seemed more enticing than usual, the presents more fascinating, the servers more obliging and ready to enter into the spirit of the thing. Swanhild, with five shillings of her own earning to lay out on Christmas gifts, was in the seventh heaven of happiness; Sigrid, with her own secret now once

more a joy and not a care, moved like one in a happy dream; while Frithiof, free from the miserable cloud of suspicion, freed, moreover, by all that he had lived through from the hopelessness of the struggle, was the most perfectly happy of all. Sometimes he forced himself to remember that it was through these very streets that he had wandered in utter misery when he first came to London; and recollecting from what depths Sigrid had saved him, he thought of her with a new and strange reverence—there was nothing he would not have done for her.

His reflections were interrupted by Swanhild's voice.

"We will have every one from Rowan-Tree House, won't we?" she said.

"And Herr Sivertsen," added Sigrid. "He must certainly come, because he is all alone."

"And whatever happens, we must have old Miss Charlotte," said Frithiof; "but it strikes me we shall have to ask people to bring their own mugs, like children at a school-treat."

But Sigrid scouted this suggestion, and declared that the blue and white china would just go round, while, as to chairs, they could borrow two or three from the neighbours.

Then came the return home, and the dressing of the tree, amid much fun and laughter, and the writing of the invitations, which must be posted that night. In all London there could not have been found a merrier household. All the past cares were forgotten; even the sorrows which could not be healed had lost their sting, and the Christmas promised to be indeed full of peace and good-will.

How ten people—to say nothing of Lance and Gwen—managed to stow themselves away in the little parlour was a mystery to Frithiof. But Sigrid was a person of resources, and while he was out the next day she made all sorts of cunning arrangements, decorated the room with ivy and holly, and so disposed the furniture that there was a place for every one.

At half-past four the guests began to arrive. First Mrs. Boniface and Cecil with the children, who helped to light the tree; then Madame Lechertier, laden with boxes of the most delicious *bonbons* for every one of the party, and soon after there came an abrupt knock, which they felt sure could only have been given by Herr Sivertsen. Swanhild ran to open the door, and to take his hat and coat from him. Her eager welcome seemed to

please the old man, for his great, massive forehead was unusually free from wrinkles as he entered and shook hands with Sigrid, and he bowed and smiled quite graciously as she introduced him to the other guests. Then he walked round the Christmas tree with an air of satisfaction, and even stooped forward and smelt it.

"So," he said contentedly, "you keep up the old customs, I see! I'm glad of it—I'm glad of it. It's years since I saw a properly dressed tree. And the smell of it! Great heavens! it makes me feel like a boy again! I'm glad you don't follow with the multitude, but keep to the good old Yule ceremonies."

In the meantime Cecil was pouring out tea and coffee in the kitchen, where, for greater convenience, the table had been placed.

"Sigrid has allowed me to be lady-help and not visitor," she said laughingly to Frithiof. "I told her she must be in the other room to talk to every one after the English fashion, for you and Swanhild will be too busy fetching and carrying."

"I am glad to have a chance of saying one word alone to you," said Frithiof. "Are you sure that Mrs. Boniface does not object to this new plan as to the partnership?"

"Why, she is delighted about it," said Cecil. "And she will tell you so when she has you to herself. I am so glad—so very glad that your trouble is over at last, and everything cleared up."

"I can hardly believe it yet," said Frithiof. "I'm afraid of waking and finding that all this is a dream. Yet it feels real while I talk to you, for you were the only outsider who believed in me and cheered me up last summer. I shall never forget your trust in me."

Her eyes sank beneath his frank look of gratitude. She was horribly afraid lest she should betray herself, and to hide the burning colour which surged up into her face, she turned away and busied herself with the teapot, which did not at all want re-filling.

"You have forgotten Signor Donati," she said, recovering her self-possession.

"Ah! I must write to him," said Frithiof. "I more and more wonder how he could possibly have had such insight into the truth. Here come Mr. Boniface and Roy."

He returned to the parlour, while Cecil from the background watched the greetings with some curiosity. In honour of Herr Sivertsen, and to please Frithiof, both Sigrid and Swanhild wore their Hardanger peasant

dress, and Cecil thought she had never seen Sigrid look prettier than now, as she shook hands with Roy, welcoming him with all the charm of manner, with all the vivacity which was characteristic of her.

"Tea for Mr. Boniface, and coffee for Roy," announced Swanhild, dancing in. "Lance, you can hand the crumpets, and mind you don't drop them all."

She pioneered him safely through the little crowd, and Frithiof returned to Cecil. They had a comfortable little *tête-à-tête* over the tea-table.

"I dare to think now," he said, "of the actual amount of the debts, for at last there is a certainty that in time I can pay them."

"How glad I am!" said Cecil. "It will be a great relief to you."

"Yes, it will be like getting rid of a haunting demon," said Frithiof. "And to see a real prospect of being free once more is enough to make this the happiest Christmas I have ever known—to say nothing of getting rid of the other cloud. I sometimes wonder what would have become of me if I had never met you and your brother."

"If you had never sheltered us from the rain in your house," said she smiling.

"It is in some ways dreadful to see how much depends on quite a small thing," said Frithiof thoughtfully.

And perhaps, could he have seen into Cecil's heart, he would have been more than ever impressed with this idea.

Before long they rejoined the rest of the party, and then, all standing round the tree, they sang *Glædelig Jul*, and an English carol, after which the presents were distributed, amid much laughter and quite a babel of talk. The whole entertainment had been given for a few shillings, but it was probably one of the most successful parties of the season, for all seemed full of real enjoyment, and all were ready to echo Lance's outspoken verdict, that Christmas trees in model lodgings were much nicer than anywhere else.

"But it isn't fair that the model lodgings should have both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day," said Mrs. Boniface, "so you will come down to Rowan-Tree House this evening, and stay with us for a few days, will you not?"

There was no resisting the general entreaty, and indeed, now that all was cleared up, Frithiof looked forward very much to staying once more in the household which had grown so homelike to him. It was arranged that they should go down to

Brixton later in the evening; and when their guests had left, Sigrid began, a little sadly, to make the necessary preparations. She was eager to go, and yet something told her that never again, under the same circumstances, would the little household be under her care.

"I will take in the tree to the Hallifields," she said; "the children will be pleased with it. And, Frithiof, don't you think that before we leave you had better just call and thank Mr. Osmond for his help, and for having been so kind to Swanhild? He will like to know that all is cleared up."

Frithiof agreed, and set off for Guilford Square. The night was frosty, and the stars shone out bright and clear. He walked briskly through the streets, not exactly liking the prospect of his interview with the clergyman, yet anxious to get it over, and really grateful for what had been done by him.

Charles Osmond received him so kindly that his prejudices vanished at once, and he told him just how the five-pound note had affected his life, and how all had been satisfactorily explained.

"Such coincidences are very strange," said Charles Osmond, "but it is not the first time that I have come across something of the sort. Indeed, I know of a case very similar to yours."

"If Lady Romiaux is still with you," said Frithiof, flushing a little, "perhaps you will tell her that all is set straight, and thank her for having released Swanhild from her promise."

"She is still here," said Charles Osmond, "and I will certainly tell her. I think when she gave the money to your sister she yielded to a kind impulse, not at all realising how foolish and useless such a plan was. After all, though she has lived through so much she is still in some ways a mere child."

He looked at the Norwegian, wondering what lay beneath that handsome face, with its Grecian outline and northern colouring.

As if in answer to the thought, Frithiof raised his frank blue eyes, and met the searching gaze of his companion.

"Will not Lord Romiaux remember her youth?" he said. "Do you not think there is at least a hope that he will forgive her?"

Then Charles Osmond felt a strange gladness at his heart, and over his face there came a look of indescribable content. For the words revealed to him the noble nature of the man before him; he knew that not one in a thousand would have so spoken under the circumstances. The interest he

had felt in this man, whose story had accidentally become known to him, changed to actual love.

"I am not without a strong hope that those two may be atoned," he replied. "But as yet I do not know enough of Lord Romiaux to feel sure. It would probably involve the sacrifice of his public life. I do not know whether his love is equal to such a sacrifice, or whether he has strength and courage enough to offend the world, or whether he in the least understands the law of forgiveness."

"If you could only get to know him," said Frithiof.

"I quite hope to do so, and that before long," said Charles Osmond. "I think I can get at him through a mutual friend—the member for Greyshot—but we must not be in too great a hurry. Depend upon it, the right time will come if we are only ready and waiting. Do you know the old Scotch proverb, 'Where twa are seeking they're sure to find?' There is a deep truth beneath those words, a whole parable, it seems to me."

"I must not keep you," said Frithiof, rising. "But I couldn't rest till I had thanked you for your help, and let you know what had happened."

"The affair has made us something more than mere acquaintances," said Charles Osmond. "I hope we may learn to know each other well in the future. A happy Christmas to you."

He had opened the study door, they were in the passage outside, and he grasped the Norwegian's hand. At that moment it happened that Blanche passed from the dining-room to the staircase; she just glanced round to see who Charles Osmond was addressing so heartily, and, perceiving Frithiof, coloured painfully and caught at the banisters for support.

Having realised what was the Norseman's character, Charles Osmond did not regret the meeting; he stood by in silence, glancing first at his companion's startled face, then at Blanche's attitude of down-cast confusion.

As for Frithiof, in that moment he realised that his early passion was indeed dead. Its fierce fire had utterly burnt out; the weary pain was over, the terrible battle which he had fought so long was at an end, all that was now left was a chivalrous regard for the woman who had made him suffer so fearfully, a selfless desire for her future safety.

He strode towards her with outstretched hand. It was the first time he had actually

touched her since they had parted long ago on the steamer at Balholm, but he did not think of that, the past which had lingered with him so long and with such cruel clearness seemed now to have withered like the raiment of a viking whose buried ship is suddenly exposed to the air.

"I have just been telling Mr. Osmond," he said, "that, thanks to your note to Swanhild, a curious mystery has been explained; he will tell you the details."

"And you forgive me?" faltered Blanche.

"Yes, with all my heart," he said.

For a moment her sorrowful eyes looked into his, she knew then that he had entirely freed himself from his old devotion to her, for they met her gaze frankly, fearlessly, and in their blue depths there was nothing but kindly forgiveness.

"Thank you," she said, once more taking his hand. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye," he replied.

She turned away and went up-stairs without another word. And thus, on this Christmas eve, the two whose lives had been so strangely woven together, parted, never to meet again till the clearer light of some other world had revealed to them the full meaning of their early love.

CHAPTER XXXVI

FOR a time Frithiof was rather silent and quiet, but Sigrid and Swanhild were in high spirits as they went down to Rowan-Tree House, arriving just in time for supper. The atmosphere of happiness, however, is always infectious, and he soon threw off his taciturnity, and dragging himself away from his own engrossing thoughts, forgot the shadows of life in the pure brightness of this home which had been so much to him ever since he first set foot in it.

With Swanhild for an excuse they played all sorts of games; but when at last she had been sent off to bed, the fun and laughter quieted down. Mr. and Mrs. Boniface played their nightly game of backgammon; Roy and Sigrid had a long *tête-à-tête* in the little inner drawing-room; Cecil sat down at the piano and began to play Mendelssohn's Christmas pieces; and Frithiof threw himself back in the great arm-chair close by her, listening half dreamily and with a restful sense of pause in his life that he had never before known. He desired nothing, he revelled in the sense of freedom from the love which for so long had been a misery to him; the very calm was bliss.

"That is beautiful," he said, when the

music ceased. "After all there is no one like Mendelssohn, he is so human."

"You look like one of the lotos-eaters," said Cecil, glancing at him.

"It is precisely what I feel like," he said, with a smile. "Perhaps it is because you have been giving me

* Music that gentler on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.*

I remember so well how you read that to me after I had been ill."

She took a little thin red volume from the bookshelves beside her and turned over the leaves. He bent forward to look over her, and together they read the first part of the poem.

"It is Norway," he said. "What could better describe it?

"A land of streams! Some like a downward smoke,
Slow dripping veils of thinnest lawn did go;
And some through wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
... far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copee."

"You will not be a true lotos-eater till you are there once more," said Cecil, glancing at him. For his dreamy content was gone, and a wistfulness which she quite understood had taken its place. "Don't you think, now that all is so different, you might perhaps go there next summer?" she added.

"No," he replied, "you must not tempt me. I will not go back till I am a free man and can look every one in the face. The prospect of being free so much sooner than I had expected ought to be enough to satisfy me. Suppose we build castles in the air; that is surely the right thing to do on Christmas eve. When at last these debts are cleared, let us all go to Norway together. I know Mr. Boniface would be enchanted with it, and you, you did not see nearly all that you should have seen. You must see the Romsdal and the Geiranger, and we must show you Oldören, where we so often spent the summer holiday."

"How delightful it would be!" said Cecil.

"Don't say 'would,' say 'will,'" he replied. "I shall not thoroughly enjoy it unless we all go together, a huge party."

"I think we should be rather in the way," she said. "You would have so many old friends out there, and would want to get rid of us. Don't you remember the old lady who was so outspoken at Balholm when we tried to be friendly and not to let her feel lonely and out of it?"

Frithiof laughed at the recollection.

"Yes," he said; "she liked to be alone,

and preferred to walk on quickly and keep 'out of the ruck,' as she expressed it. We were 'the ruck.' And how we laughed at her opinion of us."

"Well, of course you wouldn't exactly put it in that way, but all the same, I think you would want to be alone when you go back."

He shook his head.

"No; you are quite mistaken. Now, promise that if Mr. Boniface agrees, you will all come too."

"Very well," she said, smiling, "I promise."

"Where are they going to?" he exclaimed, glancing into the inner room, where Roy was wrapping a thick sofa blanket about Sigrid's shoulders.

"Out into the garden to hear the bells, I dare say," she replied. "We generally go out if it is fine."

"Let us come too," he said; and they left the bright room and went out into the dusky verandah, pacing silently to and fro absorbed in their own thoughts while the Christmas bells rang

"Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill to all mankind."

But the other two, down in a sheltered path at the end of the garden, were not silent, nor did they listen very much to the bells.

"Sigrid," said Roy, "have you forgotten that you made me a promise last June?"

"No," she said, her voice trembling a little, "I have not forgotten."

"You promised that when Frithiof was cleared I might ask you for your answer."

She raised her face to his in the dim starlight.

"Yes, I did promise."

"And the answer is——?"

"I love you."

The soft Norse words were spoken hardly above her breath, yet Roy knew that they would ring in his heart all his life long.

"My darling!" he said, taking her in his arms. "Oh, if you knew what the waiting has been to me! But it was my own fault—all my own fault. I ought to have trusted your instinct before my own reason."

"No, no," she said, clinging to him; "I think I was hard and bitter that day; you must forgive me, for I was so very unhappy. Don't let us speak of it any more. I hate to think of it even."

"And nothing can ever come between us again," he said, still keeping his arm round her as they walked on.

"No; never again," she repeated; "never again. I know I am too proud and independent, and I suppose it is to crush down my pride that I have to come to you like this, robbed of position and money, and——"

"How can you speak of such things," he said reproachfully. "You know they are nothing to me—you know that I can never feel worthy of you."

"Such things do seem very little when one really loves," she said gently. "I have thought it over, and it seems to me like this—the proof of your love to me is that you take me poor, an exile, more or less burdened with the past; the proof of my love to you is that I kill my pride—and yield. It would have seemed impossible to me once; but now—— Oh, Roy! how I love you—how I love you!"

* * * * *

"And about Frithiof?" said Roy presently. "You will explain all to him, and make him understand that I would not for the world break up his home?"

"Yes," she replied, "I will tell him; but I think not to-night. Just till to-morrow let it be only for ourselves. Hark! the clocks are striking twelve! Let us go in and wish the others a happy Christmas."

But Roy kept the first of the good wishes for himself; then, at length releasing her, walked beside her towards the house, happy beyond all power of expression.

And now once more outer things began to appeal to him; he became conscious of the Christmas bells ringing gaily in the stillness of the night, of the stars shining down gloriously through the clear frosty air, of the cheerful glimpse of home to be seen through the uncurtained window of the drawing-room.

Cecil and Frithiof had left the verandah and returned to the piano; they were singing a carol, the German air of which was well known in Norway. Sigrid did not know the English words; but she listened to them now intently, and they helped to reconcile her to the one thorn in her perfect happiness—the thought that these other two were shut out from the bliss which she enjoyed. Quietly she stole into the room and stood watching them as they sang the quaint old hymn:

"Good Christian men rejoice,
In heart and soul and voice,
Now ye hear of endless bliss;
Joy! joy!
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath oped the heavenly door,
And man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this."

Cecil, glancing up at her when the carol was ended, read her secret in her happy, glowing face. She rose from the piano.

"A happy Christmas to you," she said, kissing her on both cheeks.

"We have been out in the garden, right down in the lower path, and you can't think how lovely the bells sound," said Sigrid.

Then, with a fresh stab of pain at her heart, she thought of Frithiof's spoilt life; she looked wistfully across at him, conscious that her love for Roy had only deepened her love for those belonging to her.

Was he never to know anything more satisfying than the peace of being freed from the heavy load of suspicion? Was he only to know the pain of love? All her first desire to keep her secret to herself died away as she looked at him, and in another minute her hand was on his arm.

"Dear old boy," she said to him in Norse, "won't you come out into the garden with me for a few minutes?"

So they went out together into the starlight, and wandered down to the sheltered path where she and Roy had paced to and fro so long.

"What a happy Christmas it has been for us all!" she said thoughtfully.

"Very; and how little we expected it!" said Frithiof.

"Do you think," she began falteringly, "do you think, Frithiof, it would make you less happy if I told you of a new happiness that has come to me?"

Her tone as much as the actual words suddenly enlightened him.

"Whatever makes for your happiness makes for mine," he said, trying to read her face.

"Are you sure of that?" she said, the tears rushing to her eyes. "Oh, if I could quite believe you, Frithiof, how happy I should be!"

"Why should you doubt me?" he asked. "Come, I have guessed your secret, you are going to tell me that——"

"That Roy will some day be your brother as well as your friend," she said, finishing his sentence for him.

He caught her hand in his and held it fast.

"I wish you joy, Sigrid, with all my heart. This puts the finishing touch to our Christmas happiness."

"And Roy has been making such plans," said Sigrid, brushing away her tears; "he says that just over the wall there is a charming little house back to back, you know, with this one, and it will just hold us all, for of

course he will never allow us to be separated. He told me that long ago, when he first asked me."

"Long ago?" said Frithiof; "why, what do you mean, Sigrid? I thought it was only to-night."

"It was only to-night that I gave him his answer," said Sigrid. "It was when we were at the sea last June that he first spoke to me, and then—afterwards—perhaps I was wrong, but I would not hear anything more about it till your cloud had passed away. I knew some day that your name must be cleared, and I was angry with Roy for not believing in you. I dare say I was wrong to expect it, but somehow I did expect it, and it disappointed me so dreadfully. He says himself now that he ought to have trusted——"

"It was a wonder that you didn't make him hate me for ever," said Frithiof. "Why did you not tell me about it before?"

"How could I?" she said. "It would only have made you more unhappy. It was far better to wait."

"But what a terrible autumn for you!" exclaimed Frithiof. "And to think that all this should have sprung from that wretched five-pound note! Our stories have been curiously woven together, Sigrid."

As she thought of the contrast between the two stories her tears broke forth afresh; she walked on silently hoping that he would not notice them, but a drop fell right on to his wrist; he stopped suddenly, took her face between his hands and looked full into her eyes.

"You dear little goose," he said, "what makes you cry? Was it because I said our stories had been woven together?"

"It's because I wish they could have been alike," she sobbed.

"But it wasn't to be," he said quietly. "It is an odd thing to say to you to-night, when your new life is beginning, but to-night I also am happy, because now at last my struggle is over—now at last the fire is burnt out. I don't want anything but just the peace of being free to the end of my life. Believe me, I am content."

Her throat seemed to have closed up, she could not say a word just because she felt for him so intensely. She gave him a little mute caress, and once more they paced along the garden path. But her whole soul revolted against this notion of content. She understood it as little as the soldier marching to his first battle understands the calm indifference of the comrade who lies in hospital.



"The most beautiful bouquet I ever saw."

Surely Frithiof was to have something better in his life than this miserable parody of love? This passion, which had been almost all pain, could surely not be the only glimpse vouchsafed him of the bliss which had transfigured the whole world for her? There came back to her the thought of the old study at Bergen, and she seemed to hear her father's voice saying—

"I should like an early marriage for Frithiof, but I will not say too much about you, Sigrid, for I don't know how I should ever spare you."

And she sighed as she remembered how his plans had been crossed and his business ruined, and his heart broken—how both for him and for Frithiof failure had been decreed.

Yet the Christmas bells rang on in this world of strangely mingled joy and sorrow, and they brought her much the same message that had been brought to her by the silence on Hjerkinshö—

"There is a better plan which can't go wrong," she said to herself.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"I HAVE some news for you," said Mr. Horner to his wife a few days after this, as one evening he entered the drawing-room. The huge gold clock with the little white face pointed to the hour of eight, the golden pigs still climbed the golden hill, the golden swineherd still leant meditatively on his golden staff. Mrs. Horner, arrayed in peacock-blue satin, glanced from her husband to the clock and back again to her husband.

"News?" she said in a distinctly discouraging tone. "Is it that which makes you so late? However, it's of no consequence to me if the dinner is spoilt, quite the contrary, I am not particular. But I beg you won't grumble if the meat is done to a cinder."

"Never mind the dinner," replied Mr. Horner captiously. "I have other things to think of than overdone joints. That fool Boniface has taken me at my word, and actually doesn't intend to renew the partnership."

"What!" cried his wife, "not now that all this affair is cleared up, and you have apologised so handsomely to young Falck?"

"No; it's perfectly disgraceful," said James Horner, looking like an angry turkey-cock as he paced to and fro. "I shook hands with Falck and told him I was sorry to have misjudged him, and even owned to Boniface that I had spoken hastily, but would you believe it, he won't reconsider the matter. He

not only gives me the sack but he takes in my place that scheming Norwegian."

"But the fellow has no capital," cried Mrs. Horner in great agitation. "He is as poor as a rook! He hasn't a single penny to put into the concern."

"Precisely. But Boniface is such a fool that he overlooks that and does nothing but talk of his great business capacities, his industry, his good address, and a lot of other rubbish of that sort. Why without money a fellow is worth nothing—absolutely nothing."

"From the first I detested him," said Mrs. Horner. "I knew that the Bonifaces were deceived in him. It's my belief that although his character is cleared as to this five-pound note business, yet he is really a mere adventurer. Depend upon it he'll manage to get everything into his own hands, and will be ousting Roy one of these days."

"Well, he's hardly likely to do that, for it seems the sister has been keeping her eyes open and that idiot of a Roy is going to marry her."

"To marry Sigrid Falck?" exclaimed Mrs. Horner starting to her feet. "Actually to bring into the family a girl who plays at dancing-classes and parties—a girl who sweeps her own house and cooks her own dinner!"

"I don't know that she is any the worse for doing that," said James Horner. "It's not the girl herself that I object to, for she's pretty and pleasant enough, but the connection, the being related by marriage to that odious Falck, who has treated me so insufferably, who looks down on me and is as stand-offish as if he were an emperor."

"If there is one thing I do detest," said Mrs. Horner, "it is pushing people—a sure sign of vulgarity. But it's partly Loveday's fault. If I had had to deal with the Falcks they would have been taught their proper place, and all this would not have happened."

At this moment dinner was announced. The overdone meat did not improve Mr. Horner's temper, and when the servants had left the room he broke out into fresh invectives against the Bonifaces.

"When is the wedding to be?" asked his wife.

"Some time in February, I believe. They are house-furnishing already."

Mrs. Horner gave an ejaculation of annoyance.

"Well, the sooner we leave London the better," she said. "I'm not going to be mixed up with all this; we'll avoid any open breach with the family of course, but for

goodness' sake do let the house and let us settle down elsewhere. There's that house at Croydon I was very partial to, and you could go up and down easy enough from there."

"We'll think of it," said Mr. Horner reflectively. "And, by-the-bye, we must, I suppose, get them some sort of wedding present."

"By good luck," said Mrs. Horner, "I won a sofa-cushion last week in a raffle at the bazaar for the chapel organ fund. It's quite good enough for them, I'm sure. I did half think of sending it to the youngest Miss Smith who is to be married on New Year's Day, but they're such rich people that I suppose I must send them something a little more showy and expensive. This will do very well for Sigrid Falck."

Luckily the opinion of outsiders did not at all mar the happiness of the two lovers. They were charmed to hear that the Horners were leaving London, and when, in due time, the sofa-cushion arrived, surmounted by Mrs. Horner's card, Sigrid, who had been in the blessed condition of expecting nothing, was able to write a charming little note of thanks, which, by its straightforward simplicity, made the donor blush with an uncomfortable sense of guilt.

"And after all," remarked Sigrid to Cecil, "we really owe a great deal to Mrs. Horner, for if she had not asked me to that children's fancy ball I should never have met Madame Lechertier, and how could we ever have lived all together if it had not been for that?"

"In those days I think Mrs. Horner rather liked you, but somehow you have offended her."

"Why of course it was by earning my living and setting up in model-lodgings; I utterly shocked all her ideas of propriety, and, when once you do that, good-bye to all hopes of remaining in Mrs. Horner's good books. It would have grieved me to displease any of your relations if you yourselves cared for them, but the Horners—well, I cannot pretend to care the least about them."

The two girls were in the little sitting-room of the model-lodgings putting the finishing touches to the white cashmere wedding dress which Sigrid had cut out and made for herself during the quiet days they had spent at Rowan-Tree House. Every one entered most heartily into all the busy preparations, and Sigrid could not help thinking to herself that the best proof that trouble

had not spoilt or soured the lives either of Cecil or Frithiof lay in their keen enjoyment of other people's happiness.

The wedding was to be extremely quiet. Early in the morning, when Cecil went to see if she could be of any use, she found the bride-elect in her usual black dress and her housekeeping apron of brown holland, busily packing Frithiof's portmanteau.

"Oh, let me do it for you," she said. "The idea of your toiling away to-day just as if you were not going to be married!"

Sigrid laughed merrily.

"Must brides sit and do nothing until the ceremony?" she asked. "If so, I am sorry for them; I couldn't sit still if I were to try. How glad I am to think Frithiof and Swanhild will be at Rowan Tree House while we are away! I should never have had a moment's peace if I had left them here, for Swanhild is after all only a child. It is so good of Mrs. Boniface to have asked them."

"Since you are taking Roy away from us I think it is the least you could do," said Cecil laughing. "It will be such a help to have them this evening, for otherwise we should all be feeling very flat, I know."

"And we shall be on our way to the Riviera," said Sigrid, pausing for a few minutes in her busy preparations; a dreamy look came into her clear, practical eyes, and she let her head rest against the side of the bed.

"Sometimes, do you know," she exclaimed, "I can't believe this is all real. I think I am just imagining it all, and that I shall wake up presently and find myself playing the *Myosotis* waltz at the academy—it was always such a good tune to dream to."

"Wait," said Cecil; "does this make it feel more real," and hastily going into the outer room, she returned bearing the lovely wedding bouquet which Roy had sent.

"Lilies of the valley!" exclaimed Sigrid. "Oh, how exquisite! And myrtle and eucharis lilies—it is the most beautiful bouquet I ever saw."

"Don't you think it is time you were dressing," said Cecil. "Come, sit down and let me do your hair for you while you enjoy your flowers."

"But Swanhild's packing—I don't think it is quite finished."

"Never mind, I will come back this afternoon with her and finish everything, you must let us help you a little just for once."

And then as she brushed out the long golden hair she thought how few brides showed Sigrid's wonderful unselfishness and

care for others, and somehow wished that Roy could have seen her just as she was in her working-day apron, too full of household arrangements to spend much time over her own toilet.

Swanhild, already dressed in her white cashmere and pretty white beaver hat, danced in and out of the room fetching and carrying, and before long the bride, too, was dressed, and with her long tulle veil over the dainty little wreath of real orange blossom from Madame Lechertier's greenhouse, and the home-made dress which fitted admirably, she walked into the little sitting-room to show herself to Frithiof.

"I shall hold up your train, Sigrid, in case the floor is at all dusty," said Swanhill, much enjoying the excitement of the first wedding in the family, and determined not to think of the parting till it actually came.

Frithiof made an involuntary exclamation as she entered the room.

"You look like Ingeborg," he said, "when she came into the new temple of Balder."

*"Followed by many a fair attendant maiden,
As shines the moon amid surrounding stars,"*

quoted Swanhill in Norse from the old saga, looking roguishly up at her tall brother.

Sigrid laughed and turned to Cecil.

"She says that I am the moon and shine with a borrowed light, and that you are the stars with light of your own. By-the-bye, where is my other little bridesmaid?"

"Gwen is to meet us at the church," explained Cecil. "Do you know I think the carriage must be waiting, for I see the eldest little Hallifield tearing across the courtyard."

"Then I must say good-bye to every one," said Sigrid; and with one last look round the little home which had grown so dear to them, she took Frithiof's arm and went out into the long stone passage, where a group of the neighbours stood waiting to see the last of her, and to give her their hearty good wishes. She had a word and a smile for every one, and they all followed her down the stairs and across the courtyard and stood waving their hands as the carriage drove off.

That chapter of her life was ended, and the busy hive of workers would no longer count her as queen-bee of the establishment. The cares and troubles and wearing economies were things of the past, but she would take with her and keep for ever many happy memories; and many friendships would still last and give her an excuse for visiting

afterwards the scene of her first home in London.

She was quite silent as they drove through the busy streets, her eyes had again that sweet dreamy look in them that Cecil had noticed earlier in the morning; she did not seem to see outward things, until after a while her eyes met Frithiof's, and then her face, which had been rather grave, broke into sudden brightness, and she said a few words to him in Norse, which he replied to with a look so full of loving pride and contentment that it carried the sunshine straight into Cecil's heart.

"This marriage is a capital thing for him," she thought to herself. "He will be happy in her happiness."

By this time they had reached the church; Lance, in the dress he had worn at Mrs. Horner's fancy ball, stood ready to hold the bride's train, and Gwen came running up eager to take her place in the little procession.

A few spectators had dropped in, but the church was very quiet, and up in the chancel there were only Roy and his best man, Madame Lechertier, old Herr Sivertsen, and the father and mother of the bridegroom. Charles Osmond read the service, and his pretty daughter-in-law had begged leave to play the organ, for she had taken a fancy not only to little Swanhill, but to the whole family, when at her father-in-law's request she had called upon them. After the wedding was over and the procession had once more passed down the aisle she still went on playing, having a love of finishing in her nature. Charles Osmond came out of the vestry and stood beside her.

"I am glad you played for them," he said when the last chord had been struck. "It was not at all the sort of wedding to be without music."

"It was one of the nicest weddings I was ever at," she said; "and as to your Norseman—he is all you said, and more. Do you know, there is a strong look about him which somehow made me think of my father. Oh! I do hope he will be able to pay off the debts."

"There is only one thing which could hinder him," said Charles Osmond.

"What is that?" asked Erica looking up quickly.

"Death," he replied quietly.

She made no answer, but the word did not jar upon her, for she was one of those who have learnt that death is indeed the Gate of Life.

Silently she pushed in the stops and locked the organ.

RICHARD STEELE.

By J. ALLANSON PICTON, M.P.

DICK STEELE! how kindly, how affectionate, and how interesting were the associations with this name in the first quarter of last century! A delightful companion; a fairly successful dramatist; a ready, swift, and lively writer; an affectionate husband, whose devotion and submission were the subject of many a joke amongst the wits of the time, he excited also the mingled compassion and contemptuous sympathy generally accorded to the man who is always and hopelessly in debt. His varied experiences of life included those of a scholar, a soldier, a gazetteer, and a legislator; but throughout them all there was continued the ground tone of impecuniosity and bankruptcy. Yet whatever the causes of debt, they never prevented the career of Dick Steele from being lively and interesting. At the clubs of the day he was the most clubbable of all men. Will's Coffee House, St. James's Coffee House, and not least the Kit-cat Club, were at their brightest when he was there. Not that he could boast the rapier-like wit of Swift, nor yet the elegance of Addison; but he was so loveable, so genial, and, if the expression may be pardoned, such a "devilish good fellow," that his dark square face and lowering brows added to his attractions the pleasure of an unexpected contrast. It was, however, as a journalist that Steele made his main mark in life. Yet the journalism was not exactly what we understand in this day by that term. The periodical literature which suddenly blossomed with such exuberance at the beginning of last century was a catena of polished essays, interspersed with smart comments upon contemporary persons, rather than newspapers in our sense of the word. It must be admitted that such periodical literature called for far higher intellectual gifts, and elicited many more sparks of genius, than journalism at the present day.

On the whole, such a man may be admitted to have fair claims to immortality, but until the appearance of Mr. Aitken's book,* it might almost have appeared as though this claim were to be ignored. More than a hundred and fifty years have elapsed since his death; and after all that time, the author of the work before us is able to announce himself as the first complete biographer of his hero. Yet it is not in any proper sense

of the word a resurrection that Mr. Aitken is attempting. The writings of Steele have never lost their interest for students of English literature. During the eighteenth century his works were constantly passing through new editions. One marked difference between the periodicals of the present day and those of the early eighteenth century is, that whereas the former are readily consigned to dealers in waste paper, the latter were carefully treasured and so continually sought after that new editions were a profitable investment for publishers. The *Tatler* and the *Spectator* appeared again and again in new dress. During the present century it may be that the writings of Steele have gone a little out of fashion; but it cannot for a moment be said with any truth that their author has been forgotten. Mr. Aitken is, therefore, peculiarly fortunate in discovering a subject which, while possessing a living interest, has never been fully treated by any one else.

How full his own treatment is will best be learned by the readers of his work. We can only say that, so far as our own experience goes, such a complete, exhaustive, elaborate, and laborious monument of biography is rarely given to the world. Not content with ransacking every dusty record of the courts and every accessible file of family letters, for any new light upon the personal history of his hero, Mr. Aitken has traced his genealogy far back into the past, has followed up collateral family connections, has for the first time recovered the maiden name of the first wife, and has traced out to its utmost roots the genealogical tree of the second wife's family. One feature of the work is at first sight a little forbidding. The processes for debt which are so familiar in the life of Dick Steele are related with a prolixity perhaps not altogether necessary. The endless legal documents reciting to various right honourable High Chancellors the defence of their "orator" against reasonable or unreasonable claims were perhaps hardly necessary to be reproduced verbatim. Still there are probably enthusiastic students of personal traits to whom it may be a satisfaction to be able to read over these documents without the trouble and inconvenience of searching the Record Office for themselves. In fine, Mr. Aitken has done his level best not only to produce a complete monograph, but to make it absolutely impossible for any

* "The Life of Richard Steele." By George A. Aitken. 2 vols. demy 8vo. London: Wm. Isbister, Limited. 1899.

biographer in the future to add a single new touch to the subject.

The peculiar form of Steele's genius is undoubtedly Irish, and though his family may be traced to English parentage, it is cer-

tain that a large infusion of Celtic blood, aided by the influence of the *genius loci*, made this ultimate flower of the family worthy of his birthplace. Born in Dublin in 1672, he was early left an orphan and



From Vertue's Engraving of the Portrait by Thornhill.

owed much to the care of an uncle Gascoigne, whose doings and character our author is careful to relate at full length. By this uncle's liberality and prudent management young Steele obtained as much education as

was then possible at Christ's Hospital, where he was fortunate in forming an early friendship with Joseph Addison. He proceeded in 1690 to Christchurch, Oxford, where, however, he did not take a degree. But it would

not appear that this lack of a degree was owing to any defective scholarship on his part, for his occasional use of Latin in the composition of epitaphs and other documents shows him to have been possessed of very fair Latinity. During his college career his genius gave some sign of its future development. While still a student he wrote a comedy; but perhaps the best and most promising feature of the composition was its end; for on being told by a judicious friend that it was worthless, the author calmly and courageously burned it and went on with his studies. His friendship with Addison was continued and developed at the university; but the result was not at first any decisive determination on a literary career. Not having any private means, it was necessary for him to earn his daily bread at once; and strangely enough his thoughts turned towards the army. But he had neither money nor interest to obtain a commission; he therefore enlisted as a private in the Horse Guards.

This was not quite the same thing as enlistment at the present day in an ordinary regiment. Many impecunious sons of poor gentlemen were accustomed at that time to enlist in such special and favoured regiments as those of the Guards. Thackeray has indulged his imagination with much probability when in "Henry Esmond" he describes Dick the scholar as called in by Captain Westbury to translate a suspicious Latin document. But Steele was not very long a private, and, indeed, during this humble part of his career, he was not without social influences that inspired his genius. The very first composition we have of his would appear to be certain verses addressed to the wife of Colonel Selwyn. Strangely they take the form of a "Valentine," but this need not excite any suspicion, as the poem was manifestly a *jeu d'esprit* evoked by some game in which Mrs. Selwyn was consigned to him "by lot."

"One Minute, Fortune, Thou hast let me Live,
I freely all my Life, before, forgive.
Cares did, till now, my rising bliss destroy
And streaks of Sorrow ran through all my Joy.
But, fickle Goddess, Thou art now sincere
Quite happy now I feel not hope, or fear;
Thy Wealth and Empire on thy slaves bestow,
Slaves who no bliss, but Wealth and Empire know.
Be all thy Power in one great gift display'd,
And to these Arms convey the Lovely Maid;
I never will beseech thy bounty more
But be as rough, and Angry as before."

These verses were written in 1694; and in December of that year Queen Mary died of smallpox. On this Steele wrote a poem called "The Procession," in which, while

describing Her Majesty's funeral, he enlarged upon her virtues and the benefits conferred upon the country by the double reign. Most probably this poem secured him the favourable attention of influential people and a commission was procured for him as ensign in the Coldstream Guards. For a while he was stationed in the Isle of Wight, also probably at the Tower, and certainly for a considerable period at Languard Fort. During these years, from 1695 to 1701, his reputation secured him the friendship of many literary men of the day.

His next important adventure in writing throws a singular and interesting light upon his own inner life. The manners of the time were the reverse of Puritanical. The degrading reaction under the dissolute reign of Charles II. had indeed been in part corrected by the comparatively virtuous Court of William and Mary. Still every young man was supposed to be under some imperious necessity to "sow his wild oats," and to experiment in excess and impurity. Steele was not a saint to stand out against prevalent wrong. Nevertheless it is certain that he had the elements of strong religious feeling. There must often have been inward conflict between his better aspirations and his degrading surroundings. The result was a little book entitled "The Christian Hero," and the account given of it by himself in after years is in all probability true. Speaking of himself in the third person, he said—

"He first became an author when an ensign of the Guards, a way of life exposed to much irregularity; and being thoroughly convinced of many things, of which he often repented, and which he more often repeated, he writ, for his own private use, a little book called the *Christian Hero*, with a design principally to fix upon his own mind a strong impression of virtue and religion, in opposition to a stronger propensity towards unwarrantable pleasures. This secret admonition was too weak; he therefore printed the book with his name, in hopes that a standing testimony against himself, and the eyes of the world (that is to say of his acquaintance) upon him in a new light, might curb his desires, and make him ashamed of understanding and seeming to feel what was virtuous, and living so quite contrary a life."

The motive thus assigned to the book was excellent, but the purpose can hardly be said to have been realised. On the contrary, he himself said in after life that the publication of the *Christian Hero* had no other good effect but that "from being thought no undelightful companion he was soon reckoned a disagreeable fellow. One or two of his acquaintances thought fit to misuse him and tried their valour upon him, and everybody

he knew measured the least levity in his words and actions with the character of a 'Christian Hero.'" He felt it apparently incumbent upon him to prove that he did not set up for a Puritan. One mode of doing this was to write a comedy. Of all subjects for a comedy a funeral seems perhaps the most unlikely; but Steele did not think so; and *The Funeral; or, Grief à la Mode*, was brought out with considerable success. One point in the play was a satire upon the hypocrisy involved in the outward pomp and show of funereal display. "Let's have no laughing now on any provocation," says Sable, the undertaker. "Look yonder at that hale, well-looking puppy! You ungrateful scoundrel! did not I pity you, take you out of a great man's service, and show you the pleasure of receiving wages? Did I not give you ten, then fifteen, now twenty shillings a week to be sorrowful? And the more I give you I think the gladder you are." The next play which Steele produced was called *The Lying Lover*, and was brought out in 1703. It also had a very considerable amount of success. But still, after all, Steele's chief vocation did not turn out to be that of a playwright. In later years he became a theatrical manager, and made a very fair income thereby; but he was also involved in such losses and lawsuits in the endeavour to maintain his rights that it is doubtful whether on the whole the final balance was one of profit or loss.

It was in 1709 that Steele began the celebrated *Tatler*. It appeared three times a week, and was published at the price of one penny. The first four numbers were given away gratuitously; but the demand for it speedily rose, and it became a paying concern. To some extent it was like what are called "society papers" at the present day, inasmuch as its satirical comments or moralisations were often based upon personal allusions very thinly disguised. At the same time, perhaps, it may be said that the interest of the *Tatler* depended far less upon personal gossip than upon the literary essays to which disguised personal allusions served as mere seasoning. Considering the manners of the times, the general elevation of tone in these papers must be acknowledged to be remarkable, and there is no occasion to dispute the claim made by the editor or author when the series terminated. "The general purpose of the whole," he says, "has been to recommend truth, innocence, honour, and virtue, as the chief ornaments of life; but I consider that severity of manners was absolutely necessary

to him who would censure others, and for that reason and that only chose to talk in a mask. I shall not carry my humility so far as to call myself a vicious man, but at the same time must confess my life is at best but pardonable."

The *Tatler* was succeeded by various other papers with different names. The *Spectator* was begun in 1711, and was followed by the *Guardian* in 1712. Other periodicals, with less distinguished names, afterwards came out, but none of them quite attained the success of the *Tatler*. It seems odd that when one paper began to flag, its editor should expect a revival of his own energies from a mere change of name. But it was perhaps to the curiosity of readers he looked, which might be awakened by novelty of title. The variation of method was but slight. There was always some mythical personage, such as Isaac Bickerstaffe in the *Tatler*, who favoured the world with his personal observations and kept up a certain continuity of character.

Although the *Tatler* still has considerable interest even to the present generation, it is hardly likely that any paper of the same kind, however well conducted, would succeed at the present day. This is not merely because of the far greater demand for news, as distinguished from comments on life; but also because literature is so much more easily accessible in the form of cheap books. No man would care to have his attention distracted by casual sheets of essays, who can obtain for a very few shillings in a collected form the best essays that have ever been written. Whatever time can be spared for daily papers is fully occupied in noting absolutely necessary news. The weekly papers or the reviews and the so-called society papers may be said to have taken the place of the *Tatler*. But their place is not nearly so literary, as they are largely occupied either with party comments on political events or with spiteful personal gossip.

Like Addison, Richard Steele mingled politics with literature; and though Parliament did not yield him as much pecuniary profit as it did to his friend, his brief career there was much more sensational than that of the latter. He was elected in 1713 as member for Stockbridge, of which place it was said, "it's a very wet town, and the voters are wet too." The average price of a vote is said to have been £60, which seems moderate when it is borne in mind that the whole number of electors was under one hundred. Steele's biographer does not assert that the election in 1713 was at all excep-

tional, and we may fairly presume that the cost increased his pecuniary embarrassment. But at any rate he was protected from arrest, and he was sanguine enough to think that his election would be a step towards preferment. Unfortunately, however, in a war of pamphlets about the Treaty of Utrecht he took a side obnoxious to the prevalent Toryism of the day, and in less than nine months he was expelled from the House. Mr. Aitken has taken great pains to give a full and impartial account of this incident, which was on the whole very creditable to Steele's independence and courage. It is of course open to cynics to suggest that he was calculating on the advent of the House of Hanover, and the ascendancy of the Whigs. But such deep-laid calculations were not consonant with his character. He was a man of the world certainly, and was far from indifferent to promotion. But he did not see many moves ahead in the game of life, and from moment to moment he acted on the whole from honest impulses.

As a matter of fact, George I. did come to the throne within a few months after Steele's expulsion. The change of dynasty did not, however, bring so much good fortune to the persecuted pamphleteer as his friends expected. A knighthood, a special theatrical license, a commissionership in Scotland—which, by the way, he neglected so persistently that he was fined as a defaulter—did not make up for his disappointment in failing to obtain the mastership of the Charterhouse. He was elected again to Parliament, but from this time his interest in politics appears to have gradually decayed. In truth he was not the sort of man to make politics pay. It can hardly be said that he was too conscientious, but he was certainly too good-natured and easy-going.

Richard Steele was married twice, and notwithstanding his recklessness about money, it may fairly be said that if ever man deserved to have a good wife he did. Of his first wife we have not much knowledge; in fact, as already stated, Mr. Aitken has for the first time discovered her maiden name. She was a widow, Mrs. Stretch, when she married Steele. She came from a family holding a fair amount of property in Barbados, and this property Steele continued to enjoy after her early decease in 1707, two years after his marriage. He did not long remain inconsolable. There was a certain friend of his first wife, a Miss Mary Scurlock, who very soon engaged his attention. Concerning the connections of this lady, Mr.

Aitken has made such diligent and exhaustive investigations that ten pages of his book are occupied with the details before we arrive at any information about the lady herself. But she really appears to have been an interesting and somewhat piquant person, though by no means as good a mother or wife as Steele was a father or husband. The correspondence of Steele with his wife has long been well known to the world. Mr. Aitken has few additions to make to it; but in his pages we have the great advantage of reading only selected letters, and having those intelligibly connected with the events suggesting them.

There was something of caprice in her bearing from the earliest moment of their courtship until the end of their married life. At the time of Steele's first approaches she was living in London and her mother in Carmarthen, where the family held property. It is curious to note how the distance and the difficulty of correspondence is made an excuse for the necessity of Mary's action without consulting her mother. Writing to the latter she says:—"You doubtless wonder at y^e assurance of my Stile; for really I do my self; but yⁿ if yⁿ Consider y^e necessity of it, 'twill paliate y^e boldness. for first, y^e distance between us is so great y^e y^e Speediest answer to a letter terminates an Age of days, yⁿ y^e Constant Visits, in y^e form fitt for a Lover Make a Mighty noise in an idle prying Neighbourhood, so will Cause y^e uneasiness of an Endless nine-days Wonder as they Call it. but y^e main Matter of all, since fate I believe has ordain'd him Mine is his neglect of business w^{ch} his Coming in y^e Manner he dose must Cause." The lady's spelling is not what modern high schools would consider perfect; and Mr. Aitken does right in reproducing it exactly as she wrote. But if the orthography, and the involved construction or want of construction, betray limited education, yet there are clear signs of character contained in her letters.

Before she consented to the suit of Steele she had enjoyed the distinction, not very common to women, of being sued for breach of promise of marriage. The investigation of this obscure transaction seems to have given Mr. Aitken as much pleasure as Highland sportsmen find in stalking a specially wary herd. By one of those happy chances which only occur to assiduous diligence he has discovered not only the name of Mary Scurlock's persecutor but full records of the proceedings. We shall not forestall the interest which readers of the Life will undoubt-

edly find in this teacup storm of a forgotten world. But certainly the light thrown on the manners and customs of marriageable maidens in those days is not a little startling. We content ourselves with quoting the language of Miss Scurlock concerning this discomfited swain, in the already-mentioned letter to her mother in Wales:—

“By a Letter I had from Cox. betty Scurlock I find you're resolv'd to Winter in Wales, w^{ch} is y^e Cause of y^e Speed in my Writing having kept a Secret from you through fear y^t a Letter might (by y^e usual Impertinent Curiosity of people) make A discovery of w^t is proper for y^r own Ear only & not to divert any in y^r tatling place Where y^t wretched impudence H. O. resorts who (Lest wee shou'd think god had not Wholly forsaken him) had y^e boldness to send me a Letter w^{ch} I had y^e very last post. I tore it without once reading it he being beneath my scornfull Laugh.”

A lady with so evident a temper might have inspired caution in one already experienced in married life. But her genial, sanguine suitor had no fears; and his attachment was sincere and deep enough to survive a good deal of conjugal strife. Owing to her mother's absence in wild Wales, Steele was unwilling to wait the slow arrival of maternal consent, and a compromise seems to have been arrived at. To make all safe the marriage was celebrated; but the bride and bridegroom still lived separate until the mother's blessing arrived by the lagging post. To his “dear Molly” he at once became, if his letters are to be believed, her “most obedient, most faithful servant;” her “most obliged and grateful husband.” Nor, on the whole, is there any reason to think that his professions of devotion were exaggerated. It is suggestive, indeed, that within a month of his marriage he writes “to beg pardon for every act of rebellion he has ever committed against her.” Still more ominous is it that a little later, when sending word that he has accepted an invitation to supper, he adds, “dear Prue, don't send after me for I shall be ridiculous; I send word to put you out of frights.” Her long absences from him also are not quite consistent with that kind of attachment which makes the absence of the loved one “an aching void.” But about his almost idolatrous worship of her there can be no doubt; and there are evidences that, after her manner, she sincerely responded. Indeed, if Mr. Aitken is right, she occasionally anticipated Mr. Silas Wegg, by “dropping into poetry,” and declaring that while formerly “free as wanton winds she lived, that unconcerned do play,” now “in her heart a kindling flame, his softer sighs had blown;”

and “she trembled when her hand he pressed, nor could her guilt controul; but Love prevail'd, and she confest the secrets of her Soul.” Whatever we may think of her, Steele, who knew her best, thought her worthy of one of the noblest dedications that ever any wife received from a literary husband. “The Ladies' Library,” which he issued in 1714, was a compilation in three volumes of various passages from Jeremy Taylor, Fleetwood, Locke, and Halifax, supposed to be profitable for female reading. Each volume contained a dedication, the first to the Countess of Burlington; the second to Mrs. Catherine Bovey; and the third to his wife. The style of the latter is, perhaps, a little too evidently laboured; but the reality of the emotions it expresses appeals to the heart of the reader.

Perhaps no trait of Steele's life is more beautiful than his tenderness to his children. During a long absence of Lady Steele in Wales—an absence difficult to reconcile with some of the virtues her husband ascribed to her—he frequently refers to the children in his letters, sometimes in terms that stir the fount of sympathetic tears. “Dear Prue” he says—why he called her Prue continually the biography does not explain—“Dear Prue, whether I love you because you are the mother of the children, or them because you are their mother, I know not, but I am sure I am growing a very covetous creature for the sake of both of you.” In another letter his words sketch a domestic picture, so bright and sweet that we cannot wonder at its having been transferred to canvas. “The Brats my Girles stand on each side of the table, and Molly says that what I am writing now is about Her new coat. Besse is with me till she has new cloathes. Misse Moll has taken upon Her to hold the sand Box, and is so impertinent in Her office that I cannot write more; But You are to take this letter as from yr three best Friends, Besse, Moll and their Father.”

Would that all his life had been of a piece with this! But debt and embarrassment, especially when carelessly incurred, are ill foes to domestic bliss. It can hardly be said that in his case “at even-tide there was light.” But at least he was relieved from pressing cares, and passed a few quiet years on his wife's property in Wales. At fifty-four he was prematurely old; and for three years he lingered on in the decay both of bodily and mental powers, but kindly to the last; when death released him before he had reached the age of fifty-eight.



UNDER THE PEAK.

BY FLORA L. SHAW, AUTHOR OF "CASTLE BLAIR," &c.

With Illustrations from Drawings by W. M. BAILLIE.

SECOND PAPER.

CAMELLIAS and the scarlet ibiscus were blossoming with roses and myrtles out of doors, but the winter climate of Laguna gives sharply-cold mornings, in which, before the sun gains warmth, you are reminded that no screen of importance shields you from the snowy Peak. For this reason invalids do not linger, but pass on to realise their dreams of perpetual summer at Oratava. The drive is of twenty miles of gentle slope down-hill, with a range of mountains culminating in the Peak all the way upon the left, and the ocean rolling out to meet the blue horizon on the right. After first leaving Laguna the sea is hidden at intervals by rising ground; but the road soon passes everything which is higher than itself, and the view remains unobstructed. The road runs at a certain height, with the coast lying always down below it. It is only when a gorge has to be crossed that it drops to the sea-level, and then it is immediately pulled up again. People who have heard much of the vegetation of Teneriffe will probably be disappointed on crossing it for the first time in winter. The immense masses of volcanic

rock strike the imagination at first sight. It is only on further and more intimate acquaintance that the extraordinary fertility of the soil in those patches where there is soil is realised, and then the original impression of barren beauty is forgotten. The island is very beautiful. The colour of the rocks and sea, the penetrating sunshine, which gives a jewel-like brightness, and the sense of Southern ease which pervades the whole, cannot easily be conveyed, even as a remembrance, to the North. But in the winter months, though the orange-trees are yellow with fruit and palms and bananas remain unaffected by change of seasons, other foliage has for the most part gone. The vineyards are empty, the fig-trees are bare, potatoes have just been planted, and the numberless stone walls with which the country is terraced seem to have been built for no other purpose than to break the natural slope of every hillside. The absence of continuous curves in the lower levels spoils the outline and deprives the landscape of much of its native charm; the want of large trees, also, is very much felt; but the eye soon

learns to overlook these defects and to seek its satisfaction in the mountains—of which the cultivated parts become in the summer-time a mere fertile fringe—and in the coast-line, which is magnificent. The upper levels of the mountains are still richly wooded, and between the road and the Peak red lava cliffs alternate with dark patches of forest, till the distinction is lost in heights which stand purple round the one great white pyramid that overtops them all. It alone is capped with snow, and its broad sides shine like silver under a cloudless blue sky. It wants two thousand feet of the height of Mont Blanc, but set as it is upon so small an island, with the level of the sea to spring from, its size produces more proportionate effect. Its proper name, "El Teide," comes from a Guanche word signifying "Hell," and had, no doubt, a meaning in its volcanic days; but now "La Corona," as the islanders commonly call it, is much more fitting to the rather cold majesty of its actual appearance.

As the road winds round into the Oratava Valley it approaches the cliffs, where breakers roll in white surges far beneath, and the descent becomes a zigzag, not quite so steep as the mount at the other end to Laguna, but sharp enough for groups of palms and orange-trees and oleanders, which grow in wayside gardens, to stand out in relief against the sea. In December a few roses linger. Eucalyptus are silver grey by the roadside. The sea spreads its wide blue plain before the hills, and down on the far side of the valley, on a tongue of sand and rock which runs out into the waves, a little white-walled, red-tiled town, palm-plumed like every village we have passed, is to be seen, and we are told that it is the Puerto of Oratava. The valley, as it is called, of Oratava is more correctly a sloping plain of about six miles broad and eight miles deep, lying in a horseshoe-shaped wall of lava-hills, of which the sea closes the base. The wall runs from the height of a few hundred feet, which it has at the sea-shore, to between six and eight thousand feet along its highest level. On either side it is precipitous, and offers magnificent surfaces of red lava to the rays of the setting and the rising sun. From the centre the plain slopes to the shore, leaving one edge in the forests of the higher levels and losing the other in the waves; while it seems, between the two extremes, to unroll itself like a great scroll, upon which the differing vegetation of the different levels has inscribed lines of nature's

own dictation. Glas, in describing it, says: "Inland or upwards from the sea it rises like a hanging garden all the way, till you come within a league of the clouds. . . . All the fertile ground within a league of the sea is covered with vines; that of the next league produces corn; and the third some corn, woods of chestnut-tree and many other different sorts, particularly the bresos, which are used by the natives for fuel." It is hardly possible to imagine a spot more entirely cut off from the world, for the hills which surround it, it must be remembered, are not composed of the ordinary peaks and valleys, but form one solid unbroken, and in many places precipitous, wall. Nothing can overlook it but the Peak, of which the snowy cone rises solitary and white above the highest lava-line, giving an indescribable dignity to the scene; and when you turn from the contemplation of the hills, the ocean rolls for half a hemisphere before you. In winter the cumbres or summits, as the higher levels of the walls are called, are covered occasionally with snow, and offer a vivid and interesting contrast with the valley, where summer lingers all the year.

Its slopes are varied by many irregularities of volcanic formation. There are deep gorges opened by the splitting of the rock, and used probably once as channels for lava, but now for water to run down to the sea. There are also cones which rise abruptly to a height of some hundred feet, lifting corn-fields and fig-trees with them on one face, and showing the original formation of black cinder on the other. The ground is broken into different levels, but wherever a handful of earth has lodged in the crevice of a rock it is taken advantage of for cultivation. The sides of the gorges sometimes seem to be wrinkled with green, so narrow are the lines of growing corn, and there are gardens scarcely bigger than a good-sized pocket-handkerchief. As the sea-level is approached the tendency is, of course, to spread into rather wider lines, and there are some fine fields of sugar-cane and corn; but the immediate fringe of the shore is rocky, and terracing is everywhere in use. What strikes the eye with perpetual wonder is the contrast between the fertility and the great masses of burnt and barren rock that alternate with it. You may walk for miles in the neighbourhood of the Puerto and not take your feet off cinders or cobbles. There are acres of stone which look like nothing but the emptyings of some giant coal-scuttle, and on which nothing but the cactus com-

mon in the district could possibly be induced to grow. Except under cultivation there is not a tree within walking distance; the sea-sand, of course, is black, and you have to accustom your eye by degrees to these peculiarities; but in spite of the undoubted disadvantages of some of the volcanic accompaniments to the scene; in spite, too, of a certain sense of disappointment which is usually caused by them at first, the prevailing and final impression is of the luxuriance of nature assisted by the unwearied industry of the people. It cannot

be truly said "that the land produces its fruits spontaneously," but it produces them in such abundance that there is never a season without its crop, and fruits follow each other in such quick succession that reaping is by far the greater part of work. The climate is a perpetual summer, tempered by breezes from the sea and hills, and the transition of the seasons into one another is so gentle, that between November and May there is no very perceptible change. On the whole, December was perhaps the hottest and February the coldest of those months.



Villa or town of Oratava.

In the summer the trade-winds, blowing from April to October, prevent an excessive heat.

From the practical invalid point of view it should be said that it is neither desirable nor safe to live immediately on the sea-level. Enjoyable as the air at first seems even there, it is found to be relaxing, and in the Puerto itself, whether as a result of climate or of defective sanitary arrangements, there is an undoubted tendency towards affections of a choleraic nature. A line of two or three hundred feet above the sea, lying in the league which Glas describes as the league of vineyards, and which might as accurately be

described as the league of oranges, palms, and sugar-canes, is the line at which all the charm without any of the evil effects of the climate may be enjoyed. One of the most curious features of the place, however, is that within a drive you can at any time change your climate if you please. The differing vegetation of the different levels points to the natural variations which exist; and while in the league of summer, at a few hundred feet above the sea, people saunter with shady hats and white-lined umbrellas enjoying the odour of orange-blossom, which mixes with the salt scents of the waves, in the league



Port of Oratava.

next to the clouds the inhabitants of Vilaflor de Chasna are cowering in their snowed-up houses over fires made from the charcoal of their only trees, the giant heaths.

The valley is not empty nor dependent for population on the foreign colony now springing up. Its blue depths are dotted with towns and villages, which perch upon the heights or nestle in the laps and folds of the barrancos. They are all white-walled and red-roofed, and marked by tufts of palm or the great dragon-trees, which are known everywhere for landmarks. These trees, ugly enough to have been ingeniously described by some writers as the original of the dragon who guarded the golden apples (or oranges) of the Hesperides, have a curiously animal appearance. One seeks comparison for them more naturally in the reptile than in the vegetable kingdom, and having called up

images of crocodiles and serpents, the mind falls back through ichthyosaurians and vaguely known prehistoric beasts to the enchanted tree-animals of fable. A scaly, formless, colourless creature rearing himself on his tail and spitting sword-blades is what you seem to see, and of him, as of Spenser's Dragon of Error, there are a thousand young ones bred, "each one of sundrie shapes, yet all ill-favoured." The tree, which is botanically no tree at all, but a form of giant asparagus, grows up in the form of a sausage, without any leaves, but one tuft of sharp aloe-like foliage at the top, and does not begin to branch until it has attained a certain height. It then begins to divide into three or four smaller, but still bulky sausages, each bearing a tuft of leaves, and once its branches it is said to grow no more upwards, but only to increase in size. I am inclined to doubt this, for I have never seen an unbranched specimen of anything like the full height of some of the older trees; but as they take thousands of years to come to perfection all that is said of them must be necessarily to some extent conjectural. The

specimen described by Humboldt as standing in one of the gardens of Oratava, and unfortunately blown down about twenty years ago, was pronounced by botanists to be at least six thousand years old. The earliest historic notice of it that we have is a mere nothing in comparison with such an age, but at the time of the Spanish conquest it was already a hollow tree, used by the Guanches for their religious observances, and mass was said in it for the Spanish commanders in the year 1495. The scarlet juice drawn from these trees, which the Guanches used for the preservation of their mummies, adds to their weird resemblance to animals. No poet that I know of has given to the blood of his fabled monster the power of preserving the body without the soul, but when one thinks of this as a property of the dragon's blood it combines with the extraordinary age of the trees to give them a unique place in the imagination.

The valley was the Guanche district of Taora, reigned over by the King Bencomo, who fought the Spaniards at Laguna. Amongst its villages are the two Realejos, or camps, built on the spots on which the opposing armies drew themselves up for a last encounter, and from Realejo Alto the spire rises of the church in which the Guanche hosts, after submitting to the Spaniards, were baptized. The Villa or Town of Oratava, about a thousand feet higher than the Puerto, and a league farther inland, is entirely of Spanish growth, and has been more or less the capital of the district since the conquest. It clings round the foot of a hill in streets so steep that the upper part of the town is six hundred feet higher than its lower edge. The aristocracy of the valley have made it their home, and the history of the last four hundred years is to some extent recorded in its growth. To most of the existing families the history of the valley is the history of the Spanish conquest and settlement; and the records of anything older than this must not be sought in the towns, but in the country itself, in the caves which still line the barrancos, and, more than all, in the actual customs of the peasantry. It is only slowly and by degrees as he takes his daily ride amongst them, learning the language and chatting with the rustics whom he meets, that the foreigner begins to understand and read the annals of the antique and interesting people who were the original possessors of the soil.

For forty years after the conquest they mixed more or less freely with the Spaniards. There was, of course, a great deal of inter-

marriage, and I have given as much as I have given of their history chiefly because the characteristics which marked them are not lost. The islanders of to-day are as the Guanches were, gentle and law-abiding. The men are industrious, the women chaste. The Guanches had no money, and desired none until the Spaniards taught them the use of it. The present islander has little, and is only just beginning to learn, from the wealthy foreigners who are flocking to the country as a health-resort, the arts of begging and overcharging with which the civilised world is so familiar. He does not know them yet. Except in rare instances, he is still happy to serve, and thinks himself rewarded with the pleasure. He will accept a service just as simply as he gives one. He has not set his heart upon "conventional pleasures," and does not understand the business-like notion of a money value attached to every act. As soon as it became known, for instance, that I liked flowers, my room was never without them. Labouring men whom I did not know would come up to me with bouquets in the street. When I returned from country walks, I used to find baskets of roses or camellias laid upon my door-mat. Flowers often were thrown in at the window, and the givers rarely waited even to be thanked. One day, at a distance from home, we asked at a cottage for goats' milk. When we wished to pay for it the woman of the house refused. "Nothing! nothing!" she said, waving a hand in emphatic negation; "we do not do these things for money; we do them for the grace of God!" It is only possible to repay in kind, and the relations between rich and poor become pleasant and simple in consequence. It was my habit to take a walk at sunrise, usually with a book for a companion. I used to meet only men and women going to their work, and one morning a woman with a bundle on her head accosted me. "Senorita, I want to ask a favour of you." The favour was that I should teach her boy English. He had already some instruction; he wanted to be a clerk at Santa Cruz; it would be of immense service to him to know English. I had not noticed the woman, but it appeared that she had passed me every day, and seeing me with a book, she asked for instruction as simply as I, seeing her with a goat, might have asked for milk. I began to teach the boy. The next day I passed a woman on a hillside carrying figs. She offered me her basket. "Eat, Senorita, eat! I am the aunt of Manuel whom you

teach!" Happening to praise especially some white flowers in a bouquet brought by his mother, "Ah! you like white flowers!" she said; and from that day until I left the island I was never without, not only flowers, but white flowers. I believe that every relative Manuel had was ready to render me service if I wished. The charm of this primitive kindness is among the greatest charms of the place. In order to enjoy it, it is only necessary to speak the language of the people, and I think I may say that all the foreign visitors who could speak Spanish agreed in esteeming the native peasantry among the simplest, the gentlest, and the most kindly that they had ever met. Those who could not speak the language entertained, of course, the usual opinion which the Englishman abroad thinks it patriotic to entertain of the foreigner.

As with the Guanches, the habits of the people are frugal and industrious, and it is, no doubt, in part because their wants are few that they can afford to be generous. Their houses are poorer than the Irish cottages, consisting, in many cases, of four mud walls thatched with branches, and without other opening than the door. The very poorest live in caves; and it is common to see comparatively well-built houses without glass in the windows. The furniture and household utensils are as primitive as the dwellings. Cane screens, which were used for the same purpose by the Guanches, serve to partition the common shelter. There is usually a wooden chest and a cradle in the living-room. A few earthenware pots, a bunch of bananas, a palm mat and basket, in which the grain for gofio is picked over, con-

stitute the rest of the furniture. For clothing, the woman has a cotton skirt, a shawl, and a small round straw hat, all of the poorest kind. Her only finery is a coloured handkerchief, which is worn on the head under the hat. There is a rather picturesque country dress for the men, but it is rarely seen. They usually dress as Europeans, with the addition of a very primitive-looking white blanket-cloak, which is gathered about the neck and hangs down below the knees. Their principal food is fruit and gofio, which, when the grain has once been roasted, they usually eat raw. Lupin-seed, also, is largely eaten, and requires no other preparation than to be soaked in water. Sometimes the diet is varied by potatoes, haricots, and salt fish, which require to be cooked, otherwise no fire is needed. The sun gives them all their light, and as they live out of doors, exposure to the air keeps them both clean and healthy.

I speak of them, of course, chiefly as they were in the neighbourhood of Oratava, where I knew them best, and before the influx of foreigners had lasted long enough to have much influence upon their customs. As a health-resort, the Canary Islands undoubtedly possess advantages which are wanting to both Madeira and the Riviera. Material arrangements for comfort are still defective. When they have been supplied, it is probable that the wealthy invalids of Europe and America will make a second conquest of the islands, which will change them almost as much as the Spanish inroad of the fifteenth century. Is it rank heresy to civilisation to wonder whether the change will be altogether for their good?

THE WONDERS OF WINTER.

BY THE LATE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.*

AUTUMN has passed, and cold winter has in turn usurped the rule of its predecessor. But shall we cease from our walks, and are we to think that nature is dead? Assuredly not. We may continue our walks as usual, and not only that, but we may take the same route, and find that the same spots contain as much and as varied

interest as they did during the warmer seasons of the year.

Nature is not dead. She may be sleeping for a while, but the sleep is more apparent than real; and if it be investigated, the warm active life of nature becomes more and more manifest as we extend our researches. Thousands of hearts are beating throughout the coldest frost, and every heart-stroke helps to keep up the internal fire which is the first condition of existence, no matter what may be the creature which draws the breath of life. More in some, less in others, but existing in all.

* This is the last of four papers which Mr. Wood specially wrote for *Good Words*, in response to a suggestion, made by one of our readers, that he should retell in his own way, for the young of to-day, the old story of "Eyes and No Eyes." Its publication was delayed till Winter came round again; but we little thought then that Death was so soon to claim the genial voice and facile pen of our ever-welcome friend.—Ed. G.W.]

There are some beings in which it is much diminished during the months of winter, and in which some of the functions of life are almost in abeyance, and others are temporarily suspended altogether. This remarkable phenomenon goes by the rather inappropriate name of Hibernation, in which the functions of respiration and digestion are altogether suspended, while the heart-beats are so much reduced in number and power that they are hardly perceptible, and are only just sufficient to maintain unbroken the very slight thread which connects the life of a hibernating animal with its body. Of the physiology of the phenomenon itself our limited space forbids me to treat, and I shall therefore only devote a few words to the hibernating animals of our own country, such as we shall be sure to find in our winter's walk if we only know where to look for them.

In no part of the world do birds hibernate, the enormous volume of air which passes through their respiratory systems, and the consequent consumption of tissue during the purification of the blood, rendering impossible a condition in which respiration must cease for many consecutive days or even months. Neither in this country is hibernation necessary for fishes, and in consequence it is restricted to certain mammalia, reptiles, and invertebrates. The most persistent hibernators are the bats, which vanish from our sight as soon as the weather is cold enough to debar insects from flight, and consequently to deprive them of their food.

Where shall we find the bats in winter-time? Almost in every spot where quiet shelter can be obtained. An old wall or rock which is thickly overgrown with ivy has great charms for the bats. So has a hollow tree, especially if ivy has grown over it; and so has the roof, especially if it be thatched, of an old barn or outhouse. With one or other of these localities we shall be sure to meet in our winter's walk, and in any of them we shall be tolerably sure to find some hibernating bats.

We might easily omit to notice them even if we happened unexpectedly to come upon one of their haunts, so utterly are they unlike the familiar and active beings which urge their erratic course through the air on a warm summer's evening, and make the night vocal with their shrill shrieks of exultation as they capture their tiny prey. The wide dark wings are wrapped round the body so as completely to metamorphose its form, while the creature hangs suspended head

downwards, its slight weight supported wholly by the sharp curved claws of the hind feet. The entire aspect of a hibernating bat partakes largely of the grotesque, especially in the common long-eared bat, in which the enormous ears are folded against the body, and the long pointed tragus projects beyond the head, just as if the bat were gifted with a pair of straight black horns. Altogether the bat looks much more like a bunch of dry leaves than an animal, and might well escape recognition by an inexperienced eye.

Perhaps upon the very tree within whose hollow trunk we have discovered the bats we may find another of our hibernating animals, the squirrel. Sharper eyes are required to discover the squirrel than are needed for the bats. There is not much difficulty in finding a hollow tree, or pulling aside the masses of ivy in search of concealed hollows, or in investigating with the assistance of a lantern the roof of a barn. But it is perfectly possible to examine from below an old tree, and yet have no suspicion that a family of squirrels are slumbering in a large and warm nest under the shelter of the branches. The winter "drey," or "cage," as it is indifferently called, is always placed at some height up the tree, where the larger branches join the trunk. So skilfully is the nest constructed that in spite of the enormous amount of leaves and other materials of which it is built, it is almost as invisible from below as if it were the nest of a chaffinch. More than once I have only detected the nest of a squirrel by looking down upon it accidentally from a higher branch. As to the quantity of material which I have taken out of a single squirrel's nest, I should be almost afraid to mention it. As to packing it all back again, so as to be invisible from below, such a task would be as impossible as for a man to make the nest of the long-tailed titmouse. Within this "drey" the squirrel lies coiled throughout the greater part of the winter, awaking occasionally when, as sometimes happens, a comparatively warm day breaks the monotony of the winter's frost. Then out comes the squirrel, runs to one of his many storehouses, carries off a nut or two, eats them, and then resumes his interrupted repose. As the animal always buries more food than it needs to consume, many of these buried nuts and acorns are forgotten, take root, and grow into fresh trees, the squirrel therefore being one of Nature's means by which the continuance of our forests is preserved. Were it only for this reason the squirrel deserves not only

protection but encouragement. The only excuse for destroying it is to be found in such places as the New Forest, where it swarms like the rabbit, and for similar reasons must be kept within due bounds, the squirrel doing as much damage to the tops of the trees as the rabbits do to their bark when they are young and tender.

While we are in the wood let us look out for some thick bushes, part the branches carefully, and examine them thoroughly. We may investigate several bushes in this manner and find nothing, but at last we shall be nearly sure to see, not more than four feet from the ground, a darker spot, which, when examined a little more closely, looks as if a number of leaves and grass-blades had been accidentally blown into the bush and become matted together. This will certainly be the nest of the dormouse, which, though so much smaller, is made in a manner much like that of a squirrel, and of similar materials. To take it out uninjured is not an easy task, for so firmly is the nest woven round the branches that they must be cut away from below, bringing the nest with them.

The body of the nest is composed of long grass-blades ingeniously twisted together, and the leaves are mostly fastened on the outside, for the purpose, as I believe, of concealment. Any kind of leaf seems to be used in masking the nest. A very fine specimen which was in my possession, and which has been admirably figured by the late Mr. Keyl in my "Homes without Hands," was taken out of a hazel bush, and had maple leaves woven into it as well as those of the hazel. The entrance was small, and ingeniously concealed by some broad grass-blades, which were drawn loosely over it, and pulled aside by the inmate when it wanted to enter or leave the nest.

Like the squirrel, the dormouse needs some food during the winter, and accordingly lays up a store of nuts and grain, which it hides close to the nest. Supposing that we have found one of these nests, let us examine the neighbouring bushes, and we shall probably find others, the dormouse being a sociable creature, and liking company.

Still keeping to the wood, let us look out for any sheltered depressions in the ground into which the fallen leaves of autumn have drifted. Let us rake about among them with a stick, and it is most probable that we may come on the very inartificial nest of another of our hibernators, the hedgehog.

Should the gnarled roots of some old tree project from the side of a bank so as to leave irregular hollows between them, the hedgehog will in all probability make its winter's nest under their shelter.

Not long ago, while walking through a copse of oak underwood, I came unexpectedly on the winter home of a hedgehog. A series of dry ditches ran through the copse, and were nearly filled with dry leaves. When crossing one of these ditches, and pushing aside the leaves so as to ascertain its depth and the absence of the broken bottles which tramps are apt to fling into such places, I found a resistance to the stick, and there was the hedgehog in its nest. Hibernation was over, but the animal had retained its comfortable lodgings for future use.

A warm winter day arouses the hedgehog from its torpor, and it then needs sustenance; but, as it lives on animal food, it cannot lay up a store like the vegetarian squirrel and dormouse. It therefore has recourse to other hibernators, and trots briskly about in search of the snails which hide themselves during the winter, and cling together in clusters, a dozen or so fastening upon the shells of their neighbours. Like the thrush, the hedgehog has a special talent for detecting these snail-clusters, and when it has eaten its meal, returns to its home and resumes its sleep.

All our reptiles, including the frogs, toads, and newts, are hibernators, being deprived by cold of their natural food. Do not be surprised at the name of the newt as a hibernator on land. The creature only inhabits the water for breeding purposes, and towards autumn seeks the shore and becomes a denizen of land. Even when in the water it breathes atmospheric air by means of lungs, and is obliged to come to the surface at short intervals for the purpose of breathing. Even the snakes can live longer under water than the newt, the single long, bag-like lung containing enough air to sustain life for a considerable time. I wonder how long the infant Hercules had to grasp the snakes before he succeeded in strangling them!

Newts may be found in the depth of winter snugly tucked away under the roots of heath and other plants, often several hundred yards from the nearest water. I believe that they are always found alone, whereas the frogs and snakes love to congregate together in any convenient hole, so that when one is found it is sure to have plenty of

companions. In all cases, if the refuge be opened during a severe frost, the cold first awakes the inmates, and then kills them, as I have personally witnessed. As to the hibernating insects, their name is legion. I can only mention the hive bee and the ants among the hymenoptera. It is true that a few wasps and hornets may be found in a torpid condition, but these are only the future queens of nests as yet unmade, the whole of the workers and larvæ having perished. Beetles can often be dug out of the ground, but, as soon as they come in contact with the cold air, they turn on their backs, fold up their legs, and die. I have often seen the large and powerful ground beetles (*Carabus*) unable to run more than a few inches before collapsing.

Several butterflies, especially the tortoiseshell and a few of its relatives (*Vanessa*), and the brimstone (*Gonepteryx rhamni*), are in the habit of making their appearance on a warm day. Then the newspapers are sure to contain letters announcing "Early Appearance of the Butterfly," "A Promise of Warm Spring," and similar paragraphs. These "early appearances" often occur in churches, for the simple reason that the insects make their way into the buildings, and find them to be charming refuges for the winter. Then, on Sundays, when the fires are lighted and the building is warmed, the butterflies awake from their torpor and flutter up and down the windows, much to the discomposure of the juvenile part of the congregation.

One too familiar insect derives its popular name from its singular habits. During the months of November and December, when insect life appears to have vanished from the earth, a moth may be seen fluttering along the hedges, and setting the frost at defiance. This is the Winter Moth (*Cheimatobia brumata*), a creature with upper wings of a grey brown traversed by several narrow waved bars of a darker hue, and with pale grey under wings. The extreme measurement of the spread wings is about an inch and a quarter.

It is a pleasing object to the passer-by, as showing that insect life is not wholly extinct, but the fruit-grower looks on it with eyes of deadliest hatred, and with good reason, as it is one of the most destructive insects in England.

Fruit trees suffer terribly from the ravages committed by the larvæ, which swarm over the trees and make their way into the buds. In some seasons they increase to such an extent that if it were not for the sparrows and other small birds, which carry countless

myriads of these little pests in order to feed their young, the fruit crops would be in the greatest danger. In 1887 there was a great outcry in Kent against the sparrow, and great numbers of the birds and eggs were destroyed. The natural result swiftly followed, as is shown by this extract from the Kentish newspapers of May, 1888:—"The absence of sparrows is bemoaned by Kentish farmers, whose plantations have suffered from an unprecedented attack of maggots. Planters are making vigorous efforts to fight the pest, but the grubs are so numerous that hitherto they have defeated all attempts to get rid of them."

Only the male has serviceable wings, those of the female being so small that she is obliged to climb up the trunks of the trees for the purpose of depositing her eggs on the bark. Great quantities of these wingless females are caught by painting the tree-trunks with some adhesive compound, but no remedy is so good as that which is appointed by Nature, namely, the action of the sparrow, bullfinch, titmice, and other small birds.

Of birds there is no lack in winter, and first among them must be placed the redbreast, a bird which can hold its own even against the sparrow. Cheeriest of the cheery, it hops and flits about throughout the winter, takes perch on the top of a tree, and thence pours out its short but lively song, a most pleasant sound in winter. It is not, however, so hardy as the sparrow, and when the frost has been prolonged and the snow heavy, great numbers of robins may be found lying dead, having succumbed to hunger and cold. Those who feed birds in the winter should always mix chopped meat or fat with the crumbs, in order to afford due nourishment to the birds.

Then there are the titmice, which do good service during the winter by traversing the trunks and branches of trees, and picking out the eggs of various destructive insects. For the use of these birds I always keep a large lump of suet tied up in a net, and suspended by a string four feet in length from the branch of a cherry tree in front of my study window. No other birds can perch on it and feed, and not even my incorrigible bird-destroying cats, "Bunny" and "Fluff," can get at them while engaged in feeding.

The blue titmice are wonderfully bold birds, and even when I am standing almost within arm's length of the net they will fly to it, cling with their backs downwards while it sways about, and when they have eaten

their fill fly off again, leaving the net swinging in all directions by the impetus given by their flight. The rapidity with which a lump of suet as large as a man's head shrinks into the shape of a thin sausage is most amusing. Notwithstanding the supply of suet, the titmice are among the most constant visitors to my window-sill, managing to swallow an amount of porridge, bread, egg, and meat that seems quite incompatible with their tiny dimensions.

Among the visitors to the window-sill are some thrushes, which seem to take life seriously, and swallow great lumps of porridge with a staid and contemplative gravity which is beautiful to behold. They, as well as the blackbirds, do such good service by snail-devouring, and please my ears so well with their melody, that although they strip my cherry trees within a few yards of my window, I cannot find it in my heart to deprive them of their banquet. The wren, too, may be seen popping in and out of the hedges as merrily as if it were the middle of summer, while the tiny gold-crest defies the cold, and trips over the branches in search of food, pecking here and there with all the liveliness and most of the agility of the titmice.

Far afield, the missel thrush may be seen and heard. But, during the winter, he is so wary that to approach him is no easy task. Also may be found the fieldfare, which only visits us in the winter months, seldom making its appearance until the end of November or beginning of December. As it is very good to eat, it soon finds itself so persecuted by gunners that it almost rivals the rook in

wariness, and will seldom allow itself to be approached within gun range.

Descending by the usual path to the river we shall find there our old friends the water-hen, coot, and dabchick, all paddling about as long as the river remains unfrozen, and generally allowing themselves to be approached nearer than in the warmer seasons of the year, when they have to guard their young. In the marshy part of the ground the snipe will almost certainly be found, and if we are very fortunate we may creep close enough to see the woodcock itself. Then there are the various ducks and geese which only visit us in the winter, and may nearly always be found just in such a spot as the marshy ground near the junction of the brook and river. When they first arrive, they can be approached with comparative ease, but they soon learn caution, and then clever must be the sportsman who can get within range.

December flowers are but few, and, saving the ubiquitous shepherd's purse, and the equally ubiquitous chickweed and groundsel, the dead nettle is perhaps the only plant on which we are sure to find a flower. In early winter the blackberry is in perfection, requiring a frost to impart to the fruit its full flavour. Unluckily, the prowling boy, who is the natural enemy of creation in general, will seldom leave the fruit on the bush long enough to attain its perfection.

So, even in the depth of winter, those who have eyes, and will use them, will find their walk fully repaid by the bounteous fulness of Nature.

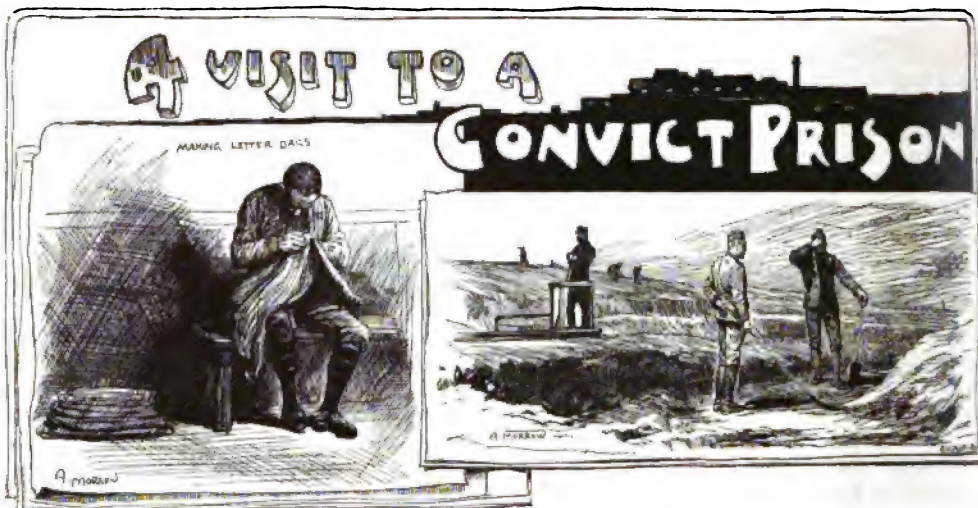
NO DEATH!

THE Lord of Life went down
To Death's dark home of dread:
"And hast thou then a frown
For me?" he said.
"My Father's servant thou,
Reviled by human breath—
I come to bless thee now,
Misjudged Death!"

"There shall be no more fear
Of thee among my friends;
The servant shall be dear
Their Father sends.
Be thou the shepherd kind,
That earth wide wandereth
My weary ones to find
And succour, Death!"

He tarried there awhile,
Till dawned, in answering wise,
His own divinest smile
In Death's dull eyes—
Then to the worlds above
He said, and yet He saith,
"Death is transformed by Love;
There is no Death!"

JANET LOGIE ROBERTSON.



BY THE VERY REV. S. REYNOLDS HOLE, D.D.,
DEAN OF ROCHESTER.

With Pictures by A. MORROW.

"O let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before Thee: according to the greatness of Thy power, preserve Thou those that are appointed to die."

HE who would enlarge his appreciation of liberty, and his sympathy with those who have lost it, should visit a convict prison. He should leave awhile the society of men who are free to work or to play, the hurrying to and fro in eager quest of honour, wealth, or amusement, the happy voices of the children, the music of the singing birds, and through massive walls and huge gates of iron, clanking, as they close, in so many guilty hearts a terrible farewell to all the outer world, he should enter that solemn place of retribution, and in its yards and workshops, corridors and cells, should look upon a thousand faces which neither smile nor speak. A sight which stirs the soul with pity, although there is rarely a countenance which seems to ask compassion. The shame, which is a glory and grace, has vanished long ago, and in its place there is the sullen, defiant scowl, the malignant sneer, the sly, hypocritical simper, but chiefly the blank vacant look of stolid apathy, of those whom St. Paul describes as past feeling, given over to work all uncleanness with greediness.

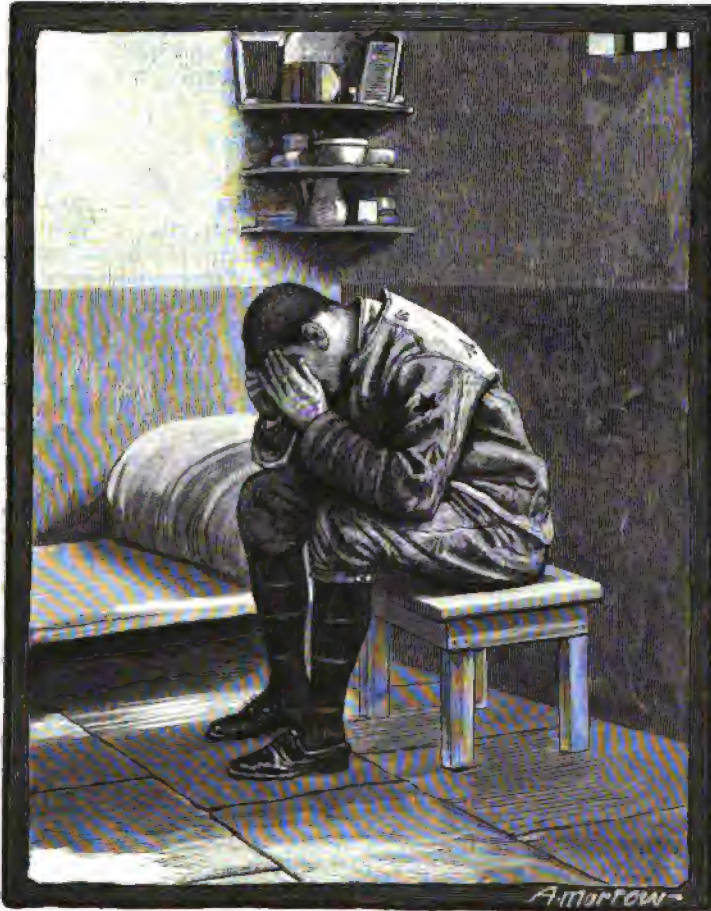
Nevertheless, we may not despair, nay, all the more cogently are we constrained, as Christians, by our fear of this imminent and awful doom, by our love of Him Who willeth not that any should perish, and with Whom nothing is impossible, to do our utmost for these souls that are ready to perish, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening

of the prison to them that are bound. By practical generosity, and personal appeals, we may bring him, as they brought the blind and the maimed, the leprous, the lunatics, and those that were possessed with devils, to Christ, that He may heal. His "touch has still its ancient power." That beautiful picture of Christus Consolator sets before the eye of faith realities far more glorious than human skill can paint; not only that gracious scene at Capernaum, when the sun was set, and our Incarnate Lord went forth amid the crowd of sufferers, and turned their heaviness to joy, but the Spiritual Presence, now and ever with us, of the same great Physician of our souls, Who healeth those that are broken in heart, and gives medicine to heal their sickness.

There is a further claim, the most solemn and stringent of all, upon our sympathies, our supplications, our energies, and our alms. He, Who, in this our day of acceptance, yearns to save, has forewarned us that in the day of our account, when it will be too late to cry for mercy, because it will be the time for justice, He will speak to every one of us those words of welcome or of woe—either, "I was in prison, and ye came unto Me," or, "I was in prison, and ye visited Me not." How shall we hope to be of those who love His appearing, who shall lift up the heads which have been so often bowed in shame, when the day of their redemption

draweth nigh, if we have never gone where He has commanded us to go, in spirit, if not in person, and with all such help as we could bring, to restrain from crime, to rescue criminals, and where He has promised not only that they who seek shall find Him, but that whatsoever is done in the faith which worketh by love, shall be recognised, before men and angels, as done unto Himself?

We are, moreover, encouraged in our efforts to protect the innocent and to reclaim the guilty, to strengthen such as do stand, to comfort and help the weak-hearted, and to raise up them that fall, by abundant proof that there has been for many years, partly from the considerations to which I have referred, and partly from philanthropic and political motives, a deeper interest, and a progressive



In Solitary Confinement.

improvement, in the surroundings and treatment of our prisoners. If we refer to history, or if we visit the dismal dungeons which are found beneath the ruins of our ancient forts; when we see with dread and disgust, as at Venice in the Palace of the Doges, the cruel cells to which no daylight came, with the foul sewage from the canal close by oozing through the walls, some of them so small that it was impossible to stand upright or lie

down at full length within; we may well thank God that this tyranny is overpast, and that His creatures are no longer thus poisoned and tortured unto death.

Not only in distant lands and centuries, but in our own, we shall find like causes for thanksgiving, as we compare the present with the past. There are many living men who can remember the hulk, the grim, gaunt "man-of-war," no longer fit for service, dis-

mantled and dismayed, "monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum," which was moored at several of our naval stations, and to which those convicts were consigned, who had been sentenced to transportation, prior to their embarkation for New South Wales. To some of the weaker inmates that time of embarkation never came, for these hulks were often overcrowded, and the atmosphere so impure, from want of proper ventilation, that many a soul passed thence to the eternal shore; and there are still mounds on the banks of our great rivers, as by the Medway at Upnor, which mark the convict's grave.

The better time came at last, when this floating jail, so degraded from its noble purpose—the defence of fatherland against the fury of the oppressor—so deformed from that pristine beauty with which it walked the waters like a thing of life, was condemned by a wise authority, sold by auction, and broken up; and the modern prison, commodious, well supplied with light, and air, and water, received its occupants.

Physically and morally, this merciful migration was beneficent beyond words. The convicts, instead of being crowded together like swine on a rail truck, in a state of semi-suffocation, yelling, nevertheless, and blaspheming, glorying in their shame and in the boastful narrative of their wicked deeds, so that the young in years became veterans in their knowledge of crime, and pledged themselves with devilish oaths to try, if ever they were free, new villainies and baser sins, were now separated from each other or met together in silence. Their time was no longer wasted in idleness, but was fully occupied in useful work. Their food was no longer as to quality inferior and as to quantity scant, but palatable and sufficient. Mind and soul were no more neglected, but there was a supply for all who wished it of instructive and devotional books; there were daily services in the prison church; there was a right and due administration of the Holy Sacrament, and the chaplains regularly and anxiously visited each prisoner in his cell.

More will be said of these subjects hereafter, but the most striking and lasting proof of convict labour may be mentioned here. The necessity arose, some twenty-five years ago, of an enlargement of the dockyards at Chatham for the reception of those monster ships, "the Ironclads," requiring more depth of water than our tidal rivers could supply. The work was commenced, in consequence, by Colonel Pasley, of the Royal Engineers.

The channel called St. Mary's Creek was closed at both ends, and three great basins and six graving docks were excavated by the convicts, then numbering about 2,000 men. In the soil of the creek the labourers found, some thirty feet below the surface, a warship of antique structure, heavily laden with cannon, bar-shot, chain-shot, and various forms and fragments of iron, and purposely sunk to prevent the enemy's ships from sailing up the channel, as they could have done at high tide, out of reach of the artillery which was then in use, and which was about as inferior to our modern guns as Brown Bess to a Minie rifle.

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In speaking of the efforts made to improve the condition of the convict, our gratitude should be expressed to those pioneers in the sacred enterprise who designed and built the great Milbank Penitentiary, with its six pentagonal prisons, united by corridors to the central block, which contains the chapel, infirmary, workshops, and officers' quarters. Here every effort was made, by separating the notorious criminals from those who were punished for a first offence, to prevent contamination; to search for indications of penitence, to kindle these sparks into flame, and to give to all "prisoners of hope" special encouragements, not only while they remained in England, but, by letters of commendation, when transported over the seas.

* * * * *

Some years later there arose at Pentonville an imposing structure, which assumed, and largely deserved, the proud title of "The Model Prison." Numerous jails in different parts of the country were built after its plan with reduced proportions, and the same system of management was adopted within their walls.

The chapel of the prison at Pentonville had a novel and singular arrangement. The seats rose tier upon tier, like the boxes at a theatre, but more resembling in size and shape the shelter of a soldier on guard, and each prisoner, wearing a half mask and enclosed in his own compartment, was hidden, when the door was closed behind him, from all eyes except those of the clergyman and the warders in charge. The scheme is suggestive to enthusiastic advocates of the pew system. While it secures for the occupant exclusive possession and preservation from contact with his fellow-men, he can still quote George Herbert if he pleases, "All



"GOING TO WORK" IN THE DOCKYARD.

equal are within the church's gate," and should he yield to drowsiness, and "an exposition of sleep come upon him," he may rest assured that his somnolence is unknown to his neighbour, unless he wakes him with his snores.

In the prison at Pentonville the first experiment was made of "the silent system," and great results were expected from it, both as a punishment of the most rebellious and a stopping at once and ever "the filthy conversation of the wicked." But this silent system, including solitary confinement, had issues unforeseen. Many of the prisoners showed symptoms of mania, and it was evident that the brain was affected by this unnatural stillness and seclusion. At first a strange explanation was offered by those who had originated the project, and were of course anxious for its success. The chaplain was one of those preachers—rare in his day, happily multiplied in ours, but still in a sad minority—who surely convinced that they are sent to deliver the most awful, and yet the most hopeful, message which can be told to man, knowing the terrors of the Lord and His infinite mercy also, speak from the heart and plead with all their power. To his earnest eloquence the prison authorities, in quest for some explanation of these sad phenomena, and naturally indisposed to doubt the wisdom of that long and lone isolation which they had themselves designed, actually attributed these mental aberrations; but when they ventured to suggest that a more quiet style would cause less excitement, they got much the same answer which was given by Rowland Hill to a similar expostulation: "I once saved a man's life, who was walking by the sea, and did not notice that the tide was surrounding him, *by shouting at the very top of my voice*; and, when I see souls in danger of eternal death, I don't mean to speak in a whisper." Wherefore, unable to refute his argument, and though they must have been somewhat dubious as to the sensitive and emotional susceptibilities of the convict community, they decided that he should go. They obtained for him the offer of a valuable London living, and Pentonville saw him no more. But the intimations of insanity were manifested again and again until the cause became too apparent for further evasion. The rules were relaxed, and the period of solitary confinement was shortened, so as to prevent a recurrence of this deplorable distress.

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The most remarkable event in the chronicles of the great convict prison at Chatham was the mutiny and insurrection of the prisoners, which occurred on the 11th of February, 1861. A spirit of discontent and insubordination had been prevalent for some time among them, and their animosity and threats of vengeance were expressed with "curses, not loud but deep," against the chief warder, who was responsible in their belief for the food which they received, and which they denounced as being inferior in quality, insufficient in quantity, and badly cooked.

A great number of the convicts were taken then as now, every morning after breakfast and attendance at chapel, to work in the dockyards, and they were at that time occupied upon an island in St. Mary's Creek, to which they were rowed in large boats, and where they worked until the evening. Their dinners were brought to them from the prison in tin cans at mid-day, and they angrily protested that in the conveyance their food became cold and distasteful, signifying on one occasion their indignation and disgust by throwing their soup upon the heads and uniforms of the warders, and thoroughly enjoying with malignant mirth their appearance of "green and yellow melancholy," their dripping garments, their astonishment, rage, and discomfort.* A brief ecstasy! quickly overtaken by the Nemesis of retribution—empty stomachs for the rest of the day, and severe punishments when they returned to prison.

This correction seemed to exasperate their hostile feeling, and not many days after, seizing their opportunity, and upon a concerted signal, they made a simultaneous attack, which would now be impossible, owing to the altered construction of the prison and the more constant vigilance and complete precautions, overpowered the warders and put them to flight, having previously relieved them from the encumbrance of their weapons and watches. Free from restraint, they lost no time in resuming their former habits of appropriation, mischief, and destruction, breaking windows, forcing open desks and drawers, collecting their contents, with books and all available furniture, and then making a huge bonfire of the heap. It seemed at one time as though the conflagration would spread throughout the prison, and the intense

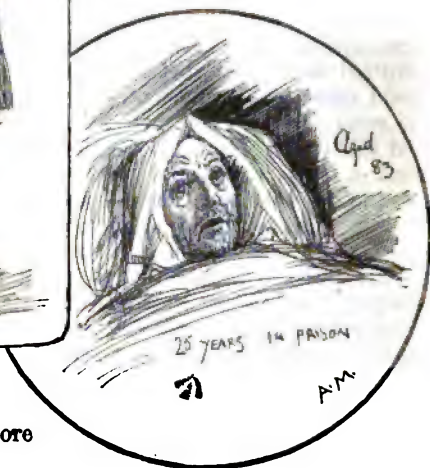
* This abnormal effusion recalls the apt quotation of an Oxonian, dining with his friend at a City restaurant. Two specimens of the London "Gent" were seated at a table near, and upon the shoulder of one of them a waiter, carrying a dish, spilt some gravy. Naturally, when this attendant was introducing another course, the visitor drew aside in fear, on which the collegian said to his companion, "*Terruit gentes, grave ne rediret.*"

anxiety which prevailed was only relieved by the prompt and admirable energy of those who were in authority. The fire-engines were quickly at work, and as they poured their abundant and continuous stream upon the flames, the discordant yells of the rebels proclaimed their prevailing power. This duel of the elements, fire and water, was manifestly obnoxious to the seconds, who had provoked it, and who, alternately drenched and singed, were constrained to consider the disagreeable question, whether they should be boiled or roast.

The red fire was extinguished, but the prison was encircled by a broad band of scarlet, the soldiers of the Royal Engineers, the Royal Marines, and from the depôts of other regiments then stationed at St. Mary's Barracks. The great gates were unlocked, and the warders re-entered, much improved in dignity and order, and accompanied by a military escort of nearly a thousand men. The latter marched with bayonets fixed, and the insur-

gents, convinced at once by these pointed arguments, retired from further discussion. There was a sound as of persons anxious to catch a train, and then a resonant banging of heavy iron doors, and then each wanderer was in his place, with a look of placid innocence upon his countenance, like some pious hermit in his cell, or like schoolboys

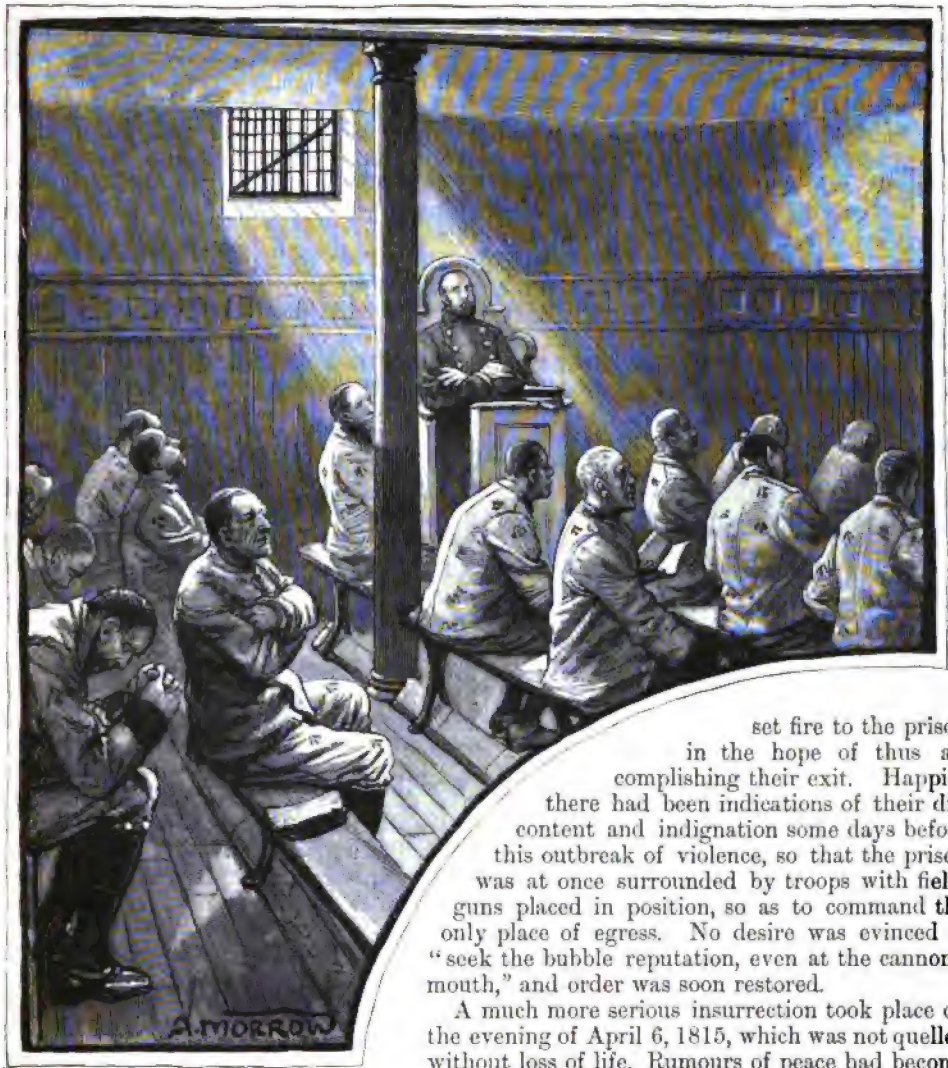
who, after some great battle of bolsters at midnight, are invariably found by the master, whose own slumbers have been interrupted by their riot, in a sound and tranquil sleep. There was a further similitude. As the cane or the rod is called into action by the disobedience and deception of the schoolboy, so was the cat-o'-nine-tails brought to bear in



full swing upon the persons of these mutineers. The prison, like the grotto of Calypso on the departure of Ulysses, resounded with their cries, and only two or three succeeded in suppressing the utterance of pain, the most defiant of all declaring with a derisive laugh that the chastisement which his mother inflicted upon him with the strings of her apron was far more severe and painful.

* * * * *

Captain Vernon Harris, in his very interesting and instructive book on "Dartmoor Prison, Past and Present," of which he was governor before he undertook a similar position at Chatham, refers to two notable occasions on which the discontent of prisoners developed into open revolt. In September, 1812, the bakehouses, in which their bread had been usually baked, having been burned down, they were supplied with one-and-a-half pound of biscuit per man, which was afterwards reduced to one pound. Enraged at this alteration, the prisoners, about 7,500 in number, became ungovernable, broke the enormous bars of the principal gate, and being still unable to effect their escape, were preparing to



In Church.

set fire to the prison in the hope of thus accomplishing their exit. Happily there had been indications of their discontent and indignation some days before this outbreak of violence, so that the prison was at once surrounded by troops with field-guns placed in position, so as to command the only place of egress. No desire was evinced to "seek the bubble reputation, even at the cannon's mouth," and order was soon restored.

A much more serious insurrection took place on the evening of April 6, 1815, which was not quelled without loss of life. Rumours of peace had become current throughout the country, and when the official announcement came that there would be no cessation of hostilities, the Americans made a determined dash at the main entrance with the intention of overpowering the guard placed there for its protection. They were received with a volley of musketry, which killed seven and wounded thirty-five of their number. This course was undoubtedly as severe as it was short; it evoked much criticism, and was by some denounced as a cruel massacre. But there is every reason to believe that this decisive act of the soldiers on duty, done in obedience to the instructions which they had received, was the means of averting a far more serious calamity.

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These desperate men have desperate resources, and only cease to be dangerous when they are surrounded by insuperable barriers and punished whenever they attempt to climb or to break them. They can only be ruled by fear. A large proportion have never known the influence of kindness and only suspect it as a pretext to deceive. As a rule the convict has been from his childhood,

δόλιος ἀγύρτης μηχανορράφος,

a wily, designing vagabond. "He will lie with such volubility that you would think truth was a fool." Plato says that a man is like a charioteer who drives two horses, the one white, with wings, ever intent to bear him onward and upward, the other black, malignant, ever watching for an opportunity to drag him over a precipice. The white horse of the convict has been long dead. Richter writes that we each of us resemble the summit of a hill facing north and south, on the sunny side we can grow luxuriant grapes, but the fruit on the shady side is small and sour. From one comes the basket of very good figs and from the other the basket of very naughty figs which cannot be eaten. Alas, in the case of the convict the southern slope has for years gone out of cultivation, and is covered with thistle and thorn.

If there were no eye of supervision he would "run his work." When he is in the dockyard a warder watches with a loaded rifle in his hand. He is an accomplished actor, and will simulate pain, epileptic fits, paralysis, and insanity with consummate skill, that he may escape from labour. The most wary and experienced are sometimes deceived. The following example was cited with others before the Penal Servitude Acts Committee in 1878, and is recorded in the "Minutes of Evidence":—Henry Philips was commended for discharge from Dartmoor prison before his term had expired in consideration of the very delicate state of his health and his inability to walk. He described himself as completely paralysed, and in order to help him he was furnished on his discharge with a wheeled chair, which he could propel with his arms. An officer was sent to accompany him to his destination. On their arrival at Manchester the wheeled chair was not forthcoming, but it was promised by the railway officials on the following morning. The officer conducted the prisoner in a cab to his residence, a beer-house in the suburbs, where his friends were carousing, and having consigned him to their custody sought a lodging elsewhere, in order that he might fetch the chair next morning and convey it to the owner. He had just received it, when, to his intense astonishment, the man Philips walked into the station with a jaunty air, his hat on one side, and swinging a stick. "You have recovered very quickly!" exclaimed the gaoler, hardly knowing what to say. "There is nothing the matter with me," was the cool reply, "and there never was. I can walk as well as you can—but how about that chair?"

The officer was so taken aback that he made no opposition to its removal, and it very quickly disappeared.

Some will even mutilate themselves that they may be reported as unfit for work, as the cowardly archer of old maimed the thumb of his bow-hand, and was designated poltroon, *pollice truncus*, to escape the perils of war.

This astute malingering is by no means restricted to the doctors and nurses, with whom it so seldom succeeds, but is extensively attempted upon the chaplains, who have not the same means of detecting hypocrisy, and are more credulous and more susceptible of favourable impressions through the charity which hopeth all things. How can he decide whether the prisoner here portrayed (page 760) is a serious penitent or a hypocrite? He has the star on his coat which denotes that he has not previously entered a convict prison, though he may have been oft convicted, and "who art thou that judgest another?"

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The reference to dress suggests an explanation of the different costumes worn by the prisoners. 1. A dress of plain brown, without any distinctive mark. 2. Canvas suit, with broad arrow, worn by those who have destroyed property, their own clothes, books, bedding, glass, &c. 3. Yellow and black, the uniform of those who have made attempts to escape, many in number, although only two in a period of nineteen years have succeeded in regaining their liberty. 4. Half black, half brown, the colours which indicate that the wearer has made an assault upon some officer, and such attacks are by no means infrequent. Not long ago the governor of a prison was going his round and a powerful man, working as a shoemaker, sprang up in an instant, and, with one hand inserted within his necktie, was about to strike him with the sharp semicircular tool with which the leather is cut, when some slip or entanglement took place, and the governor taking advantage of the delay hit his assailant with his clenched fist under the right ear,—“round he spun, and down he fell.” 5. The blue facings denote that for the individual within the day of liberation is nigh, and the hair reappearing once more on lip and cheek and skull prepares him for presentation to the outer world.

* * * * *

These habiliments, and the suit in which he will leave the prison, such as is worn ordinarily by the artisan, are all made by the

convicts, and made remarkably well. The same praise is due to the industrial produce throughout the several departments. In the great foundries skilled work is done, as well as kitchen ranges and fire-grates, which are supplied for military and naval as well as for prison use, such as admirable gates in wrought iron for Plymouth dockyard, and altar rails in brass for the new chapel at Wormwood Scrubs. The beautiful massive and elaborate roof of oak in the chapel was made by the prisoners, and in the extensive department for carpentry, some of the more skilful workers were preparing a handsome pulpit of pitch pine and teak. There are clever carvers in marble; but these cases are, of course, exceptional, and the manual labour of the prisoners supplies an immense store of useful articles, clothing, furniture, letter bags, &c., &c.

The order and discipline, the construction and ventilation, the cleanliness, the preparation and distribution of the food, the economy of fuel, are excellent; and in sickness and pain the convict receives in the hospital all such remedies and alleviations as the physician and the surgeon can apply.

* * * * *

The criminal class have a language of their own, which Max Müller never knew; a lingo, rather, of slang words, intelligible only to themselves and to those who are brought into contact with them, harsh, coarse, offensive, as the notes of these jail-birds could not fail to be. As we hear or read we can only quote Mr. Lillyvick's commentary, when Nicholas Nickleby informed him that the Frenchmen called the water l'eau—"I have no opinion of that language."

Here is an authentic specimen, with translation:—

"The lags in the push bested the young screw to rights over the snout. They started a barney, and while the slop was after his Darbeys, they cracked the flat and landed the stuff. The boys was on to me about it, so I did a fake, and worked a month on the farm."

Anglicd. The prisoners in the working party cleverly deceived the young warder about the tobacco. They got up a sham fight, and while the officer was getting out his handcuffs, they broke into the cabin of the barge and obtained tobacco. The Governor suspected me, so I shammed sickness, and contrived to remain in hospital a month.

* * * * *

Before a prisoner, who has obtained his order of discharge, leaves the prison, he has

to undergo an operation which, though easy and painless to the body, seems to bring much perturbation to his mind. He is summoned to the photographic studio, and evidently aware that his likeness is required, not as an example of manly beauty, or as a souvenir of friendship, but with a view to distribution among the principal jails and offices of the police throughout the land, he exhibits a great reluctance, and not seldom a vigorous resistance, to the preliminary arrangements. He will commence a series of facial contortions and convulsive twitches, which suggest epilepsy, or indicate St. Vitus' dance. One eye is suddenly closed, and its light is gone like a falling star, or he blinks and winks incessantly with both. He grins like a nigger minstrel, or opening a mouth which would hide a tennis ball, like a rustic when he first sees a rocket, thrusts out his tongue full length, as though some imperative physician insisted upon an inspection of the roots. He might be *vis-à-vis* with the dentist in the very throes of extraction, or an idle undergraduate confronting an examiner, now in hot confusion and now in chill despair. Like the sensitive young lover in Byron's "Dream," "O'er his face, a tablet of unutterable thoughts is traced," and it is best that those thoughts should not be uttered. He seems to have discovered the secret of perpetual motion, but the artist knows that all things come to him who waits; and, finally subdued by weariness, menace, or persuasion, he permits his lineaments to resume their normal aspect, and all this opposition and refusal appropriately ends with—a negative!

The hands are sometimes included in the portrait, bearing witness, as they often do, to the identity and to the occupations of the burglar. He cuts and maims himself in his perilous entrances and exits, and he is bitten by dogs, and has his knuckles wrapped by the truncheon of the policeman. A broken finger has many a time set its sign manual to the recognition of a rogue, and has pointed to the convict's cell.

* * * * *

Abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit—but where has he gone? How few ever ask or care! Of the thousands who delight in novels about murders, sudden, by shot and shell, or slow, by poison and starvation, about robberies and forgeries, the confessions of criminals and the subtle success of the detective, how many consider for a moment what do we to prevent or to restore? They read the trial, the verdict of the jury, the condemna-

tion of the judge, and they say, "A good riddance, serve him right," "There, there, so we would have it," "Now that he is down let him rise up no more." Then he is clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind.

Some ask, "What can we do?" but, like Pilate, when he inquired, "What is truth?" they do not wait for an answer. They do not think. "Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." If their sympathies were sincere they would commune with conscience, and seek counsel from God, and His promise can never fail, "I will inform thee, and lead thee in the way wherein thou shalt go." They would be led in the faith which worketh by love to devote themselves earnestly:—

I. To the *Prevention of crime*, by denouncing and diminishing temptations to evil, by instruction in righteousness, aids to holiness, and the example of a Christian life. The governors and chaplains of our gaols will tell us that the two main causes, primary and subsidiary of crime, are drink and gambling. Wherefore the simple question which he who professes phi-

lanthropy or patriotism, or much more, religion, has to consider is this, What am I doing to promote temperance, the use and not the abuse of God's gifts, and what am I doing to discourage the selfish slothful greed of the gambler, and to induce him "not to covet nor desire other men's goods, but to learn and labour truly to get his own living, and to do his duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call him?"

II. To intercessory *Prayer*, such as that in our Litany, "That it may please Thee to show Thy pity upon all prisoners and captives, we beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord." The Rev. J. W. Horsley, an apostle within and an advocate without the prison,



with an experience of more than 100,000 cases during his chaplaincy of ten years at Clerkenwell, has organized an association, called the Guild of SS. Paul and Silas, and having 400 members, whose first obligation is to offer prayers daily for prisoners and prison work. We know that such prayers are answered, if we ask in faith, nothing wavering; and though we must not desire to see when, where, or how, there are very gracious and special manifesta-

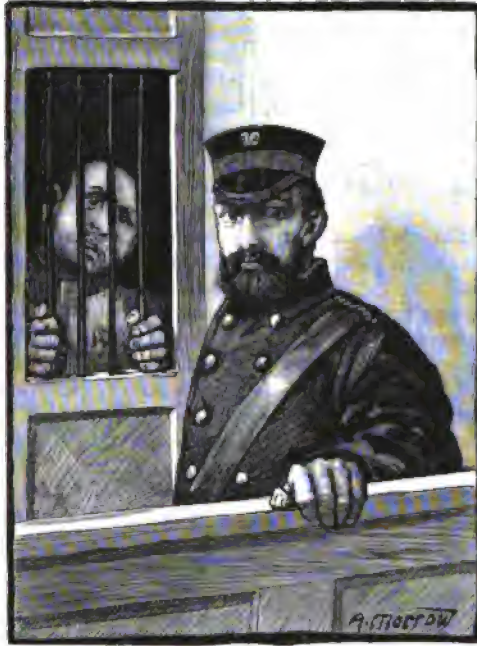
tions of Divine compliance with united and persevering prayer.

III. To the *Restoration* of discharged prisoners, by providing for them, when they leave the prison, friends, homes, and employment. There are few who can visit them in their house of bondage, but there are some who might and will not; and it is much to be wished that they had more communion with those kinsmen and friends who would seek to do them good. Mr. Horsley writes in his paper on *Prison Alms*—"Well-conducted convicts are allowed periodical visits from friends, and were such glimpses of home and the outside world not permitted (they are cut down as it is to a minimum, which I consider injurious), the percentage

of those who become cranky or rebellious would be larger than it is." But all may visit them, if not personally, through the charitable agency of societies established for their reformation and relief, such as the *Royal Society for the Assistance of Discharged Prisoners*, of which Colonel Buchanan is secretary, which has its offices at 32, Charing Cross, and which has assisted 15,404 prisoners since its foundation in 1857, by obtaining work for them, and so enabling them to lead honest lives; or the *Metropolitan Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society*, which publishes the following summary of its work, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December, 1888.

Sent to sea	50
„ friends in the country	26
„ „ abroad	3
Placed with former employer	12
Assisted with work, stock, clothes, food, and lodging	279
Temporarily assisted (food, railway fare, &c.)	34
	404

Brought forward	404
Previously assisted	14,107
Total	14,511



Visiting Day.

The Secretary is Mr. T. Ralph Price; the office at 15, Buckingham Street, Adelphi, W.C.

Both these Societies appeal earnestly for help, and cite ample testimonies of benediction and success, in letters from parents and employers, and from the discharged prisoners themselves.

* * *

This is the sum of the whole matter: that, although in many cases the foolish heart is darkened and the lamp all but gone out in the temple of the Lord, we

are perplexed, but not in despair. We dare not limit the Holy One of Israel, nor think that His arm is shortened. The same Love which, when prayer was made without ceasing of the Church for Saint Peter, sent an angel to deliver him, cast out the devils from Mary of Magdala, and forgave the thief upon the cross. It is unchanged, infinite, omnipotent, to loose those who are tied and bound with the chain of their sins, to rescue them from the prison-house of Satan, and to lead them forth to the glorious liberty wherewith Christ can make them free. All that is required of us is that we should believe in His marvellous mercy, and show forth our faith not only with our lips but in our lives.

In America there is a "Prisoners' Sunday"—a day of prayer, sympathy, and generous alms. Why not in England? This, at all events, is in our power; let him who has done nothing for these poor prisoners do something now, and let him who has done little, do more.

THE AUTHOR OF "WILLIE WINKIE."

A FEW years ago, when in Florence, I chanced to visit the studio of an American lady-sculptor. I don't remember that there was anything of special interest in the collection of studies; they were portrait-busts for the most part, with one or two ideal female heads, pure and refined but somewhat indefinite; one or two studies of children, and, still better, models of tiny dimpled feet and arms with the subtle lines forming natural bracelets round the little fat hands.

"Do you know who this is?" said my hostess, taking the damp clinging coverings from a half-finished figure.

What a roguish look it was that met mine when the cloths were removed! It was a figure of a very small boy, with "tousled" hair all over his head, clad in the scantiest of garments, from under which emerged two firm little legs, while the small fat hand held a lantern by a string. But the fascinating thing about the child was the smile, a smile half sly, half triumphant, as of one who knows that he is doing what he shouldn't, but at the same time has an inner assurance that he carries with him the secret sympathy of the powers that be.

"Don't you know your countryman?" continued the sculptress. "Why, it's wee Willie Winkie!"

It was a delightful surprise to learn that "wee Willie Winkie rins up and down" through the prosperous monotony of numerical avenues and alphabetical streets in the New World as audaciously and almost as familiarly as up the Netherbow and through Sauchiehall Street at home.

Nay, more, we learned afterwards that our good German kinsfolk have taken the little Scotch rogue to their hearts, and that "der kleine Villes Vinkee" runs through many a "gasse" and "allee" of the Fatherland, and finds his way into many a "Kinderstube" where the bare-footed, night-gowned field-marshal and professors of the future are rioting as cheerfully as if Bismarck and "Wissenschaft" were things in another planet. In Scotland itself one would fain hope that the freedom of every city and every village has been bestowed on Willie Winkie, and that he is a welcome guest both in careful, well-kept nurseries, where the "wee stumpy stousies" have been tubbed and cuddled and hushed off to sleep before seven o'clock, and in cottage homes

where the "waukrife weans" warm their little toes at the cheerful blaze and "glower" unblinkingly at the candle till they are suddenly overpowered by sleep and drop off like overblown poppies on their mothers' shoulders. Surely we owe something to the poet who has added this dear, disreputable, delightful little sinner to the innocent company of our "dream children."

If we ask ~~who~~ he was, this creator of "wee Willie Winkie," the answer is short and bald enough. His name was William Miller; he was born at Glasgow in 1810, passed his boyhood in the then comparatively rural Parkhead, then lived in Glasgow from youth to manhood, and on to the threshold of old age, pursuing his craft with diligence, modesty, and independence. He died in 1872 at the comparatively early age of sixty-two, having at least attained this great success in life, to have been much loved and to have loved much in return. If, with greater wisdom, we ask, "What manner of man was this?" we have a full and complete answer in the little volume of "Scottish Nursery Songs" which lies in our hand, and which contains the full expression of the author's mind and character, what Dr. John Brown used to call "the juice of the whole man."

He must have been a man to whom it was given to see and perceive and love this beautiful and pleasant world into which he was born, and who, through a life spent in daily toil, and in the shadow of a great city, held to the simple creed of childhood, "delight and liberty;" "delight" in all things sweet and young and natural, and "liberty" to escape from the preoccupations of practical life, and from the thwarting and binding fetters of greed and selfishness and vanity into that Kingdom of God which lies around our doors, and into which we must indeed enter as "little children." Of this delight in nature and in children we have ample expression in the poems which treat of child life. In a few others which touch on the experiences and trials of mature life we find evidence of a sweet-natured, courageous, and cheerful man, with a fine instinct of reticence regarding himself, and a spirit of the best and indeed only true independence, independence of fortune and the world which springs from absolute dependence on affection and human brotherhood.

It is a whole phase of Scottish life that we find in William Miller's homely and beauti-

ful poems, life such as is led in many a village, and in the outskirts of many a larger town in Scotland. We all know the look of the row of workmen's cottages at the edge of the town, where the country begins and the street ceases to be a street and turns into a road, with fields—"gowany" fields—on either side, and hedges which in autumn are an inexhaustible storehouse of bright leaves and berries, and in early spring the happy hunting ground of young birds'-nesters. If the town happen to be old the houses may be red-tiled, but more probably they will have substantial slate-roofs, white-washed walls, two windows on each side of the door, the kitchen "ben" and the parlour "but." In front are little gardens where flowers would grow—"the gowan wi' his red croon peeping through the yird"—but for the stamp of small feet running in and out, and the energy of small fingers pulling at everything they can get. On the doorsteps—a little hollowed and worn by constant feet—sit the children (brown head and flaxen curls bending together), laughing, singing, crying, and quarrelling, running promiscuously in and out demanding "pieces," which are doled out so generously and indiscriminately by the various mothers that the stranger is fairly puzzled as to who belongs to whom, and only gradually finds out that the blue eyes and "towsie taps of tow" belong to the MacCulloch gens, while the brown heads and bead-like black eyes are claimed by the neighbouring house of Tait.

In these gardens in the summer twilight the fathers smoke their pipes, lean against the gate and talk with a neighbour; the older lads go off on pursuits of their own and the sound of their whistling and shouting and noisy laughter comes at intervals; the big girls walk up and down together talking secrets, disappearing and reappearing in the twilight. But the mothers are wearied with their day's work and sit on neighbouring doorsteps talking in low voices, patting the irrepressible baby off to sleep, or stroking the curly head laid in their lap by some sturdy four-year-old, too tired to play, too independent to go to bed! To the young ones the quiet, the friendliness, the motherly care, are but the background to a life of hard and constant "working at play," but long years afterward the thought of those summer evenings will come back with wistful regret; to some in the crowded streets of London or Liverpool, where the falling twilight brings no quiet nor cessation of traffic; to some in distant lands, in Australia and

New Zealand, where the nearest neighbour is some twenty miles off; and to some few who have risen on a wave of good fortune to prosperity and bailliedom in "desirable villas," where the furniture is of walnut, and where no one dreams of spending the summer evening on the door-step.

Of course, little boys who don't close their eyes till after ten o'clock are inclined to be very sleepy in the morning, and so, when the fire is lit and the porridge made, and "Feyther" is settled at his comfortable breakfast, "mother" must go and rouse the rosy lie-a-bed still snug in the blanket.

"Are ye no gaun to wauken the day, ye roguie?
Your parritch is ready and cool in the cog,
And Bandrons sae gaucy and Tam o' that ilk
Wad fain ha'e a drap o' my wee laddie's milk."

"It's far in the day noe and brawly ye kam
Your feyther has scarcely a minute to open,
But as blink o' his wife wi' his bairn on her knee,
He says lightens his toil though sair it may be."

"See up to your parritch and on wi' your claes,
There's a fire that might warm the cauld Norlan' braes,
For a coggie well filled and a clean fire-on'
Should mak ye jump up and gae skalpin' ben."

And so the day begins and the long hours of play with the "neebor weans" succeed each other as usual. Carts go along the road, and the small things run under the horses' legs, and stand gaping at the big wheels, and toddle off to the "water side," and risk life and limb with perfect impunity, browsing all the while on the greenest of fallen apples and unripest of gooseberries. It is a blessed, lawless time, spent in the open air and in the wholesome dirt of mother earth; but the little limbs grow too active, the young mind too restless, and the untrained spirit too independent, and it is with a certain relief that many a careful mother must hail the advent of schooltime.

"Ye maun gang to the schule agin simmer, my bairn,
It's no near sae ill as ye're thinking to learn,
For learning's a' worldly riches abune,
It's easy to carry and never gae duna."

"See ye'll gang to the schule agin simmer, my bairn,
Ye're sae gleg at the uptak ye sune will learn,
And I'm sure ere the dark hours o' winter peep ben
Ye'll can read William Wallace frae on' to an'."

Even in these advanced educational days school-hours do not last all day, and at noon, and again at four on summer afternoons, out swarm the children into that great, glorious play-ground, the world.

Dr. John Brown, whose insight into the half-conscious, inarticulate minds of children is as exquisite as his sympathy with, and understanding of the even more un-get-at-able dog-world, says in one of his incom-

parable papers, "children are long of seeing, or at least of looking at what is above them; they like the ground and its flowers and stones, its 'red sodgers,' and lady-birds, and all queer things; their world is about three feet high and they are more often stooping than gazing up." To a child Nature is indeed the "homely nurse," the bountiful provider of endless, ever-varying playthings; and William Miller, the children's poet, sees Nature through a child's clear eyes. Each season to this cheerful and loving spirit brings its own delight, delicately observed and thankfully received.

"For a' the seasons in their turn
Some wished-for pleasures bring,
And hand-in-hand they jink about
Like bairns at Jingo-ring."

All English poets have sung of Spring, from the jubilant cuckoo-notes of "Spring, the sweet spring," to the stately and beautiful lines in which Tennyson describes the awakening of Nature's life in early Spring, and all the strange stirrings of heart and memory which it arouses in us. But no one has seen the coming of the Spring with greater freshness of feeling and more minute observation than William Miller, and the lines in which he describes them are so beautiful that we must quote them in full:—

"The Spring comes linkin' and jinkin' through the woods,
Opening wi' gentle hand the bonny green and yellow buds.
There's flowers and showers and sweet sang o' little bird,
And the gowan wi' his red croon peeping through the yird."

A northern spring is treacherous, and in April great slate-coloured clouds roll up the sky, against which the young green stands out with almost startling vividness, but to the children the hailstones that come rattling down on their heads are but new and mysterious Heaven-sent toys.

"The hail comes rattling and brattling snell and keen,
Dauding and blauding though red sets the sun at e'en,
In bonnet and wee loof the weans keep and look for mair,
Dancin' through other wi' the pearlins shining in their hair."

"We meet wi' blithesome and kythesome cheery weans,
Daffing and laughing far adoon the leafy lanes,
Wi' gowans and buttercups busking the thorny wands,
Sweetly singin' wi' the flower-branch waving in their hands."

"Boon a' that's in thee to win me, sunny Spring,
Bright clouds and green buds and sangs that the birdies sing,
Flower-dappled hill sides and dewy beech see fresh at e'en,
And the tappie-tourie fir-tree standing a' in green,"

"Bairnies bring treasures and pleasures mair to me,
Stealing an' spelling up to fondle on my knee, [fair,
In Spring time the young things are blooming see fresh and
That I canna', Spring, but love and bless thee ever mair."

And throughout all the seasons it is the same. Summer and Autumn send William Miller out into the lanes and meadows with the children to gather flowers and hear the birds sing, and like the poor black-a-moor of

the picture book "to see the sights and walk about." We have all sat in the fields on still, warm autumn afternoons, breathing the sweet air and watching lazily the peculiar, short slow flights of the thistle-down, which floats between us and the sky, now stopping suddenly and wavering in the air, now rising or sinking to another level to continue its course till carried out of our view by some wandering wind. This is how William Miller describes it:—

"The genty air, see lady-like,
Has on a scented gown,
And wi' an airy string she leads
The thistle-seed balloon."

There are very few of us who keep this knowledge of the secret paths which lead back to the "first garden of our simpleness." Our children play around us seriously pursuing their "great task of happiness," and we sit and watch them rejoicing in their laughter and in the apparently aimless activity of the round limbs and restless minds, but the world which lies around them, full of mysterious and precious things, into *that* world we do not enter. We feel a little wistfully that we once talked the language which they talk to each other in whispers, but we have lost the trick of it, and at best have an uneasy sense of translation when we try to speak it again. And then comes some man or woman of genius, Mrs. Ewing, or Mr. Louis Stevenson, or this less well-known Glasgow poet of ours, and simply tells us what they and we did, and felt, and thought, and, in a moment, it all comes back. And in some sort we tread again the old track, and see the world again as a child sees it. And we remember how rocks and trees were looked at critically with an eye to their capacities as houses and fortresses and desert islands, and how flowers, and insects, and birds, and all natural things, were judged by a quite arbitrary standard of preciousness; blue-bells were a treat and always to be gathered, while the wild geranium, the purple crane's-bill was quite valueless and neglected; certain birds, magpies for instance, made an agreeable excitement in the dulllest nursery walk; water-wagtails were common enough, but "a mystery was the little wren" to others besides the young bare-foot wanderers down "Light-burn Glen."

It is almost as difficult to recall a child's feeling about nature as it is to catch the intangible cobweb of a dream in the moment of waking. *Looking back* on our childhood we are conscious of the continuous presence of the hills that surrounded our home; of

the look of the late sunset sky with the line of dark sleep passing against it; of the stillness that used to reign in the green wood, till the wind rose in fitful gusts in the distance, coming nearer and nearer till it sighed above our heads. It is not possible that the impression made by such things should merely be the result of reconstructive memory. At moments and in solitary places—and especially in the twilight, when all familiar detail disappears, and hills and even trees become almost awful in their vague outline—something checks a child's interest in its own pursuits, and the large, silent, mysterious life around him weighs on his spirit with a feeling half of trouble, half of a new strange pleasure. But the next moment the voice of a comrade from behind a tree or the sight of some rare flower breaks in upon the unaccustomed mood, and the child is out again in the familiar sunshine, and at home in the lap of the good brown earth. It is this prevailing cheerful mood that we find in the poems with which William Miller and the children of his creation greet the varying seasons.

But in winter and in the windy weather of autumn and spring both the children and their poet have to leave the fields and valleys, and gather round the blaze of the kitchen fire. Outside—

"The moon has rowed her in a cloud,
Stravagin' winds begin
To shuggle and daud the window-brods
Like loons wha wad be in;"

but, inside—

"We're thankful for a coosie hame,
Sae 'gree, my bairnies, 'gree."

Let us go with them, and see how the night falls in two neighbouring cottages on some such wild night in autumn, when the children have come in with little muddy feet, leaving marks all over "mother's" clean floor, and with clothes that have to be changed at once. And now, while the careful mother moves about the house, hanging up wet things to dry, or laying the cloth for the evening meal, the "towsie taps o' tow" gather round the fire, chilblained feet are being warmed, active tongues are being wagged. Then one tramps on the other's toes, or some one is knocked off a seat, voices are raised in remonstrance, and small hands are very ready to enforce arguments that do not carry sufficient conviction in themselves. Sometimes "mother" will swoop down with good-humoured cuffs, administered indiscriminately, but if she is wise and has her little troop well in hand, she will do better to plead

with them as gently, though she will probably do so less poetically than the mother of William Miller's poem:—

"Oh, never fling the warmsoome boon
O' bairnhood's love awa'.
Mind how ye sleepit cheek by cheek
Atween me and the wa',
How one kind arm was round ye baith,
Or if ye disagree,
Think o' the saft and kindly soun'.
O' 'gree, my bairnies, 'gree.'"

Is it with envy or pity, we wonder, that this hard-worked mother of eight vigorous children regards the greater leisure and material prosperity of her neighbour, the mother of one precious, precocious laddie? One cannot help thinking that it is with some impatience that she listens to the endless stories of this "wonderfu' wean" which his mother never wearies of telling. *Her* bairns would be just as "auld farrant" if any one had time to note their sayings and doings, and it is something of a trial to her neighbourly toleration to hear the triumphant boast over and over again,—

"Our wean's the most wonderfu' wean e'er I saw,
It wad tak me a lang simmer's day to tell a'
His pranks frae the morning till night shalt his e'e,
When he sleeps like a peerie 'tween father an' me.
For in his quiet turns doon questions he'll speir,
How the moon can stink up in the sky that's sae clear,
What gars the wind blaw, and wha frae comes the rain,
He's a perfect divot! He's a wonderfu' wean."

In the one cottage there is room enough round the kitchen fire and in the motherly heart for the whole eight, and yet in the other one little boy can fill two hearts to overflowing with love and pride, nay, more, can fill a whole evening with his pranks and "ploys," the mother sitting trying to sew but continually dropping her work to join in the fun, and "feyther" becoming such a boy himself again that his wife protests she doesn't know which is the worst of the two.

"You and feyther are sic twa!
At our ain fire-end;
He makes rabbits on the wa',
At our ain fire-end.
Then sic fun! as they are mumping,
When to see them ye gae stumping,
They're set on your tap a-jumping,
At our ain fire-end."

But at last the noisy fun dies away. "Feyther" betakes himself to his newspaper, and the mother gets her laddie to herself, asleep with his head on her lap, as much her own as when he lay a baby on her bosom. She thinks of that, and still traces the tiny waxen features and soft downy hair in the sunburnt face and tangled locks on her lap; but more often her thoughts wander to the times that shall be when, following the inevitable law of life and manhood, her son must leave her and fight his own way in the

world, only returning at intervals as a way-farer and dearly welcomed guest.

"When your head's lain in my lap,
At our ain fire-end,
Taking childhood's dreamless nap
At our ain fire-end.
Then frae lug to lug I kiss you,
And wi' heart o'erflowing bless you,
And a' that's good I wish you,
At our ain fire-end.

"When ye're far far frae the blink
O' our ain fire-end,
Fu' monie a time ye'll think
O' our ain fire-end,
O' a' your gamesome ploys,
O' your whistles and your toys,
And ye'll think ye hear the noise
O' our ain fire-end."

William Miller is at his best and happiest when treating of children and of their place in the hearts and thoughts of older people, but he touches upon other elements of life, and his touch is always delicate, his sympathy always ready with things true and lovely and of good report.

Thus middle life, with its own peculiar cares and interests, is touched on here and there in these poems, although with more reserve. The problems of active manhood have to be met, with what of patience and cheerfulness and good sense a man can muster, but they do not lend themselves to poetry as naturally as the simple, careless happiness of childhood; nor yet as the regained freedom and peaceful pleasure in outward things which so often make the crown of old age. Our poets have, perhaps, for the most part, dwelt too little on this "season of calm weather," when toil-worn men and women slip off the burden of active duties on to younger shoulders, and sit in the sun dreaming over old times or watching the present cheerfully, affectionately, but no longer with the anxious personal interest of earlier times. Of this aloofness from the troubles of life, this calm enjoyment of all past things—all painful experience becoming peaceful in the sense of nearness to "the restitution of all things"—we have no picture so complete as Tennyson's "Grandmother." In the poems of William Miller we have only one aspect of old age. True to his homely instincts and experience, our poet chiefly dwells on old age in the light of its perfect companionableness with childhood. In busy households where "father" goes off to his work and "mother's" hands are more than full from early morning till late at night, and where the elder children go regularly to "the schule," it naturally falls out that the only two idle members of the household, the white-headed grandfather and the "wee bit things wha rampin' rin," become

companions to each other through the long summer days.

They are perfectly at their ease with one another; their companionship is almost a mutual flattery; the child knows that grandfather will tolerate, nay, admire and boast of all the pranks that might excite other and less satisfactory feelings in his mother's breast, and the grandfather knows that the child will listen over and over again to his stories of "lang-syne," and to the songs and other scraps of learning acquired in youth and still retained with proud partiality. In a "Poem written on reading of the great grief of Victor Hugo for the death of his grandson" we find the following charming description of the companionship of the very old and the very young, none the less true in its homely sweetness because the grandfather to whom it was addressed was one who had stirred all Europe by his verse and prose, and who held an imperial position in the French world of letters:—

"I ken the ploys that ye had plan'd,
The simmer days' sweet lingering journeys,
To pu' the gowans and to sit
By thymy bank o' moorland burnies.

'Or sing him songs that he wad ken
The meanin' o' when he grew older,
And as thy voice rose wi' the strain
Mark how his broad, brent brow looked bolder."

Who that has read to a susceptible child something of an heroic nature, the story of Samson, say, or one of Scott's patriotic pieces, will fail to recognise the truth of the description in the last line?

Perhaps, these two, the very young and the very old, compose the only really "leisured classes" in the community. Under seven and over seventy we really do "inherit the earth." A child has the whole world as far as his little feet will carry him to play in, no game-preservation acts extend to minnows and stickle-backs, and for castle-building are there not unnumbered acres at his disposal? And the heritage of the old man is even richer than the child's—if so be that he, like Mr. Honest, has trysted "one Good Conscience" to be with him at the end—since facts which are God's lesson for our learning must always be better than our imaginings. All that was *real* in his life is his by assured possession, laid up "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt." The labour of his hands in field or house or bridge has been "established" unto him, and the care and affection bestowed on his children are bringing in their harvest of tenderness and kindness. The struggles and perplexities of earlier life are passed away; yes, and the waywardness

and sins of youth are pardoned, expiated in the labours and sorrows of life, "for he hath received at the Lord's hand double for all his sin." The fields he tilled now offer gowans and buttercups for him and the little "oe" who trots at his side; the porch or the fire-side afford comfortable resting-places; even the busiest members of the household can spare a few minutes to "crack" with grandfather, and in quiet hours old faces and old voices come around him and make the world cheerful. It was on the threshold of this seventh decade—this sabbath of life—that William Miller was called away from a world which he had found "very good," and which he has made better by opening our eyes to its beauty and happiness. It is recorded of William Blake that, when he was ill and old, and tried in various ways, he called a child to him and said, "My child, may God make this world as pleasant a place to you as it has been to me." And in spite of the inevitable trials and disappointments of life

and the cares of day and way which must have pressed on him, as well as on the majority of humankind, one cannot doubt that the world was a "pleasant place" to William Miller.

So many of us acquiesce in our own dullness, go our round of daily cares and duties and talk resignedly about "this work-a-day world," and all the time the sun and clouds are weaving wonderful webs of light and colour in the sky, and the earth is putting on her "coat of many colours," and the children, both those in our own households and those we meet with smiling dirty faces and little bare feet, are going before us into "the Kingdom." Among those who "having become as little children," pass in and out of the material *un*-real world into that world of reality, surely we may place William Miller. They are among the best benefactors of their kind who add to our perception of those things which here and now are so good that they "pass man's understanding."

FLORENCE MACCUNN.

THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT.

By THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM BOYD CARPENTER, D.D., BISHOP OF RYPON.

THE story of the unprofitable servant, no doubt, points the moral of wasted or unused powers. No man has a right to bury his talents, whether great or small. It is not only unwise, but it is a kind of fraud against nature. If God does with us as we with candles, and we are not lighted for ourselves, then to lose the chance of shedding some little beams of brightness on God's world is to rob the world of some of God's light. The story, no doubt, points the moral of wasted or unused powers; but there is another charm about the story, and I find my thoughts running after it. I like to note the moral characteristics of this unprofitable servant. We may lose some of the best teaching by keeping what I may call the commercial aspect of the story uppermost. It was clearly not because the man had gained no interest on the money that he was blamed, it was because he never tried to win any; it was the utter moral listlessness, the indifference, or indolence, about the whole affair, which deserved the censure. No man is to be blamed for failure, because it is not given to mortals to command success; but every man is to be blamed for those actions or inactivities which court failure or make success impossible. In the ultimate analysis of human life, the things for which

men are blamed are just the things for which they ought to be blamed. The censure does not fall on the man because he had little; the one talent, the five talents, the ten talents, are accidental elements, so to speak, in the story; the essential point is the moral energy and the moral feeling of the men in the face of responsibility and opportunity. The circumstances in which they were placed tested them; their moral fibre was brought to exercise; and as a result, the unprofitable servant was discovered to be a poor, paltry-minded, vain, cowardly, evasive, ignoble man.

I have called him vain. I think the epithet is deserved. He never tried to turn his talent to account because it was so small. The plea was after this fashion: If I had been given the ten talents, I should have done much. His vanity imagines that he was fit to be entrusted with greater responsibilities and advantages. This is not an uncommon form of vanity. We imagine how easily we should be able to achieve great results if we had great resources at our command; we have the effrontery to believe that we could successfully farm some thousands of acres while our poor little three-acre plot is untilled and fruitless.

I have called him cowardly. It springs out of the previous thought. The heroic

man does not refuse to use his opportunities because they are small. As a matter of fact, the stimulus which comes from straitened means is often—I had almost said always—greater than that which comes from great possessions. The men on whom much depends—the head of the large banking-house, the commander of vast armies—have far greater reasons for hesitation about risks than the clerk or the subaltern. This one-talented man had so little to risk that it might well become him to be venturesome. We may be sure that if his heroism was not equal to the effort to do something with his one talent, he would have readily found plausible excuses for not trading vigorously with five talents or ten. The truth is that the great successes which startle the world come more frequently from the men who start with the one talent than from those who start with the five or the ten. The millionaires of to-day were not all men born in purple and fine linen, and given bank-notes to play with in their cradles; they were men who came to London with the often-quoted half-crown in their pockets, or who rambled about the quays of New York in search of work, or ready to stake their solitary half-dollar on some little venture.

I have called him evasive. His cowardice leads to that form of intellectual dishonesty which not only refuses to look duty in the face, but evades looking it in the face by raising false issues, or by glossing over facts, or by falsely-colouring them. He begins to argue the case—a fatal thing when the duty of action is clear. He argues that he is unfairly situated; more is expected of him than he can possibly accomplish; it is absurd to expect results from one who has such small chances as he has. This evasiveness of spirit is a sign of moral deterioration. When a man indulges in the habit of blaming circumstances, instead of taking himself to task, he has ceased to climb upwards. He has begun to be intellectually dishonest; he is corrupting his intelligence at the bidding of his cowardice.

I have called him ignoble. Ungenerous and base are his thoughts; having settled it in his mind that he is hardly used, over-matched by circumstances, he begins to indulge in petulance and in unworthy thoughts of his master. It is his master who is to blame—a hard, unreasonable person, who expects impossibilities, and grinds the face of his servants, demanding, like another Pharaoh, results without material, bricks when he has supplied no straw, harvests

when he has sown no seed, usury when he has bestowed next to no capital. He is unjust and ungenerous in his thoughts; he thinks false things of his Lord, and we see that the base thoughts which he indulges in are founded simply on his own wounded vanity, indolence, and cowardice. The radical want of nobility in his character is shown perhaps most of all in this, that, not content with being listless, idle, cowardly, he begins to shelter himself beneath a caricature of the master who gave him the opportunity of doing something by entrusting him with the talent which he has never attempted to use.

He has been tried, and found wanting. It is not, however, because his talent has gained no usury, that he is found wanting. It is, indeed, a condemnation that he has done no good with his opportunity; but his worse condemnation lies in this, that he stands revealed for what he is. His character is discovered; he is a paltry-minded, poor-spirited, bad-hearted man, flinging accusations recklessly at every one except himself, basely and falsely accusing the master to whom he owes everything, and well meriting his description, "Thou wicked and slothful servant."

The story illustrates the connection between the social virtues and the moral and spiritual life of men.

There is a reproach which has been aimed at Christianity. It has been said that she fosters the milder and more feminine virtues, but that she pays little heed to those virile virtues which are of so much importance in social life. It is all very well, it is said, for men to be gentle and loving, pure-hearted and forgiving; but for ordinary life we want fortitude and firmness. Flabby goodness is a poor substitute for manliness and courage. But the story of the one talent is answer enough to this reproach. The story is of a man who fails for lack of sturdiness and fortitude. No creed ever laid stronger emphasis on the truth that man is not the victim of circumstances. A noble heedlessness of comfort, an ability to do without the cheap rewards of transitory success, a courage to pursue the right at all costs, to sacrifice gain, power, and desire, or to pluck out the eye and cut off the right hand, rather than to miss it, belong to its teaching, and form a conception of life which declares that man is greater than circumstances. Christianity thus sets its face vigorously against all whimpering about fate, all murmuring against the heavy odds which are against us. She teaches man to do without the flattering

smile of fortune, to keep the calm and unmoved heart of courage which is calm alike in sun or storm; in sunshine, not to be uplifted with passionate joy; in cloud, not to be plunged into wild and despairing grief.

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown,
With that wild wheel we go not up nor down;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.
Smile, and we smile, the lords of many lands;
Frown, and we smile, the lords of our own hands;
For man is man, and master of his fate."

It is the man whose heart is great even when his hoard is little who has within him the stuff out of which heroes are made. The man with the one talent, murmuring that things were against him, shows that his heart is matched by his hoard. Both are little; but the heart, besides being little, is mean also. He allows fate to master him; he is less than man. There is no honour for such a man. Against such pusillanimous behaviour Christ sets his teaching: "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee,"—so the Master speaks.

If things were as bad as you say, then, seeing that you had nothing to lose, and all to gain, could not even despair have lent to your heart that courage which it needed, and have taught the way to carve victory out of defeat? There is no lack of manly virtue in teaching like this.

Note, now, the connection between the social virtues and the moral and spiritual condition of men. What would have made this man courageous? If he had had the sense of the high claims of right and duty, he would not have proved so craven. A man of conscience is a man of courage. "It is right to do my best; therefore my energies shall go forth to the work put into my hands. It is not for me to compare my chances with those of others; but it is for me to do my duty where I am. With the minor part to play in life's drama, let me at heart do my best. I am responsible, not for being without talents or opportunities which others have, but for using to the very utmost those which I have. Right is still right, though done in obscure parts of the world, and with small chances of applause." The man who can thus counsel himself has the seed of manly courage and true heroism within him. Conscience makes cowards of us all; yet conscience can make heroes of us all. The man who lives by it has a comrade who makes him strong to be at all times true. Thus writes Dante:

"E vidi cosa, ch' io avrei paura
Senza più pruova di contarla solo:
Se non che coscienza m' assicurava,
La buona compagnia che l' uom francheggia
Sotto l' usbergo del sentirsi pura."
Inf. xlviii. 112—117.

I give Longfellow's rendering:

"And [I] saw a thing which I should be afraid
Without some further proof even to recount,
If it were not that conscience reassures me,
That good companion which emboldens man
Beneath the hauberk of its feeling pure."

But of this high conscientiousness the man with one talent had no thought. His mind dwells on his chances of failure. He does not allow conscience to speak, or duty would have grown clear, and he would have risen into courage. He is socially useless. He is cowardly, because he will not give his conscience fair play.

And as this want of simple conscientiousness spoils him socially, it tends to ruin him spiritually. He begins to form theoretical ideas—passion and petulance, instead of conscience, being his guides—of his master's character. He is a hard taskmaster. But there was no ground for this. Had it even been so, it would not have excused his weakness. Good men will do their duty, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; for they have learned of Him whose benediction falls, like his rain, upon the evil as well as the good. But there was no ground for this idea. We who know whom we serve, and how infinitely tender and loving is the Master who assigns us our work, will wonder rather at His patience and generous interpretation of our poor efforts, than murmur at His hardness. Surely this is the most touching part of the story. The querulous unreasonableness of this man has a kind of deep baseness in it, when we remember who it is stands before us as Lord of all men. He was no taskmaster, heedless of those whose opportunities were small. He showed how entirely His sympathy was with those whose chances of success in life's conflict were small. He drew to His side the needy, the erring, the sinful, the sick in body and infirm in soul; He sought out those who had let the talents and chances of life slip out of their grasp. The worst self-reproach which will visit men's hearts in the day when things are made plain, will be that they have in their fretfulness misread and misinterpreted One whose love was so full of wisdom, who assigned to men the measure of their powers and the limit of their days, and adjusted powers and opportunities in fit harmony with each other. How true are Amiel's words, "Lui aussi, Lui surtout, est le Grand Méconnu, le souverainement incompris!" We who murmur that people are cruel in their judgments, so quick to misinterpret us, who say that the bitterest thing in life is to be misunderstood, how often

have we in moments of disappointment suffered dark and cruel thoughts of God to rise within us, and persisted in misinterpreting His providence and misunderstanding the purposes of His love! He too, He above all, though He is infinite love and unfailing in wisdom, He is misunderstood.

Wasted opportunities, unused powers,—this was the word with which we began; let us close with it. Conscience should be awake to the meaning of life, and the high duty of all to do some good in it. But vanity, conceit, exaggerated self-esteem, make us quarrel with our place and work. They then turn us into cowards; they demoralise us, and then bring the shadow of dark and unworthy thoughts between us and God. Well and wise, then, is he who keeps his conscience clear-eyed and strong, who brings his life and passions under the rule of right, who looks not for reward, or honour, or chance of

distinction, but just for duty. Every day his powers in the little duties of life are growing. His capacities are enlarging. He begins to see and understand life. God's methods grow clearer. Dark questions may remain unsolved, but duties are not left undone. He may have doubts, but he will not doubt that large and patient love which encompasses his life. And come what may, he will not pause on the road of life to murmur that he has not been given some other task. His eyes, quickened by practice and inspired by love, see the myriad ways in which the world may be helped. His opportunities grow; the talents in his hands multiply; his conceptions righten and brighten. After all it is a grand thing to live in a world where there is so much scope for doing good; and it is a royal privilege to carry on that work of love which has been given us by Him who went about doing good.

LIBERTY.

WHAT thing is liberty?—a most sweet word
To thrill the wing of prisoned bird with glee;
But how to brook the freedom, being lord
Of vasty space, where riskful chances be—
Ay, there's the rub! What if the bird should fly
Into the fire, or break its dainty bill
Against the pane, or 'neath the troublous sky
Be swept, where wings against the storm's wild will
Are weak as chaff? Better for prancing steed
To own the rein within well-bounded plan
Than rush with headlong plunge and snorting speed
He knows not whither; and a reasoning man
Should know to bow the head with reverent awe
And loyal heart to wise restraint of law.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER LII.—A STRANGE SUMMONS.

MADELAINE VAN HELDRE closed the book and sat by the little table gazing towards her father's bed.

Since he had been sufficiently recovered, she had taken her father's task and read the chapter and prayers night and morning in his bedroom—a little later on this night, for George Vine had stayed longer than usual.

Madelaine sat looking across the chamber at where her father lay back on his pillow

with his eyes closed, and her mother seated by the bed's head holding his hand, the hand she had kept in hers during the time she knelt and ever since she had risen from her knees.

Incongruous thoughts come at the best of times, and, with the tears standing in her eyes, Madelaine thought of her many encounters with Aunt Marguerite, and of the spiteful words. She did not see why a Dutchman should not be as good as a Frenchman, but all the same there was a little of the love of descent in her heart, and as she gazed at

the fine manly countenance on the pillow, with its closely-cut grey hair displaying the broad forehead, and at the clipped and pointed beard and moustache, turned quite white, she thought to herself that if Aunt Marguerite could see her father now she would not dare to argue about his descent.

The veil of tears grew thicker in her eyes, and one great drop fell with a faint *pat* upon the cover of the Prayer-book as she thought of the past, and that the love in her heart would not be divided now. It would be all for those before her, and help to make their path happier to the end.

"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us," said Van Heldre thoughtfully. "Grand words, wife—grand words. Hah! I feel wonderfully better to-night. George Vine acted like a tonic. I've lain here hours thinking that our old companionship would end, but I feel at rest now. His manner seemed to say that the old brotherly feeling would grow stronger, and that the past was to be forgotten."

He stopped short, and a faint flush came into his pale cheeks, for on opening his eyes they had encountered the wistful look in Madelaine's. He had not thought of her sufferings, but now with a rush came the memories of her confession to him of her love for Harry on that day when she had asked him to take the young man into his office.

"My darling!" he said softly as he held out his arms; and the next moment she was folded sobbing to his heart.

No word was spoken till the nightly parting; no word could have been spoken that would have been more touching and soothing than that embrace.

Then "Good night!" and Madelaine sought the solitude of her own chamber, to sit by the open window listening to the faintly heard beat of the waves upon the bar at the mouth of the harbour. Her spirit was low and the hidden sorrow that she had fought hard to keep down all through the past trouble had its way for the time, till, at last wearied out, she closed her window and went to bed. Still for long enough it was not to sleep, but to think of the old boy-and-girl days, when Harry was merely thoughtless, and the better part of his nature, his frank kindness and generosity, had impressed her so that she had grown to love him with increasing years, and in spite of his follies that love still lay hidden in her heart.

"And always will be there," she said softly, as she felt that the terrible end had been the expiation, and with the thought that in

the future Harry Vine, forgiven, purified—the Harry of the past—would always be now the frank, manly youth she idealised, she dropped off to sleep—a deep, restful slumber, from which she started with the impression full upon her that she had only just closed her eyes. There must have been some noise to awaken her, and she sat up listening, to see that it was day.

"Yes? Did any one knock?" she said aloud, for the terror was upon her now, one which had often haunted her during the unnerving past days—that her father had been taken worse.

All silent.

Then a sharp pattering noise at her window, as if some one had thrown up some shot or pebbles. She hurried out of bed, and ran to the window to peep through the slit beside the blind, to see below in the street Liza, the Vines' maid, staring up.

"Louise—ill? or Mr. Vine?" thought Madelaine, as she quickly unfastened and opened the window.

"Yes, Liza. Quick! what is it?"

"Oh, miss, I've been awake all night, and not knowing what to do, and so I come on."

"Is Mr. Vine ill?"

"No, 'm; Miss Louise."

"Ill? I'll come on at once."

"No, miss; gone," whispered Liza hoarsely; and in a blundering way she whispered all she knew.

"I'll come on and see Mr. Vine," said Madelaine hastily, and Liza ran back, while her blundering narrative, hastily delivered, had naturally a confusing effect upon one just awakened from sleep.

Louise gone, Mr. Leslie found bleeding, Mr. Vine sitting alone in his room busy over the mollusks in his aquaria! It seemed impossible. Aunt Marguerite hysterical. Everything so strange.

No mention had been made of Uncle Luke by the girl, nor yet of Leslie's departure.

"Am I still dreaming?" Madelaine asked herself as she hastily dressed, "or has some fresh terrible disaster come upon us?"

"Upon us," she said, for the two families seemed so drawn together that one could not suffer without thrilling the other's nerves.

"Louise gone! It is impossible!"

She said that again and again, trying all the while to be cool and think out what were best to be done. She felt that it would be better not to alarm her father by waking him at that early hour, and that she could not arouse her mother without his knowing.

She was not long in deciding.

Uncle Luke had shown during the troubles of the past how he could throw aside his eccentricity and become a useful, helpful counsellor, and it seemed the natural thing to send a message up to him, and beg him to come down. Better still, to save time, she would run up there first.

Liza had not been gone a quarter of an hour before Madelaine was well on her way, after stealing silently out of the house.

The effort to be calm was unavailing, for a wild fit of excitement was growing upon her, and instead of walking up the steep cliff path, she nearly ran.

Would Uncle Luke be at home? He was eccentric and strange in his habits, and perhaps by that time out and away fishing off some rocky point.

She scanned the rough pier by the harbour, and shuddered as the scene of that horrible night came back. But there was no sign of the old man there, neither could she see him farther away, and feeling hopeful that perhaps she would be in time to catch him, she hurried on, panting. As she turned a corner of the devious way, and came in sight of the cottage, with Leslie's house and mine chimney far up at the back, she stopped short, breathless and wondering, and with a strange reaction at work, suggesting that, after all, this was some mythical invention on the part of the servant, for there stood Duncan Leslie outside Uncle Luke's cottage awaiting her coming.

CHAPTER LIII.—HER DEFENDER.

"MISS VAN HELDRE!"

"Mr. Leslie! That woman came to our house this morning to say— Oh, then, it is not true?"

"Yes," he said slowly; "it is all true."

"True that—that you were hurt—that—that— Oh, pray speak! Louise— Louise!"

"Gone!" said Leslie hoarsely, and, sick at heart and suffering, he leaned back against the wall.

"Gone? Louise gone? Gone where?"

Leslie shook his head mournfully, and gazed out to sea.

"Why do you not speak?" cried Madelaine. "Can you not see how your silence troubles me? Mr. Leslie, what is the matter? You were found hurt—and Louise—gone! What does it mean?"

He shook his head again.

"Where is Mr. Luke Vine?" cried Madelaine, turning from him quickly.

"At the house."

"Then I have come here for nothing," she cried agitatedly. "Mr. Leslie, pray, pray speak."

He looked at her wistfully for a few moments.

"What am I to say?" he said at last.

"Tell me—everything."

He still remained retentive; but there was a grim smile full of pity and contempt for himself upon his lips as he said coldly—

"Monsieur De Ligny has been."

"Monsieur De Ligny?"

"The French gentleman, the member of the *haute noblesse* who was to marry Miss Vine."

Madelaine looked at him wonderingly.

"Mr. Leslie," she said, laying her hand upon his arm and believing that she saw delirium in his eyes, consequent upon his injury, her late experience having made her prone to anticipate such a sequel. "Mr. Leslie, do you know what you are saying?"

"Yes, perfectly," he said slowly. "Monsieur De Ligny, the French gentleman of whom Miss Marguerite so often talked to me, came last night, while Mr. Vine was at your father's, and he was persuading Louise to go with him, when I interfered and said she should not go till her father returned."

"Yes?—well?" said Madelaine, watching him keenly.

"Well, there was a struggle, and I got the worst of it. That's all."

"That is not all!" cried Madelaine angrily.

"Louise, what did she say?"

"Begged him—not to press her to go," he said slowly and unwillingly, as if the words were being dragged out of him.

"Yes?"

"That is all," he said, still in the same slow, half-dreamy way. "I heard no more. When I came to, the Vines were helping me, and—"

"Louise?"

"Louise was gone."

"Mr. Leslie," said Madelaine gently, as in a gentle, sympathetic way she laid her hand upon his arm. "You seem to have been a good deal hurt. I will not press you to speak. I'm afraid you hardly know what you say. This cannot be true."

"Would to Heaven it were not!" he cried passionately. "You think I am wandering. No, no, no; I wish I could convince myself that it was. She is gone—gone!"

"Gone? Louise gone? It cannot be."

"Yes," he said bitterly; "it is true. I suppose when a man once gets a strong hold upon a woman's heart she is ready to be his

slave, and obey him to the end. I don't know. I never won a woman's love."

"His slave—obey—but who—who is this man?"

"Monsieur De Ligny, I suppose. The French nobleman."

Madelaine made a gesticulation with her hands, as if throwing the idea aside.

"No, no, no," she said impatiently. "It is impossible. De Ligny—De Ligny? You mean that Louise Vine, my dear friend, my sister, was under the influence of some French gentleman unknown to me?"

"Unknown to her father too," said Leslie bitterly, "for he reviled me when I told him."

"I cannot do that," said Madelaine firmly; "but I tell you it is not true."

"As you will," he said coldly; "but I saw her at his knees last night."

"De Ligny—a French gentleman?"

"Yes."

"I tell you it is impossible."

"But she has gone," said Leslie coldly.

"Gone? I cannot believe it. Mr. Vine? He knows where?"

Leslie shook his head mournfully. "Some secret love," he said.

"Yes; Louise did nurture a secret love," said Madelaine scornfully, "and for a man unworthy of her."

"Poor girl!"

"Yes: poor girl! Shame upon you, Duncan Leslie! She may be gone for some good reason, but it is not as you say and think. Louise, my sister, my poor suffering friend, carry on a clandestine intrigue with some French gentleman? It is not true."

"You forget her aunt—the influence she has had upon the poor girl."

"I forget everything but the fact that Louise loved you, Duncan Leslie, with all her heart."

"No, no," he cried with an angry start.

"I tell you it is true," cried Madelaine.

"De Ligny?—a French nobleman? Absurd! A fable invented by that poor old half-crazy woman to irritate you and scare you away."

"I might have thought so once, but after what I saw last night——"

"A jealous man surrounds all he sees with a glamour of his own," cried Madelaine. "Oh, where is your reason? How could you be so ready to believe it of the truest, sweetest girl that ever lived!"

"But——"

"Don't speak to me," cried Madelaine, angrily. "You know what that old woman

is with her wild ideas about birth and position. Louise, deceive her father—cheat me—elope! Duncan Leslie, I did not think you could be so weak."

"I will not fight against your reproaches," he said, coldly.

"No. Come with me. Let us go down and see Uncle Luke."

"But you really think——" he faltered.

"I really think?" she cried with her eyes flashing. "Am I to lose all faith and confidence in you? I tell you what you say is impossible."

Her words, her manner sent flashes of hope through the darkness that haunted Leslie's spirit, and without a word he turned and walked hurriedly down with her toward the town till they reached the seat in the sheltered niche where he had had that memorable conversation with Aunt Marguerite.

There he paused, and pointed to the seat.

"She sat there with me," he said bitterly, "and poured her poison into my ears till under a smiling face I felt half mad. I have tried so hard to free myself from their effect, but it has been hard—so hard. And last night——"

"You saw something which shook your confidence in Louise for the moment, but that is all gone now."

"I think—I——"

"I vouch for my friend's truth," said Madelaine proudly. "I tell you that you have been deceived."

Leslie was ghastly pale, and the injury he had received and the mental agony of the past night made him look ten years older, as he drew in a catching breath, and then said hastily—

"Come on, and let us find out the truth."

CHAPTER LIV.—AUNT MARGUERITE FINDS A FRIEND.

UNCLE LUKE met them at the garden gate, and took Madelaine's hands in his, drawing her toward him, and kissing her brow.

"Tell me, Mr. Luke," she said quickly, "it is not true?"

"What he says is not true, Maddy," said the old man quietly.

"But Louise?"

"Gone, my dear. Left here last night. No," he continued, "we know nothing except what her letter says. She has good reason for what she has done, no doubt, but it is very terrible for my brother."

Madelaine darted a triumphant look at Leslie.

"Look here, my child," said Uncle Luke, "I am uneasy about George. Go in and see him, and if he says anything about Louy, you will side with me and take her part?"

"Do you think I could believe it of Louise?" said Madelaine, proudly.

Uncle Luke held her hand in his, patting it softly the while.

"No," he said, "I don't think you could. Go to him now. Tell him it will all be cleared up some day, perhaps sooner than we think."

"Where is he?" she said quietly.

"In his study."

She nodded her head with a confident look in her eyes, crossed the hall, and tapped at the study door.

"Come in."

The words bidding her to enter were uttered in so calm and matter-of-fact a way that Madelaine felt startled, and Uncle Luke's words, "I am uneasy about George," came with a meaning they had not before possessed.

She entered, and stopped short, for there before the open window, close to which was a glass vessel full of water, stood George Vine, busy with a microscope, by whose help he was carefully examining the structure of some minute organism, while one busy hand made notes upon a sheet of paper at his side.

His face was from her, and he was so intent upon his task that he did not turn his head.

"Breakfast?" he said quietly. "I shall not have any. Yes," he added hastily; "bring me a cup of tea, Liza—no sugar, and a little dry toast."

A pang shot through Madelaine's heart, and for a few moments she strove vainly to speak.

"It is I, Mr. Vine," she faltered at last in a voice she did not recognise as her own.

"Madelaine, my child!" he cried, starting and dropping his pencil as he turned. "How rude of me! So intent upon this beautiful preparation of mine here. Very, very glad to see you," he continued, as he took her hands in his. "How is your father this morning?"

"I—I have not seen him this morning," faltered Madelaine as she gazed upon the pale, lined face before her, to note the change thereon, in spite of the unnatural calmness which the old man had assumed, "I—I came on at once, as soon as I had heard."

He drew in a long breath as if her words

were cutting him. Then raising her hands to his lips he kissed them tenderly.

"Like you," he said gently, "like you, my child. There, I have nothing to say, nothing to hear."

"But dear Mr. Vine," cried Madelaine, as she clung to him, and her tears fell fast, "I am sure——"

He smiled down at her lovingly, as he kissed her hand again.

"Spare me, my child," he said. "Never mention her name again."

"But, Mr. Vine——"

"Hush, my dear! It is like you," he whispered. "Good, gentle, and forgiving. Let the whole of the past be dead."

"But, Mr. Vine, Louise——"

"Hush!" he said sternly. "There, come and sit down and talk to me. No, my dear, I had a nasty fainting attack last night, but I am not mad. You need not fear that. Let the past be dead, my child. Will you bring me some tea?"

Madelaine's face worked pitifully, as she clung to him for a few moments, and then as he resumed his place at the table, she felt that the hour was not opportune, and turned to leave the room.

At that moment there was a gentle tap at the door.

"See who that is, my child," said Vine, quietly; "and do not let me be interrupted. If it is my brother, ask him not to speak to me to-day."

Madelaine crossed quickly to the old man's side, bent over him, and kissed his forehead, before going to the door, to find Uncle Luke waiting.

"Maddy," he whispered, "tell my brother that Margaret wants him to see her. Ask him if she may come in."

Madelaine took the message, and felt startled at the angry look in the old man's face.

"No," he cried peremptorily. "I could not bear to see her. Maddy, my darling, you are almost like a daughter to me. You know all. Tell her from me to keep to her room, I could not trust myself to see her now."

Madelaine clung to him, with the tears gathering in her eyes. From her earliest childhood she had looked up to him as to some near relative who had treated her as he had treated his own child—her companion, Louise—and now as she saw the agony depicted in his face, she suffered with him, and in her womanly sympathy her tears still fell fast.

"But, dear Mr. Vine," she whispered, "forgive me for pressing you at such a time, but there is some mistake."

"Yes," he said sternly; and she shivered as she saw how he was changed, and heard how harsh his voice had grown. "Yes, Madelaine, my child, there has been a terrible mistake made by a weak, infatuated man, who acted on impulse and never let his mind stray from the hobby he pursued—mine."

"Mr. Vine!"

"Hush, my child, I know. You are going to say words that I could not bear to hear now. I know what I have done, I see it too plainly now. In my desire to play a kindly brother's part, I let that of a father lapse, and my punishment has come—doubly come."

"If you would only let me speak," she whispered.

"Not now—not now. I want strength first to bear my punishment, to bear it patiently as a man."

It seemed to be no time to argue and plead her friend's cause, but she still clung to him.

"Bear with me," he whispered. "I am not going to reproach you for what you have said. There, my dear, leave me now."

Madelaine sighed, and with her brow wrinkled by the lines of care, she stood watching the old man as he bent over his microscope once more, and then softly left the room.

"Well?" said Uncle Luke eagerly, as she joined him in the hall. "What does he say?"

"That he will not see her. That he could not trust himself to meet her now."

"Ah!"

Madelaine started, and turned sharply round as a piteous wail fell upon her ears.

Aunt Marguerite was standing within the dining-room door, wringing her hands, and looking wild and strange.

"I can't bear it," she cried. "I can't bear it. He thinks it is my fault. Go in and tell him, Luke. He must not, he shall not blame me."

"Let him alone for a bit," said Luke, coldly.

"But he thinks it is all my fault. I want to tell him—I want him to know that it is no fault of mine."

"Can't convince him of impossibilities," said Uncle Luke coldly.

"And you think it, too!" cried Aunt Marguerite passionately. "I will see him."

"Go up to your room and wait a bit. That's the best advice I can give you."

"But George will——"

"Say things to you that will be rather startling to your vain old brain, Madge, if you force yourself upon him, and I'll take care that you do not."

"And this is my brother!" cried Aunt Marguerite indignantly.

"Uncle Luke is right," said Madelaine quietly, speaking of him as in the old girlish days. "If I might advise you, Miss Vine."

"Miss Margue— No, no," cried the old lady, hastily. "Miss Vine; yes, Miss Vine. You will help me, my child. I want my brother to know that it is not my fault."

The old contemptuous manner was gone, and she caught Madelaine's arm and pressed it spasmodically with her bony fingers.

"You could not go to Mr. Vine at a worse time," said Madelaine. "He is suffering acutely."

"But if you come with me," whispered Aunt Marguerite. "Oh, my child, I have been very, very hard to you, but you will not turn and trample on me now I am down."

"I will help you all I can," said Madelaine gravely; "and I am helping you now in advising you to wait."

"I—I thought it was for the best," sobbed the old lady piteously. "Hush! don't speak to me aloud. Mr. Leslie may hear."

She glanced sharply round to where Leslie was standing with his back to them, gazing moodily from the window.

"Yes; Mr. Leslie may hear," said Madelaine sadly, and then in spite of the long years of dislike engendered by Aunt Marguerite's treatment, she felt her heart stirred by pity for the lonely, suffering old creature upon whose head was being visited the sufferings of the stricken household.

"Let me go with you to your room," she said gently.

"No, no!" cried Aunt Marguerite, with a frightened look. "You hate me too, and you will join the others in condemning me. Let me go to my brother now."

"It would be madness," said Madelaine gently; and she tried to take the old woman's hand, but at that last word, Aunt Marguerite started from her, and stretched out her hands to keep her off.

"Don't say that," she said in a low voice, and with a quick glance at her brother and at Leslie, to see if they had heard. Then catching Madelaine's hand, she whispered, "It is such a horrible word. Luke said it to

me before you came. He said I must be mad, and George might hear it and think so too."

"Let me go with you to your room."

"But—but," faltered the old woman, with her lips quivering, and a wildly appealing look in her eyes, "you—you don't think that."

"No," said Madelaine, quietly; "I do not think that."

Aunt Marguerite uttered a sigh full of relief.

"I only think," continued Madelaine in her matter-of-fact, straightforward way, "that you have been very vain, prejudiced, and foolish, but I am wrong to reproach you now."

"No, no," whispered Aunt Marguerite clinging to her, and looking at her in an abject, piteous way; "you are quite right, my dear. Come with me, talk to me, my child. I deserve what you say, and—and I feel so lonely now."

She glanced again at her brother and Leslie, and her grasp of Madelaine's arm grew painful.

"Yes," she whispered, with an excited look; "you are right, I must not go to him now. Don't let them think that of me. I know—I've been very—very foolish, but don't—don't let them think that."

She drew Madelaine toward the door, and in pursuance of her helpful rôle, the latter went with her patiently, any resentment which she might have felt toward her old enemy, falling away at the pitiful signs of abject misery and dread before her; the reigning idea in the old lady's mind now being that her brothers would nurture some plan to get rid of her, whose result would be one at which she shuddered, as in her heart of hearts she knew that if such extreme measures were taken, her conduct for years would give plenty of excuse.

CHAPTER LV.—HALF CONVERTED.

"WELL Leslie," said Uncle Luke, as he stood gazing at the closed door through which the two women had passed, "what do you think of that?"

"Think of that?" said Leslie absently.

"Those two. Deadly enemies grown friends. My sister will be adopting you directly, you miserable, low-born Scotch pleb, without a drop of noble French blood in your veins."

"Poor old woman!" said Leslie absently.

"Ah, poor old woman! Margaret and I ought to be shut up together in some pri-

rate asylum. Well, you have slept on all that?"

"No," said Leslie sadly. "I have not slept."

"You're—well, I won't say what you are—well?"

"Well?" said Leslie, sadly.

"You have come to your senses, I hope."

"Had I lost them?"

"*Pro tem.*, young man. And it is a usurpation of our rights. One lunatic family is enough in a town. We're all off our heads, so you had better keep sane."

Leslie remained silently thinking over Madelaine's words.

"Look here," said Uncle Luke. "I have slept upon it, and I am cool."

"What have you learned, sir?"

"Nothing but what I knew last night—at present."

"And what do you propose doing?"

"I propose trying to act as nearly like a quite sensible man as one of my family can."

"And Mr. Vine?"

"As much like a lunatic as he can. You had better take his side and leave me alone. He is of your opinion."

"And you remain steadfast in yours?"

"Of course, sir. I've known my niece from a child, as I told you last night; and she could not behave like a weak, foolish, brainless girl, infatuated over some handsome scoundrel."

"But Miss Marguerite—have you questioned her?"

"Might as well question a weathercock. Knows nothing, or pretends she knows nothing. There, I'm going to start at once and see if I cannot trace her out. While I'm gone I should feel obliged if you would keep an eye on my cottage; one way and another there are quite a couple of pound's worth of things up yonder which I should not like to have stolen. You may as well come down here too, and see how my brother is going on. Now then I'll just step down to Van Heldre's and say a word before I start."

"By what train shall you go?"

"Train? Oh, yes, I had almost forgotten trains. Hateful way of travelling, but saves time. Must arrange to be driven over to catch one at mid-day. Come and see me off."

"Yes," said Leslie, "I'll come and see you off. What shall you take with you?"

"Tooth-brush and comb," grunted Uncle Luke. "Dessay I shall find a bit of soap somewhere. Now then, have you anything to say before I go?"

"There is no occasion ; we can make our plans as we go up."

"We ?"

"Yes ; I am going with you."

Uncle Luke smiled.

"I knew you would," he said, quietly chuckling.

"You knew I should ? Why did you think that ?"

"Because you're only a big boy after all, Duncan, and show how fond you are of Louy at every turn."

"I am not ashamed to own that I loved her," said the young man, bitterly.

"Loved ?" said Uncle Luke, quietly. "Wonder what love's like, to make a man such a goose. Don't be a sham, Leslie. You always meant to go. You said to yourself, when you thought ill of the poor girl, you would go after her and try and break the man's neck."

"Not exactly, sir."

"Well, something of the kind. And now Maddy Van Heldre has been giving you a good setting down, and showing you what a weak baby you are——"

"Has Miss Van Heldre——"

"No, Miss Van Heldre has not said a word ; but your face is as plain as a newspaper, and I know what Maddy would say if anybody attacked my niece. There, what's the use of talking ? You will say with your lips that Louise is nothing to you now, and that you believe she has eloped with some French scoundrel."

Leslie bit his lip and made an impatient gesture.

"While that noble countenance of yours, of which you are so proud, has painted upon it love and trust and hope, and all the big-boy nonsense in which young men indulge when they think they are only a half, which needs another half to make them complete."

"I am not going to quarrel with you," said Leslie, flushing angrily all the same.

"No, my boy, you are not. You are coming with me, my unfortunate young hemisphere, to try and find that other half to which you shall some day be joined to make you a complete little world of trouble of your own, to roll slowly up the hill of life, hang on the top for a few hours, and then roll rapidly down. There, we have wasted time enough in talking, and I'll hold off. Thank ye, though, Leslie, you're a good fellow after all."

He held out his hand, which Leslie slowly took, and Uncle Luke was shaking it warmly as Madelaine re-entered the room.

"Well," said the old man grimly, "have you put the baby to bed ?"

"Uncle Luke !" said Madelaine imploringly ; "pray be serious and help us."

"Serious, my girl ! I was never so serious before. I only called Margaret a baby. So she is in intellect, and a very troublesome and mischievous one. Glad to see though that my little matter-of-fact Dutch doll has got the better of her. Why, Maddy, henceforth you'll be able to lead her with a silken string."

"Uncle Luke dear—Louise," said Madelaine imploringly.

"Ah, to be sure, yes, Louise," said the old man with his eyes twinkling mischievously. "Circumstances alter cases. Now look here you two. I'm only an old man, and of course thoroughly in your confidence. Sort of respectable go-between. Why shouldn't I try and make you two happy ?"

Leslie bit his lip, and Madelaine gave the old man an imploring look ; but in a mocking way he went on.

"Now suppose I say to you two, what can be better than for you to join hands—partners for life you know, and——"

"Mr. Luke Vine !" cried Leslie sternly, "setting aside the insult to me, is this gentlemanly, to annoy Miss Van Heldre with your mocking, ill-chosen jokes ?"

"Hark at the hot-blooded Scotchman, Maddy ; and look here how pleasantly and patiently my little Dutch doll takes it, bless her !"

He put his arm round Madelaine and held her to his side.

"Why, what are you ruffling up for in that fashion ? Only a few minutes ago you were swearing that you hated Louy, and that you gave her up to the French nobleman—French nobleman, Maddy !—and I offer you a pleasant anodyne for your sore heart—and a very pleasant anodyne too, eh, Maddy ? Ah, don't—don't cry—hang it all, girl, don't. I do hate to see a woman with wet eyes. Now what have you got to sob about ?"

"Is this helping us ?"

"No. But I'm going to, little one. I was obliged to stick something into Leslie, here. He is such a humbug. Swore he didn't care a bit for Louy now, and that he believed everything that was bad of her, and yet look at his face."

"It is impossible to quarrel with you, sir," said Leslie, with the look of a human mastiff.

"Of course it is," cried Uncle Luke. "Well, Maddy, I've converted him. He sees

now that it's a puzzle we don't understand, and he is coming up to town with me to solve the problem."

"I knew he would," cried Madelaine warmly. "Mr. Leslie, I am very, very glad."

"Of course you are ; and as soon as I bring Louy back, and all is cleared, Leslie shall come and congratulate us. D'ye hear, Leslie ? I'm going to marry Madelaine. Marry her and stop up in the churchyard afterwards," he said with a grim smile full of piteous sadness.

"Uncle Luke !"

"Well, it's right enough, my dear. At my time of life hardly worth while to make two journeys up to the churchyard. So you could leave me there and go back, and take possession of my estate."

"Louise."

"Ah, yes. I mustn't forget Louise," said the old man. "Let's see—about Margaret. Leave her all right ?"

"Yes ; she is more calm now."

"Did you question her, and get to know anything ?"

"Nothing."

"Humph !" ejaculated the old man. "Close as an oyster, or else she doesn't know anything."

"That is what I think," said Madelaine eagerly.

"Ah, well, we are only wasting time," said Uncle Luke testily. "So now, Leslie, business. First thing we have to do is to go up to London. No : first thing, Maddy, is to run on to your house, and tell them what we are going to do. You'll have to stay here, my dear, and look after those two. Comfort George all you can ; drive him with that silken thread rein of yours, and keep a good tight curb over Margaret. There, you'll manage them."

"Yes. Tell them at home I think it better to stay here now," said Madelaine earnestly. "You will send me every scrap of news ?"

"Leslie and I are going to secure the wire and ruin ourselves in telegrams. Ready, Miner ?"

"Yes."

"Then come on."

Madelaine caught Leslie's extended hand, and leaned towards him.

"My life on it," she whispered, "Louise is true."

He wrung her hand and hurried away.

"Good-bye, Uncle Luke. Be happy about them here ; and, mind, we are dying for news."

"Ah ! yes ; I know," he said testily ; and

he walked away—turned back, and caught Madelaine to his breast. "Good-bye, Dutch doll. God bless you, my darling," he said huskily. "If I could only bring back poor Harry too !"

Madelaine stood wiping the tears from her eyes as the old man hurried off after Leslie, but she wiped another tear away as well, one which rested on her cheek, a big salt tear that ought almost to have been a fossil globule of crystallised water and salt. It was the first Uncle Luke had shed for fifty years.

CHAPTER LVI.—A HARD TEST.

"HARRY, dear Harry !" said Louise, as they stood together in a shabbily furnished room in one of the streets off Tottenham Court Road, "I feel at times as if it would drive me mad. Pray, pray let me write !"

"Not yet, I tell you ; not yet," he said angrily. "Wait till we are across the Channel, and then you shall."

"But——"

"Louy !" he half shouted at her, "have some patience."

"Patience, dear ! Think of our father's agony of mind. He loves us."

"Then the joy of finding we are both alive and well must compensate for what he suffers now."

"But you do not realise what must be thought of me."

"Oh, yes, I do," he said bitterly ; "but you do not realise what would be thought of me, if it were known that I was alive. I shiver every time I meet a policeman. Can't you see how I am placed ?"

"Yes—yes," said Louise wearily ; "but at times I can only think of our father—of Madelaine—of Uncle Luke."

"Hush !" he cried with an irritable stamp of the foot. "Have patience. Once we are on the Continent I shall feel as if I could breathe ; but this wretched dilatory way of getting money worries me to death."

"Then why not sell the jewels, and let us go ?"

"That's talking like a woman again. It's very easy to talk about selling the jewels, and it is easy to sell them if you go to some blackguard who will take advantage of your needs and give you next to nothing for them. But, as Pradelle says——"

"Pradelle !" ejaculated Louise, with a look of dislike crossing her face.

"Yes, Pradelle. That's right, speak ill of the only friend we have. Why, we owe everything to him. What could we have

done? Where could we have gone if it had not been for him, and my finding out where he was through asking at the old meeting-place?"

"I do not like Mr. Pradelle," said Louise firmly.

"Then you ought to," said Harry, as he walked up and down the room like some caged animal. "As he says, if you go to sell the things at a respectable place they'll ask all manner of questions that it is not convenient to answer, and we must not risk detection by doing that."

"Risk detection?" said Louise, clasping her hands about one knee as she gazed straight before her.

"The people here are as suspicious of us as can be, and the landlady seems ready to ask questions every time we meet on the stairs."

"Yes," said Louise in a sad, weary way; "she is always asking questions."

"But you do not answer them?"

"I—I hardly know what I have said, Harry. She is so pertinacious."

"We must leave here," said the young man excitedly. "Why don't Pradelle come?"

"Do you expect him to-night?"

"Expect him? Yes. I have only half-a-crown left, and he has your gold chain to pledge. He is to bring the money to-night. I expected him before."

"Harry, dear."

"Well?"

"Do you think Mr. Pradelle is trustworthy?"

"As trustworthy as most people," said the young man carelessly. "Yes, of course. He is obliged to be."

"But could you not pledge the things yourself instead of trusting him?"

"No," he cried, with an impatient stamp.

"You know how I tried and how the assistant began to question and stare at me, till I snatched the thing out of his hands and hurried out of the shop. I'd sooner beg than try to do it again."

Louise was silent for a few moments, and sat gazing thoughtfully before her.

"Let me write, Harry, telling everything, and asking my father to send us money."

"Send for the police at once. There, open the windows, and call the first one up that you see pass. It will be the shortest way."

"But I am sure, dear——"

"Once more, so am I. At the present moment I am free. Let me have my liberty to begin life over again honestly, repentantly,

and with the earnest desire to redeem the past. Will you let me have that?"

"Of course—of course, dear."

"Then say no more to me about communicating with home."

Louise was silent again, beaten once more by her brother's arguments in her desire to see him redeem the past.

"Harry," she said at last, after her brother had been standing with his cheek pressed against the window pane, looking down the street in search of the expected visitor.

"Well?"

"Has it ever occurred to you that Mr. Pradelle is trying to keep us here?"

"Absurd!"

"No: I feel sure it is so, and that he does not want us to go away. Let me take my bracelets and necklet to one of those places where they buy jewellery or lend money."

"You?"

"Yes. Why not?"

"Are you mad?"

"No. Why should I not sell what is my own?"

"Can you not understand?" cried Harry, whose voice sounded harsh from the mental irritation which had given him the look of one in constant dread of arrest.

"No, dear, I cannot. I want to help you. I want to get away from here—to remove you from the influence of this man, so that we may, if it must be so, get abroad and then set them at rest."

"Now you are bringing that up again," he cried angrily.

"I must, Harry, I must. I have been too weak as it is; but in the excitement of all that trouble I seemed to be influenced by you in all I did."

"There, there, little sis," he said more gently. "I ought not to speak so crossly, but I am always on thorns, held back as I am for want of a few paltry pounds."

"Then let me go and dispose of these things."

"It is impossible."

"No, dear, you think of the degradation. I should not be ashamed. We have made a false step, Harry, but if we must go on, let me do what I can to help you. Let me go."

"But the beggarly disgrace. You don't know what you are going to undertake."

She looked at him with her frank, clear eyes.

"I am going to help you. There can be no disgrace in disposing of these trinkets for you to escape."

"Ah! at last!" cried Harry, leaving the

window to hurry to the door, regardless of the look of dislike which came into his sister's face.

"Is that Mr. Pradelle?" she said shrinkingly.

"Yes, at last. No, Louy, I'm bad enough, but I'm not going to send you to the pawnbroker's while I stop hiding here, and it's all right now."

"Ah, Harry! Day, Miss Louy," said Pradelle, entering, very fashionably dressed, and with a rose in his buttonhole. "Nice weather, isn't it?"

"Look here, Vic," cried Harry, catching him by the arm. "How much did you get?"

"Get?"

"Yes; for the chain?"

"Oh, for the chain," said Pradelle, who kept his eyes fixed on Louise. "Nothing, old fellow."

"Nothing?"

"Haven't taken it to the right place, yet."

"And you promised to. Look here, what do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Well, I like that. Hear him, Miss Louy! What a fellow he is! Here have I got him into decent apartments, where he is safe as the bank, when if he had depended upon himself he would have taken you to some slum where you would have been stopped and the police have found you out."

"You promised to pledge those things for me."

"Of course I did, and so I will. Why, if you had been left to yourself, who would have taken you in without a reference?"

"Never mind that," said Harry, so angrily that Louise rose, went to his side, and laid her hand upon his arm. "If you don't want to help me, say so."

"If I don't want to help you! Why, look here, Miss Louy, I appeal to you. Haven't I helped him again and again? Haven't I lent him money, and acted as a friend should?"

"Why haven't you pledged that chain?" said Harry.

"Because people are so suspicious, and I was afraid. There you have the truth."

"I don't believe it," cried Harry, excitedly.

"Well then, don't. Your sister will. If you want me to bring the police on your track, say so."

In a furtive way, he noted Harry's start of dread, and went on.

"Take the chain or a watch yourself, and if the pawnbroker is suspicious, he'll either detain it till you can give a good account of how you came by it, or send for a policeman to follow you to your lodgings."

"But I am quite penniless!" cried Harry.

"Then why didn't you say so, old fellow? Long as I've got a pound you're welcome to it, and always were. I'm not a fine-weather friend: you know that. There you are, two halves. That'll keep you going for a week."

"But I don't want to keep borrowing of you," said Harry. "We have enough to do what I want. A sovereign will do little more than pay for these lodgings."

"Enough for a day or two, old fellow, and do for goodness' sake have a little more faith in a man you have proved."

"I have faith in you, Vic, and I'm very grateful; but this existence maddens me. I want enough to get us across the Channel. I must and will go."

"Right into the arms of those who are searching for you. What a baby you are, Harry! Do you want to be told again that every boat which starts for the Continent will be watched?"

Harry made a despairing gesture, and his haggard countenance told plainly of the agony he suffered.

"My dear Miss Louy," continued Pradelle, "do pray help me to bring him to reason. You must see that you are both safe here, and that it is the wisest thing to wait patiently till the worst of the pursuit is over."

"We do not know that there is any pursuit, Mr. Pradelle," said Louise coldly.

"Come, I like that!" cried Pradelle, in an ill-used tone. "I thought I told you that they were searching for you both. If you like to believe that you can leave your home as you did without your people making any search, why you have a right to."

Harry began pacing the room, while Pradelle went on in a low, pleading way.

"Ever since Harry came to me, I thought I had done all that a friend could, but if I can do more, Miss Louy, you've only got to tell me what, and it shall be done."

"You've done your best, Prad," said Harry.

"Yes, but you don't think it. I could go and do all kinds of rash things; but I've been working to throw them off the scent, and I don't think, so far, I've done amiss. You're not taken yet."

Harry drew a long breath and glanced at door and window, as if for a way of escape.

"Come, that's better," cried Pradelle. "Take a more cheerful view of things. You want change, Harry. You've been shut up too much. Have a cigar," he continued, drawing out his case. "No? I beg your pardon, Miss Louy. Oughtn't to ask him to smoke here."

Harry shook his head impatiently.

"Yes; have one, old fellow. They're good. Take two or three; and, look here: go and have a walk up and down for an hour. It's getting dusk now."

Louise gave her brother an excited look, which did not escape Pradelle. "Let's all go," he said. "We might go along the back streets as far as the park. Do you both good."

"No, no," said Harry sharply. "I shall not go out."

"Go together, then," said Pradelle, half mockingly. "I don't want to intrude; but for goodness' sake, man, try and have a little change; it would make life move different, and you'd be more ready to take a friend's advice."

"What advice?"

"To settle down here. London's the best place in the world for hiding yourself."

"Don't talk to me any more, old fellow," said Harry. "I'm out of temper. I can't help it."

"All right, lad. I'll go now; and you get him out, Miss Louy, do. It's the best thing for him."

Harry made an impatient gesture, and threw himself in a chair.

"You shall do as you like, and I'll raise all the money for you that I can," said Pradelle, rising to go; "but take things more coolly. Good-bye, old boy."

"Good-bye," said Harry, shaking hands limply.

"Good-bye," said Pradelle, as Harry turned away to rest his aching head upon his hand.

"Miss Louy!"

He gave his head a jerk towards the door, and Louise rose and followed him.

"Come outside," he whispered. "I want to speak to you."

"Mr. Pradelle can say what he has to say here."

"But it's about him."

"Well, Mr. Pradelle?"

"Well, Miss Louy, I only wanted to say that some day you'll find out who is your true friend. I want to help you both. I do, on my honour."

"Your honour!" thought Louise.

"Have a little more confidence in a man

if you can. I do want to help you. Good-bye."

He held out his hand, and she felt constrained to give him hers, which he held, and, after glancing hastily at Harry, raised to his lips; but the kiss he imprinted was on the yielding air, for the hand was snatched indignantly away.

"You'll know me better by-and-by," said Pradelle; and giving her a peculiar look, he left the room.

Louise stood for a few minutes gazing after him, her brow knit and her eyes thoughtful. Then, going back to where her brother sat with his head resting upon his hand, she laid hers upon his shoulder.

"Harry, dear," she said firmly, "that man is fighting against us."

"Rubbish," he cried impatiently. "You never liked Pradelle."

"Better for you if you had hated him. Harry, he is striving to keep us here."

"Nonsense! Don't talk to me now."

"I must, Harry. You must act, and decisively."

"What do you mean?"

"Either you must raise money at once, and go right away from here——"

He looked up sharply.

"No, I do not mean that," she said sadly.

"I will not leave you till you are fit to leave; but you must either act as I advise at once, or I shall do what I think best."

"What do you mean?"

"Write to our father to come and help us, for you are too weak and broken down to protect me."

"Louy!" he cried excitedly; "I am not so weak as you think. I will act; I will take your advice."

"And get rid of this Mr. Pradelle?"

"Anything you like, Louy, only don't let them know at home—yet, and don't leave me. If you did I should break down at once."

"Then will you be guided by me?"

"Yes."

"And take these jewels yourself and raise money?"

"Yes; but it is too late now."

Louise glanced at the window, and in her ignorance of such matters half felt the truth of his words.

"Then to-morrow you will do as I wish?"

"Yes, to-morrow," he said wearily.

"Put not off until to-morrow——" said Louise softly to herself; and she stood watching her brother as he sat with bended head, weak, broken, and despairing, in the gathering gloom.

CHAP. LVII.—AN OLD FRIEND—OR ENEMY ?

"WHERE shall we stay? I'll show you," said Uncle Luke, after giving instructions to the cabman. "My old hotel in Surrey Street. Comfortable, motherly woman. No nonsense."

"And what do you propose doing?"

"Let's hear first what you propose," shouted the old man, so as to make his voice heard above the rattle of the cab-windows—four-wheeler Jehu's enemies, which lose him many a fare.

"I have nothing to propose," said Leslie sadly; "only to find her."

"And I've given you twenty-four hours to think it out, including last night at Plymouth."

"My head is in a whirl, sir; I am in no condition to think. Pray suggest something."

"Hah! The old folks are useful, then, after all. Well, then, you would like to hear my plans?"

Leslie nodded.

"First, then, there is a good tea, with some meat; and while we are having that I shall send off a messenger."

"To find them?"

"No. Wait."

Leslie had found out that the best way to deal with Uncle Luke was to treat him like a conger-eel, such as they caught among the rocks about Hakemouth. Once hooked, if the fisher dragged at the line, the snaky monster pulled and fought till the line cut into the holder's hands, and sometimes was broken or the hook torn out; whereas, if instead of pulling, the creature had its head given, it began to swim up rapidly, and placed itself within reach of the gaff. So, in spite of his fretful irritation of mind he allowed the old man to have his own way.

The result was, that before they sat down to their meal at the quiet hotel Uncle Luke wrote a letter, which was dispatched by special messenger, after which he ate heartily; while Leslie played with a cup of tea and a piece of dry toast.

"Not the way to do work," said Uncle Luke grimly. "Eat, man; eat. Coal and coke to make the human engine get up steam."

Leslie made an effort to obey, but everything seemed distasteful, and he took refuge behind a paper till the waiter entered with a card.

"Hah! yes: show him in," said Uncle Luke. "Here he is, Leslie," he continued.

"Here who is?"

"Parkins."

"Parkins?"

"Sergeant Parkins. You remember?"

Leslie had forgotten the name, but directly after the whole scene of the search for Harry came back as the quiet, decisive-looking detective officer entered the room, nodded shortly to both, and after taking the seat indicated, looked inquiringly at Uncle Luke.

"At your service, sir," he said. "You've brought me some news about that affair down yonder?"

"No," said Uncle Luke. "I have come to see if you can help us in another way;" and he told him the object of his visit.

"Hah!" ejaculated their visitor. "Yes, that's different, sir;" and taking out a note-book, he began to ask question after question on points which seemed to him likely to be useful, till he had gained all the information he thought necessary, when he closed the book with a snap and buttoned it up in his breast.

"Rather curious fact, sir," he said, looking at both in turn; "but I've been thinking about Hakemouth a good deal this last day or two."

"Why?" asked Uncle Luke shortly.

"I've been away all over the Continent for some time—forgery case, and that Hakemouth business has gone no farther. As soon as I got back, and was free, I wanted something to do, so I said to myself that I'd take it on again, and I have."

"Oh, never mind that now," said Leslie angrily. "Can you help us here?"

"I don't know, sir. I shall try; but I might mention to you that we think we have obtained a clue to the gentleman who escaped."

"Yes, yes," said Leslie impatiently; "but can you help us here?"

"Give me time, sir, and I'll do my best," said the sergeant. "Not an easy task, sir, you know. A needle is hard to find in a bottle of hay, and all the clue you give me is that a lady left your neighbourhood with a French gentleman. Fortunately I did see the lady, and should know her again. Good morning."

"But what are we to do?" said Leslie eagerly.

"You, sir?" said the sergeant quietly, and with a suspicion of contempt in his tone.

"Oh, you'd better wait."

"Wait!" cried Leslie in a voice full of suppressed rage.

"And practise patience," muttered the man. "One moment, sir," he said aloud. "You saw this French gentleman?"

"I saw him, but not his face. Mr. Vine here told you; the light was overturned."

"But you saw his figure, the man's shape?"

"Yes, of course."

"And you heard his voice?"

"Yes."

"Broken French?"

"Yes."

"Now, sir, just think a moment. I have a slight idea. French name—spoke——"

"We mentioned no name."

"One minute, sir. Spoke French—brother's fellow-clerk and intimate—gentleman who went off—been staying at the house—long time in the lady's society. What do you say now to its being this Mr. Pradelle?"

Uncle Luke gave the table a thump which made the tea-things rattle, and Leslie started from his seat, gazing wildly at the officer, who smiled rather triumphantly.

"Great Heavens!" faltered Leslie, as if a new light had flashed into his darkened mind.

"Of course, sir, this is only a suggestion," said the sergeant. "It is all new to me; but seems likely."

"No," said Uncle Luke emphatically, "no. She would never have gone off with him."

"Very good, gentlemen. I'll see what I can do at once."

"One moment," said Leslie as he slipped some notes into the man's hand. "You will spare neither time nor money."

"I will not, sir."

"Tell me one thing. What shall you do first?"

"Just the opposite to what you've done, gentlemen," said the officer.

"What do you mean?"

"Go down to Hakemouth by to-night's mail, and work back to town."

"I feel certain," said Leslie, "that he brought her to London to take tickets for France."

"I don't, sir, yet. But even if I did, it's a long bridge from here to Cornwall, and I might find them resting in one of the recesses. You leave it to me, sir. Good day. Humph!" he added as he went out; "plain as a pike-staff. Women are womanly, and I have known instances of a woman sticking to a man for no reason whatever, except that he was a scamp, and sometimes the greater the scamp the tighter the tie. Pradelle's my man, and I think I can put my thumb upon him before long."

"No, Leslie, no. Louy wouldn't look at him. That's not the clue," said Uncle Luke.

CHAPTER LVIII.—THE NEEDLE IN A BOTTLE OF HAY.

A WEEK of anxiety, with the breaks in it of interviews with Sergeant Parkins, who had very little to communicate; but still that little was cogent.

He had been down to Hakemouth, and by careful inquiry had tracked the missing pair to Plymouth, where he had missed them. But, after the fashion of a huntsman, he made long casts round and picked up the clue at Exeter, where a porter remembered them from what sounded like an altercation in a second-class compartment, where a dark young lady was in tears, and the "gent" who was with her said something to her sharply in a foreign tongue. Pressed as to what it was like, he said it sounded as if the gent said "Taisey."

There the sergeant had lost the clue; but he had learned enough to satisfy himself that the fugitives had been making for London, unless they had branched off at Bristol, which was hardly likely.

"Come up to London," said Leslie. "Well, that is what we surmised before we applied to you."

"Exactly, sir; but I have nearly made your surmise a certainty."

"Yes, nearly," said Leslie bitterly.

"We must have time, sir. A hunter does not secure his game by rushing at it. He stalks it."

"Yes," said Uncle Luke in assent, "and of course you must be certain. This is not a criminal matter."

"No, sir, of course not," said the sergeant drily, and with a meaning in his tone which the others did not detect.

"If you are successful in finding their whereabouts, mind that your task ends there. You will give us due notice, and we will see to the rest."

"Certainly, sir; and I have men on the look out. The bottle of hay is being pretty well tossed over, and some day I hope to see the shine of the needle among the puzzling dry strands. Good morning."

"Is that man a humbug, sir, or in earnest?"

"Earnest," replied Uncle Luke. "He proved that before."

If the occupants of the hotel room, which seemed to Leslie like a prison, could have read Sergeant Parkins's mind as he went away they would have thought him in deadly earnest.

"Not a criminal case, gentlemen, eh?" he said to himself. "If it is as I think, it is very criminal indeed, and Mr. Pradelle will find it so before he is much older. I haven't forgotten the night on Hakemouth Pier, and that poor boy's death, and I shan't feel very happy till I've squared accounts with him, for if he was not the starter of all that trouble I am no judge of men."

CHAPTER LIX.—PRADELLE IS PRICKED.

SEEING more and more that if an alteration was to be made in their present position the change must come from her urging, Louise attacked her brother soon after breakfast the next morning. She was fully convinced that Pradelle was determined to keep them in London for reasons of his own—reasons the bare thought of which brought an indignant flush into her cheek; and it was evident that he was gaining greater influence over his old companion, who was just now in the stage when it would be easy for one of strong mind to gain the mastery. This being so, Louise determined that hers should be the strong will, not Pradelle's. To this end she took three or four of the most likely of her jewels, making a point of carefully wrapping them up and dwelling upon the task till she caught her brother's attention.

"What are you doing there?" he said.

"Getting ready some things upon which to raise money."

He uttered an impatient ejaculation.

"Leave them till Pradelle comes."

"No, Harry; either you or I must part with these. Who is it to be?"

"Let Pradelle take them."

"No," she said firmly. "It is time that we acted for ourselves. Will you go, or shall I?"

"But you heard what he said yesterday?"

"Yes, and I do not believe it. Come, Harry, for your own sake, for mine."

"Yes, yes; but wait."

"You forced me into this compromising position to help you escape from England."

"I could not help it."

"I am not blaming you; I only say act, or let me."

He started from his chair, and stood there swayed by the various passions which pervaded his spirit.

"Harry."

"I cannot do it."

"Then let me go."

"No, no, no!" he cried. "I am not so lost to all manly feeling as that. Here, give them to me, and let us get away."

"Yes," she said eagerly, "at once. You will go, Harry, and let us cross to-night."

He nodded his head, and without another word swept the jewels into his pocket, and made towards the door. As he laid his hand upon the lock he turned sharply and came back.

"I'm like a curse to you, Louy," he said, kissing her; "but I'm going to try, and you shall guide me now."

She clung to him for a few moments, and then loosened her grasp.

"I shall be ready when you come back," she said. "We can pay these people, and it will be like breathing afresh to get away."

"Yes," he said. "But Pradelle?"

"Is our enemy, Harry. Your evil genius."

"No, no; he has been very kind."

"For his own ends. There, go."

He went off without a word; and after making the few trifling preparations necessary, Louise put on her hat and cloak, and waited impatiently for her brother's return. An hour passed, which seemed like two, and then the blood mounted to her pale cheek, and she crossed towards the door ready to admit her brother, for there was a step upon the stair. She glanced round to see if she had forgotten anything, but there was nothing to do, save to pay the landlady, and then they would be free. She threw open the door as the step paused on the landing, and then she ran back with her lips apart, and a look of repugnance and dread in her eyes.

"Mr. Pradelle!"

"Yes, Miss Louy, me it is, and you don't look best pleased to see me."

As she fell back he entered and closed the door.

"My brother is out, Mr. Pradelle."

He nodded, and stood smiling at her.

"You can leave any message you wish for him."

"And go? Exactly. Hah! I should like to make you think differently of me, Miss Louy. You know I always loved——"

"Mr. Pradelle, I am alone here, and this visit is an intrusion."

"Intrusion? Ah, how hard you do keep on me; but I'm patient as a man can be. What a welcome to one who has come to serve you! I am only your brother's messenger, Miss Louy. He has been and done that business."

"You know?"

"Of course I know. Harry is not so hard upon me as you are. I have seen him, and he sent me on here with a cab. He wants you to join him."

"To join him?"

"Yes, at the station. He says it is not safe to come back here, and you are to join him at the waiting-room."

"He sent that message by you?"

"Yes. It's all nonsense, of course, for I think he has not so much cause to be alarmed. There is a risk, but he magnifies it. You are ready, so let's go on at once."

"Why did not my brother return? There is the landlady to pay."

"He has commissioned me to do that. I am going to see you both off, and if you'll only say a kind word to me, Miss Louy, I don't know but what I'll come with you."

"Did my brother send that message to me, Mr. Pradelle?" said Louise, looking at him fixedly.

"Yes, and the cab's waiting at the door."

"It is not true," said Louise firmly.

"What?"

"I say, sir, it is not true. After what has passed between us this morning, my brother would not send such a message by you."

"Well, if ever man had cause to be hurt I have," cried Pradelle. "Why, you'll tell me next that he didn't go out to pawn some of your jewels."

Louise hesitated.

"There, you see, I am right. He has taken quite a scare, and daren't come back. Perhaps you won't believe that. There, come along; we're wasting time."

"It is not true."

"How can you be so foolish! I tell you I was to bring you along, and you must come now. Hush! don't talk, but come."

He caught her hand and drew it through his arm so suddenly that, hesitating between

faith and doubt, she made no resistance; and, ready to blame herself now for her want of trust, she was accompanying him towards the door when it was opened quickly, and their way was blocked by Leslie and Uncle Luke.

Pradelle uttered an angry ejaculation, and Louise shrank back speechless, her eyes dilated, her lips apart, and a bewildering sense of confusion robbing her of the power of speech, as she realised to the full her position in the sight of those who had sought her out.

"Then he was right, Leslie," said Uncle Luke slowly, as he looked from his niece to Pradelle, and back.

"Uncle!" she cried in agony, "what are you thinking?"

"That you are my niece—a woman," said the old man coldly; "and that this is Mr. Pradelle."

"Uncle, dear uncle, let me explain," cried Louise wildly as she shivered at the look of contempt cast upon her by Leslie.

"The situation needs no explanation," said Uncle Luke coldly.

"Not a bit," said Pradelle with a half laugh. "Well, gentlemen, what do you want? This lady is under my protection. Please to let us pass."

"Yes," said Uncle Luke in the same coldly sarcastic tone of voice, "you can pass, but, in spite of everything, the lady stays with me."

"No, sir, she goes with me," said Pradelle in a blustering tone. "Come on," he whispered, "for Harry's sake."

"No," said Uncle Luke. "I think we will spare her the pain of seeing you arrested. Mr. Pradelle, the police are on the stairs."

BEACON LIVES.

Short Sunday Readings for November.

By THE REV. JOHN SMITH, M.A.

FIRST SUNDAY.

ESAU—PROFANE.

Road Gen. xxv. 13—24; Heb. xii. 12—20.

A PROFANE person as Esau—that is the aspect in which we would consider this character and career. By such words it is not meant that Esau was openly vicious. Literally, the word means forth from the temple. So Fox speaks of a profane cottage—outside sacred precincts, and down to our own time men spoke and wrote of profane

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history. What is meant is that this man's life, his main interests and enjoyments, were outside the religious sphere. To be a profane person, he could hardly have lived better than he did. He spent his days under the open eye of heaven. He loved to scour over the wild uplands, had no ambition more cruel than to run down the creatures of the field, used no craft save such simple cunning as was needed to secure their capture. To men he was, if impulsive, open and guileless as a child, and capable of unexpected gentle-

ness and magnanimity. Browning puts into the mouth of David a description of pastoral life which, as in a flash, brings before us what must have been the early surroundings and employments of the young Esau.

"Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fir tree, the cool
silver shock
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair,
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold dust
divine,
And the locust flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught
of wine,
And the sleep in the dried river channel
How good is man's life the mere living! How fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy."

Surely a simple and innocent life, such as might seem paradisaical to the worn, heartless, sophisticated devotees of the world. Yet in it there was a fatal lack. He was putting nature, and the simple delights which nature opened up to him, in room of God. The elder son of his father, he was for this generation the heir of the divine promise. From infancy he would be taught the unique destiny of his race. His young reverence would be excited by the oft-repeated story of the honour God had put upon his house. He would learn to bow before that unseen but ever-present Deity, whose glory his own father had witnessed, but who had oftener and more grandly revealed Himself to Abraham. Why, when he remembered His frequent appearances by day and by night to his grandfather, how did he know but that his fathers' God might come to him at any point in his wanderings, during any hour of rest or sleep?

Should he not then have been thrilled with the sense of God? Should not the fulfilment of God's purpose have been the dearest wish of his heart? Should not his chief joy have been that, by ordering of God, he was one link in carrying out His will? But it was not so. He felt it a relief to escape from these high thoughts to mere animal delights. True, through the sheer force of parental influence, a certain awe of God would retain hold of his soul. But, unnourished by personal meditation, the light which thus fell on his inner life would begin to fade away. He found himself more at home with outside people who did not share his covenant hope than with members of his own family. God's promise to his fathers, withered to a dead tradition, unfortified by any trace of fellowship with the divine, ceases to have weight with him. He is a profane person—his life, his real interests, his true joy being all apart from God in the sphere of the world. So far from

being a temple, his soul has no solitary niche in which it keeps alive an unfeigned reverence for Deity.

Very early in some lives is the shrine of reverence desecrated by the hoof of the world. Even in youth the inmost heart, thrown wide open, becomes a common road for the soul-hardening traffic of worldly thoughts and desires. Others linger longer under the genial influences of divine truth. All through boyhood and girlhood they are more or less exercised about spiritual things. They may go forward in the confidence of faith to a confession of the Redeemer. By-and-by, however, the old enthusiasm abates. Relaxed zeal exhibits itself in growing indifference, or in a discontented spirit. Associates of warmer and better days are withdrawn from. Allies of a worldlier type are courted and caressed. The old reverence for the things of God indeed dies hard. It flies to every coign of vantage, shelters behind every instinct and interest of the soul. And for the most part it keeps the backslider, in lame and halting fashion, connected with the kingdom of God. But sometimes that primitive reverence is dislodged. The soul walks right out from all contact with the Cross. The man starts life on a godless basis, and lives as a profane person, having no care beyond time, no interest save in the seen.

For a long time this worldly strain in Esau's character was a hidden tendency. He was not fully conscious of it himself. He would have denied that there was any estrangement growing up between him and his friends. He loved hunting—that was all. He had different tastes from his brother Jacob. It was not to his mind to hang at his mother's skirts, herding the tame villatic sheep of his father. And if he was oftener with Beeri and Elon the Hittites, well, it was because they had common inclinations and pursuits. But, as some recent poet sings—

"Below the surface stream, shallow and light,
Of what men say they feel; below the stream
A light of what they think they feel, there flows
With noiseless current, strong, obscure, and deep,
The central stream of what men feel indeed."

A man is what he makes himself by his deeds. Every time he chooses, he commits his whole nature to a certain course. Not that this immediately appears. He may fancy himself equally free to choose the opposite. Yea, he may declare his preference for the opposite, finding some trivial, morally indifferent reason for acting as he has done. We all know how men

palter at this point. "A friend"—"courtesy"—"self-interest"—some fancied necessity, any one of a thousand things is alleged in excuse of action men say they disapprove. But it is not what we might, or would do—much less what we think we should do—which fixes character and moulds the man. It is what we actually do. And as we go on, our affections become entwined around the objects of our choice, our judgments become more and more biased. Even from the eye of the mind opposing considerations begin to fade away. Our nature is being made in the image of our choice. At last, one day, in some sudden emergency, under some heavy strain, the real man blurts itself out, and he stands self-revealed in his true light.

"O God," cries a good man, "Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou understandest my thoughts afar off." Providence was in his view a great system of moral tests, devised by One Who knows us perfectly, to bring to light every principle working secretly in man. And that is a true view of Providence in relation to all men. We have to do with a Being Who loves us, Who delights in the triumph of good, Who is most patient in waiting for its blossoming, Who will dig about and manure the most lifeless trunk before He cuts it down. But we have to do with One Who at the same time is inflexibly just, Who will not call self-seeking piety, because it has a religious face, or living to the flesh living to the spirit, because of certain seemly accessories and relationships. We have to deal with One Who sees all things as they are—Who if a man's heart be set on anything alien to Himself will take occasion to let him see that fact by suffering him to act in the line of his ruling desire. How often in the ordinary course of Providence do events transpire, not very startling it may be, yet quite sufficient to expose the utter unreality of a man's professions. A word, a sudden deed, and he stands out what he is, beyond possibility of further disguise. His own eyes are so opened to himself that he does not care to keep up a profession any more. Ah! here is the solemn significance of circumstance for us all. It is charged with a mission to search us to the core. Messes of pottage—to anticipate the next chapter in Esau's history we are presently to consider—may not be our particular temptation, but money may, or position, or professional reputation; and it may well enough happen—at least we shall do well to face the possibility—that if the test of providence be

sufficiently severe we may grasp at our advantage and renounce God. Let us look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest for some morsel of this world's good we should forfeit the Eternal Prize.

SECOND SUNDAY.

ESAU—REJECTED.

Read Gen. xxvii.; Matt. xxiv. 40—51.

Afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected. Really he rejected it himself. He despised it as worthless, ere sovereignly it was snatched from his grasp. Albeit, through the sin of another his rejection was actually consummated, yet to Esau it was the strict consequence of his own sin. The craft of his brother was to him a judgment from God.

I am not concerned to defend Jacob's part in the transaction to which I must now refer. He exhibits the meanest characteristics of his race. But even in these he shows what a mighty reality God's promise was to him. Where he erred, and erred grievously, was in striving to secure by craft what he should have waited to receive from God. It was mean of Jacob to take advantage of Esau's hunger to secure the birthright. It argued a great lack of trust in the faithfulness and love of God. Here, however, we are concerned with Esau alone, and shall unravel only so much of the story as may throw light on God's dealings with him. It need not perplex us that Esau was the victim so far of guile. We are all more or less exposed to the same danger. That does not absolve us from responsibility, however, or deliver us from the moral consequences of our mistakes. Yea, it imposes a new responsibility and a sterner self-reliance. Temptations are often the mere occasions which discover the degeneracy coming to ripeness within, the slight shocks which crystallize, in decision and deed, feelings that already have saturated the soul.

Thus was it with Esau. Jacob's "Sell me thy birthright" pierced him to the quick. It brought out from his soul's depths what the birthright was to him. For years he has been going on, putting his own inclinations before the considerations of reverence and love for the Supreme, which should have overborne every other desire of his soul, till now everything is ripe to show how trivial they are to him. He comes home one night weary and hungry from the chase. As he enters the hut the grateful savour of the pottage invades his nostrils. He is conscious of an ungovernable desire to partake. Evi-

dently in his brother's view he had become a man to whom the immediate satisfaction of his cravings was the first thought; and so he tempted him. How many in the great world are in Esau's very case, and the supplanters are busy as ever with their baits.

Do not let us exaggerate this crisis. The point of our story is the smallness of the occasion of Esau's fall. There would be plenty of food in the house beside that red pottage. If all else had failed he could have killed one of the flock. What he said of himself when pleading for the pottage was, "I am faint." Most probably he had gone without food from early morn till night, and felt exhausted. Had he then been living in the fear of God this would have been no crisis to him. He would have repelled Jacob's offer with scorn. Indeed, Jacob would never have dreamed of presenting it to him. Many men blame temptation for their fall, who first encouraged temptation by their own evident laxity and indifference. They tempt the tempter before they are tempted by him. A crafty man like Jacob must have been encouraged by very open and palpable ungodliness on Esau's part to allure him with so cheap a bait. Yes, the glory of the birthright no longer impressed Esau. He was alive only to material realities. And so when Jacob said—it may be half-jestingly at first—"Sell me thy birthright," Esau virtually answered, "My birthright! much good will it do me." "I am at the point to die," he cried, playfully exaggerating his condition. "Do with the birthright what you like. Give me the pottage." "I am in earnest, though," cries Jacob, hardly believing his ears, and suddenly made alive to his opportunity. "Swear!" And Esau swore, was ready to give him any assurance he liked if he could only get his hunger appeased. He was a profane person who had got past pious dreams. Pottage in hand was better than even the promise of God in the future. It was a better thing for him to have his appetite satisfied right away than to know that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Here he is,—ticketed, marked off, known by himself and by all men for what he is,—self-revealed a profane person.

How pitiable! To miss life's good in any wise is pitiable. For a man to violate moral principles, only to find that he has destroyed the balance of his nature, sold himself to polluting and irresistible desire, and so shut himself out from the sight of God's face, is a profound pain, even though he may have lived in a moral twilight in which spiritual

things are but dimly discerned. But for one nurtured in the faith, saturated with pious influences, awed and elevated by considerations the most sublime, brought home in all their power at the most tender and susceptible age,—for such an one, after years of instruction, after repeated resolves and dedications, to succumb to temptation, to yield to solicitations of pride, to go out among the Hittites of the world, and find his all in earth-bound pleasures and employments and prospects, how can there fail to be regret? Piety has solid joys which, enlightened as he is, he cannot but miss and mourn. And then as the night of time draws on, as earthly joys recede, as that for which he renounced God fades from his grasp, as like a slowly whitening dawn after a weary night, eternity breaks on his view, what of his choice? Will these worldly goods receive him into everlasting habitations?

This sorrow of a renounced faith is one which is afflicting many hearts to-day. They have broken with the spiritual, and now their eyes are opened to see what a despicable thing life is, apart from God. Formerly, they only saw the restrictions of the faith,—what they had come to regard as its unreasonable restraints, but now they are coming to see what a refusal to believe in the Spiritual delivers them to,—the dreariness of a life bounded by the grave, the isolation of a universe that does not recognise a Ruling mind, and still more a benign Fatherly heart, the paralyzing sense of nothingness in presence of iron laws, and the endless strife of existence. Cunning euphemisms have been contrived to cover the cold and comfortless conclusions of unbelief, but when the heart has been free to speak as it felt, it has uttered in poem and story, and treatise, notes of sadness pitiful to hear. Nothing can long enable a man,—no superb physical resources like those of Esau, no human ideals, no public ambitions,—to ignore the misery and incompleteness of a life divorced from God.

All that is true—though we often find it difficult to say. But even that is not all the truth. I mark two things in Esau's career. First, in the matter of the birthright he virtually rejects the boon from God which it was his privilege to claim. He deems it so little worth that he lets Jacob filch it away. Then comes the series of events by which he is ruled out of the blessing. With Jacob's craft we have nothing now to do. "The deed was foully done," but Esau deserved it. There could have been no other issue. The

man had revealed his utter incapacity to receive the blessing. He was rejected. In this ousting by his brother there was a stroke of divine doom. Ah! naturally, we do not hear much of this side of it. We hear to nausea of men's rejection of God. But what of our rejection by Him? What if the Great Being, of whom we spoke as searching us with His providences, find out that our life has been a blunder, our activities aside from the mark, the very soul fatally vitiated by wrong choices, wrong imaginings, wrong deeds?

Rejected! It came in a strange way when Esau was least looking for it. God's judgments work themselves out in a divinely original manner. He sees the life culminating, its contents taking their final shape, and He can use any event to turn the man who has rejected Him, out of the path of opportunity from which he cannot now profit, aside from His cause to which he would be only a stumbling-block and hindrance.

Nor do tears and cries avail. The man has only awakened to the material evil consequences of his spiritual mistake. The promise of God to his fathers—the spring of Abraham's faith and Isaac's godly fear—had no reality for him. He was insensible to its subduing, uplifting power. But the possession of his father's blessing involved headship of the tribe,—heirship of his father's wealth. And he longed for them. He was still the profane person; his spirit had not changed one whit. He gives no indication of a wish to change. He has taken his course. He has made his choice. And he is only mourning that he cannot have his own will, and all the effects of doing God's will too. Profane right through,—he is here profanest of all.

THIRD SUNDAY.

THE YOUNG RULER.—“ONE THING THOU LACKEST.”

Read Matt. xix. 16–30; Mark x. 17–31.

Dante speaks of this young ruler as having made the Great Refusal. Crowned with a finer beauty than that of Esau, and possessed of a rarer attractiveness, he stands forth in Gospel story,—at least outside the apostolic circle,—as its most pathetic figure. His ingenuousness, his moral eagerness, his ardent pursuit of the highest truth, only add an unspeakable emphasis to the story of his error and fall.

The last word one would apply to such a man would be profane. He was not indifferent to moral and spiritual truth. He presses into Christ's presence with a question,

whose very directness showed that it leaped burning from his heart into living speech—“Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” He was a young man. The dew of early manhood was on his brow. Yet he was not thinking about his person or his pleasures or his fame, but about eternity. Most men begin to think about eternity when the game of life is up, or they fear that their work may be done. But it was not so with him. He seemed to have in an extraordinary degree a natural openness of mind to the good and noble. In high position he would have enjoyed every advantage of culture. Better still, he would have been wisely, strictly, religiously brought up. He had not been left by foolishly fond parents to wound his young reverence by boyish sins. How many young men are so pure, so clear from glaring fault, so beautiful in ardent love of the pure and true, that for Christ to look upon them would be to love them?

Yet that was true of this young man. And so he was attracted to Christ, just as the noble among our own young men are attracted to the great teachers and leaders of the hour. Others might say—a gluttonous man, a wine-bibber; but he saw beneath the marred face, and the travel-worn feet, that there was wonderful nobility there. How many modern young men, moving in cultured and fashionable circles, have spiritual perception enough to pierce through the haze of convention, and see moral glory in a poor street preacher? But while the world scoffed, this young man revered. Mark's account is specially vivid: “And as Jesus was going forth into the way, there ran one to Him and kneeled to Him.” Yes, down with all those rich stuffs into the dust. What haste, what humility,—the ruler bowing to the seeming peasant,—what eager questioning! Ah, moral correctness and honour such as he could boast were good enough in their way. He had estimated them perhaps only too highly in the past. But that spectacle of self-sacrifice in the life of Christ, made him feel how far below this prophet he was. Then all his own goodness pertained to this life. It was bounded by the concerns and obligations of time. But he never heard Christ, without feeling that He was in bright, ineffable touch with God. He exhaled a supernal light and love. The young man saw that Christ's whole nature was moved from the unseen. That was better than the weary yoke of law. If he could pierce to the fountains of yon far life

how blessed it would be! Life! that became his hourly thought,—not a dreary pumping up of human nature to a higher level than it would naturally seek, but to have life from the highest of all levels, from eternity, flowing down into him with a glorious impulse in it, lifting him, urging him ever on and up, till he reached the heaven from which it came!

Dimly enough this thought must have broken on the young ruler. He believed that he could work for life, and by work make it his own. "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" But at least he was very eager to procure the blessing. Hitherto with his studies and moralities he has got on very well. But his horizon is widening. God has come into it. Eternity has broken on his view. And he has to do with both. Poor troubled heart, he does not see things very clearly. He belonged to a legal, hidebound age. His Pharisaic self-sufficiency, if it has got many a shake, never forsook him. What good thing shall I do?

Thus does he stand before the great Teacher of men. Let us go forward at once to the climax of their colloquy. Verily, never man spake like this man. This youth had hitherto been living in the region of moral rule and precept, conversant with laws and their requirements. Now these are important, but they are not everything. Christ does not deny their relative importance, but they do not show conclusively the inmost soul of the man. My doing my duty, for instance, to a fellow-man gives no criterion as to whether my will is surrendered to God. My will may be thus surrendered, and then the lowliest duties done for God's glory and at His command are living expressions of my surrender to Him. But it may not be, and yet mine be a moral life. My morality may be largely the result of parental control, and all the time my secret heart may be set on something beside God. What I need then is that my inmost man be brought to light, that what I secretly love, and yield my will to, should be known. And what Christ does in this wonderful incident, is with subtle skill and profound knowledge of the human heart, to probe this young man to the depths and discover to him all that is in himself.

In every soul that has not yet decided for God there are growing up, side by side, dark and bright possibilities. The bright possibility in the case of this young man we have seen. He was waking into the consciousness of a hunger for eternal life. But secretly, subtly there had been growing in him another

love. Probably he was unconscious of the fact, but Jesus' quick eye discerned it, and the sequel showed how true it was. His heart was settling down on His possessions. Mingling with the hauteur of moral self-approval, there was not a little of the pride of fortune and place. Now we can understand exactly what Christ meant by His strangely severe command. He wanted to bring him to decision. Noting with unerring accuracy what stood in the way of surrender, that love of possessions in which the self-will of his heart was seen, He laid down a condition which would bring into clearest light whether the young man would choose God before everything, or whether there was anything that he loved above God. There lay the value of Christ's test. It raised for this young man the fundamental issue. Yes, he must choose. Here are his possessions if he will have them; here is God and life eternal if he will have them. To which will he yield his whole heart? To his possessions? Then he must give up God. To God? Then, says Jesus, since you have been entangling your heart with the world, sell all you have; yield your life to my disposal, that you may be quite sure the surrender is real, utter, total.

That was the significance of Christ's words. He never meant that an unreserved auction of our worldly goods, was of itself the way to life eternal. What He demands is surrender, and He asked this sacrifice to prove the reality of the surrender. We have got to make this decision,—if we have not already made it,—even as this young man had. What our particular temptation may be,—on what earthly thing we may be setting our hearts apart from God,—we may not as yet clearly see, but whatever it may be, we shall have to choose as between it and God. We may postpone, but we can in nowise shirk decision. Christ, who knows the human heart, will bring it about,—for He is about our path, and is acquainted with all our ways,—He will bring it about, that what your heart secretly covets shall stand out before you, and if you choose God you will have to choose Him through the willing renunciation of your dearest earthly desire. Everything will have to be renounced that God may have supreme place in your soul. Christ may ask some outward sacrifice, or He may not, to show the reality of the surrender, but in the one case, as in the other, the surrender must be there.

Come and see what decision this man made. Remember his correct morals, his

culture, his beautiful ingenuousness, his noble enthusiasm. Forget not that he stopped Christ on the street, that he ran to stop Him, that he kneeled on the common way to the Man of sorrows. Here is Christ, beautiful as ever, with the far heavenward look in those lustrous eyes. How real, how near, does He make the life of eternity appear! Never at any moment would the ineffable superiority of Christ more affect his soul. But then,—these possessions! Give them up, forfeit his title to place, honour, comfort, happiness; become a forlorn wanderer like this man? As he thought of this his brow began to lower, to contract, to grow dark. What shall he do? Who can tell? Oh, mystery of personality and will, for whose decision even God waits. Who can tell what uprisings to God, what reversions to the world met and clashed in that soul? At last he has decided. Which is it to be? Does he say, “Jesus, I keep nothing back—all I have I yield to thee; I give myself to follow thee, that eternal life may be mine?” Alas, no; he does not speak. He dare not speak. He dare not utter in his own ears what, nevertheless, he is going to do. He has decided to give up God. He went away.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

THE YOUNG RULER.—HE WENT AWAY SORROWFUL.

Read Psalm xvii. 1—15. Luke xviii. 1—25.

“He went away.” Such was the young man’s decision. What did it mean? Was the significance of his act this, that he had not decided for God—that the matter was in suspense as it had hitherto been? Ah, no! he had decided against God. He has made choice of his possessions rather than of God’s supreme will and life in Him. In other words, he has rejected the latter as unreal in favour of the former. The man was not then where he was before. He had leaped an awful gulf. Whether he ever reversed this decision we know not. Men have done that, who for the time were as determined as he was. We dare not exclude the possibility of his return, but when we reflect how deliberate resolves like his root themselves in the nature, and mould the life, we cannot but hold that the probability is the other way. Keeping that out of view, however, let us deal with the consequence of his present act.

He went away, saying to himself, “Of course I shall not go far. I shall be as blameless in the future as I have been in the past, only I cannot throw up everything for

what mayhap after all is a dream.” Multitudes are like this young man. They say, “We do not want to be out-and-out religious,—to yield ourselves up wholly to God. We shrink from that surrender. But we need not be bad for all that. We shall not go very far away. We shall be as moral as before,—yea, as the Christians themselves.” How many are preaching to their own hearts that they may have all the moral culture of faith without faith, that these theological requirements of conversion or heart-surrender to God, are no longer absolutely indispensable for life in the very highest line. My dear friend, I shall not quarrel about words. Come away back to the central condition of well-being which knows no secular change. Either the will of God is supreme for you, or it is not supreme. You are looking on yourself as one who exists for the service of God, or you are putting preferences of your own before His absolute sovereign will. Now, be honest above all. Do not think that you can shirk real surrender to God and yet have God. That means that you have broken with God. You have given up seeking,—as supreme good,—a life in Him. In other words, God is not as real to you as the things you have chosen before Him. Virtually He is dropt out of your world. You are essaying to carry on life’s business without Him, out of all relation to His purposes or His laws. While you recognised His will as something to be done, the universe was for you a firm city,—to recall Carlyle’s phrase,—a scene of moral probation, in which you found your place, according to your relation to that Will. Now, however, that you would be master of yourself, you are alone in the infinite void. Obligation in the old strict sense is dead. There is no one to oblige. In losing the Divine Will, you have lost your one sure foothold in the unknown.

Ah, brother, you see that you have travelled far. Though exteriorly, you may be as moral as before, you are a different man. Godless, self-centred, you have become a law to yourself. God is not in all your thoughts. Good blundering men may say of you,—and truly, in certain subordinate respects,—“He is such a good man, though not a Christian.” But those who read the heart will say, “He went away,—away from the true moral centre of life,—away from the heart’s most instinctive conviction, dependence on God,—away from all hunger for God’s righteousness,—away from desire for, ay, from the very sight of a life in God, higher, purer, more

ineffably blessed than the noblest morality of earth,—away into poor self-sufficiency, into the candle-light of human reason, into the cold ice-gleam of mere earthly prudence, into a living in and for a present which is death to the true life of the soul, to prattle about mere outside things, drainage, and sanitation, and social science, and barren altruisms—a man who might have been a son of God.

He went away. That describes his future course. Formerly his morality opened his mind to God. Now the closing of his mind to God would empty his morality of its educating power. These moral rules would be just rules, to remember for his reputation's sake. His heart would settle on his possessions. And it may well be, as love of them grew, allegiance to the cast-iron rules of morality would relax. We have seen the like happen among ourselves. And so the character would grow lower, grosser, earthlier, till hardly a trace of the old ingenuousness would survive. I shall not follow the deterioration beyond this life, though of course if it be not arrested it must go beyond this life. He that is unjust shall be unjust still.

Rather would I emphasize the word which comes next to the three on which we have been meditating. He went away, sorrowful. This young man chose his possessions and yet he was sorrowful. As he went back there stood his mansion exceeding fair. Yet he was sorrowful. He surveyed his wealth,—finding not one penny wanting. Yet he was sorrowful. He went out and received everywhere the obeisance of the people. Yet he was sorrowful. Thinking of this I am reminded of another scene where another young man,—Stephen,—having to decide as this young man decided, took the opposite side. He renounced not merely property but life for God. But he was not sorrowful. Look at him in the moment of decision. "And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." It has always been so—always will be so. The man who decides for self is unhappy, while the soul that surrenders is full of joy.

The experience of these two is reflected in the history of the world. Ages of faith have been ages of victorious joy. Ages of scepticism are ages of gloom. Men can palm wonderful deceptions on themselves. They can, with wonderful ease, make out the faith to be a yoke, a bondage, a tyranny. If all that is being said about it be true, the wonder

is that it ever lived twenty-four hours in the world. But a man has only to go out from the enclosure of religion, to find what he has lost. The *ignis fatuus* of his unbelief has led him into the old pagan darkness of the pre-Christian world. Ah, how beautiful the lit-up house of faith looks, when you have forsaken it. To believe that the Centre of this world is love, that I have been created by love, that Divine love stooped to earth to make me a son of love, and that there is for me an eternal home of love,—that is inspiring at least. Those hymns, what a rhythm! those prayers, what a rush! And what have you won instead? An outcome of law, a product of evolution, you open your eyes on the world. And in all this universe there is to you no Divine Father,—no eye, as Richter says, but only an eye-socket,—merely law grinding on in endless motion. And at any moment these great laws that threw you out a manufactured article, may crush you, there being no providence now, nor any future world of which unbelief can learn. "Earth to earth, dust to dust" will be spoken over you in a far sadder sense than the Christian. And during the seventy years in which you live, no God to pray to, no Christ on whom to cast the burden of your cares, no love to have compassion, but only soulless law. And even the brotherhood of man is now changed. It is not for Christ's sake, because of a great Divine love to which I owe everything, that I am bound to love you. But I love you because, on the whole and in the long run, unselfishness is the best investment for the individual and the race, and you love me for the same sublime reason. For Christian self-sacrifice, for that lofty spirit which throws itself out in the discovery and propagation of unknown truths, reckless of present results, because the triumph of the good and true is guaranteed in God, you have a prudence, of which each man is to be the measure, and which has no standard of obligation beyond. No wonder you are sorrowful. While we recognise the nobility of some men who preach doctrines which reach to such conclusions, yet in this whole tendency of thought we see the spirit of him who seduced Eve. "Ye shall be as gods." Poor gods, indeed; your throne is built on a grave. I do not want to be such a god. I want to be a child,—my Father's child, to have the child's heart, the child's submissiveness, the child's hope of immortality with my God. Even when in eternity I become a man, I shall not put away these childish things.

A HARDY NORSEMAN.

By EDNA LYALL,

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ONE spring evening, rather more than two years after the wedding, Sigrid was working away in the little back garden, to which, now that her household duties were light, she devoted a good deal of her time. It joined the garden of Rowan-Tree House, and for greater convenience an opening had been made in the hedge, and a little green gate put up. Upon this gate leant Cecil, chatting comfortably, her tennis racquet under her arm, and with a pleasant consciousness that the work of the day was over, and that Roy and Frithiof might soon be expected for the nightly game which during the season they seldom cared to miss.

"They are late this evening," said Sigrid. "I wonder whether Herr Sivertsen has caught Frithiof. I hope not, for the tennis does him so much good."

"Is he working very hard?" asked Cecil. "He always works furiously, and just now I think he has got what someone called 'the lust of finishing' upon him; we see very little of him, for when he is not at business he is hard at work over Herr Sivertsen's manuscript. But it really seems to agree with him; they say, you know, that work without worry harms no one."

"A very moral precept," said a voice behind her, and glancing up she saw Frithiof himself crossing the little lawn.

The two years had not greatly altered him, but he seemed more full of life and vigour than before, and success and hope had entirely banished the look of conflict which for so long had been plainly visible in his face. Sigrid felt proud of him as she glanced round, there was something in his mere physical strength which always appealed to her.

"We were just talking about you," she said, "and wondering when you would be ready to play."

"After that remark of yours which I overheard, I almost think I shall have to eschew tennis," he said, laughing. "Why should I give a whole hour to it when Herr Sivertsen is impatiently waiting for the next instalment?"

"Herr Sivertsen is insatiable," said Sigrid, taking off her gardening gloves. "And I'm not going to allow you to return to your old

bad ways; as long as you live with me you will have to be something more than a working drudge."

"Since Sigrid has begun baby's education," said Frithiof, turning laughingly to Cecil, "we notice that she has become very dictatorial to the rest of us."

"You shouldn't make stage asides in such a loud voice," said Sigrid, pretending to box his ears. "I am going to meet Roy and to fetch the rackets, and you take him into the garden, Cecil, and make him behave properly."

"Are you really so specially busy just now?" asked Cecil, as he opened the little gate and joined her; "or was it only your fun?"

"No, it was grim earnest," he replied. "For since Herr Sivertsen has been so infirm I have had most of his work to do. But it is well-paid work, and a very great help towards the debt fund. In ten years' time I may be free."

"You will really have paid off everything?"

"I quite hope to be able to do so."

"It will be a great work done," she said thoughtfully. "But when it is all finished, I wonder whether you will not feel a little like the men who work all their lives to make a certain amount and then retire, and can't think what to do with themselves."

"I hope not," said Frithiof; "but I own that there is a chance of it. You see the actual work in itself is hateful to me. Never I should think was there any one who so loathed indoor work of all kinds, specially desk work. Yet I have learnt to take real interest in the business, and that will remain and still be my duty when the debts are cleared off. It is a shocking confession, but I own that when Herr Sivertsen's work is no longer a necessity it will be an immense relief to me, and I doubt if I shall ever open that sort of book again."

"It must be terrible drudgery," said Cecil: "since you can't really like it."

"Herr Sivertsen has given me up as a hopeless case; he has long ago ceased to talk about Culture with a capital C to it; he no longer expects me to take any interest in the question whether earth worms do or do not show any sensitiveness to sound when placed

on a grand piano. I told him that the bare idea is enough to make any one in the trade shudder."

Cecil laughed merrily. It was by no means the first time that he had told her of his hopeless lack of all literary and scientific tastes, and she admired him all the more for it, because he kept so perseveringly to the work, and disregarded his personal tastes so manfully. They had, moreover, many points in common, for there was a vein of poetry in his nature as well as in hers; like most Norwegians he was musical, and his love of sport and of outdoor life had not robbed him of the gentler tastes, love of scenery, and love of home.

"See!" she exclaimed; "there is the first narcissus. How early it is! I must take it to mother, for she is so fond of them."

He stooped to gather the flower for her, and as she took it from him, he just glanced at her for a moment; she was looking very pretty that evening, her grey eyes were unusually bright, there was a soft glow of colour in her fair face, an air of glad contentment seemed to hover about her. He little guessed that it was happiness in his success which was the cause of all this.

Even as he watched her, however, her colour faded, her lips began to quiver, she seemed to be on the point of fainting.

"Is anything the matter?" he asked, alarmed by the sudden change in her face. "Are you ill, Cecil?"

She did not reply, but let him help her to the nearest garden-seat.

"It is the scent of the narcissus; it is too strong for you," he suggested.

"No," she gasped. "But a most awful feeling came over me. Something is going to happen, I am sure of it."

He looked perplexed. She dropped the narcissus from her hand, and he picked it up and put it on the farther side of the bench, still clinging to his own theory that it was the cause of her faintness. Her face, which a moment before had been so bright, was now white as the flower itself, and the look of suffering in it touched him.

His heart began to beat a little uneasily when he saw a servant approaching them from the house.

"She is right," he thought to himself. "What on earth can it be?"

"Master asked me to give you this, Miss Cecil," said the maid, handing her a little pencilled note.

She sat up hastily, making a desperate effort to look as if nothing were wrong with

her. The servant went back to the house, and Frithiof waited anxiously to hear what the note was about. She read it through and then handed it to him.

It ran as follows:—

"Mr. Grantley has come, and wishes to see the children. He will not take them away for a few days, but you had better bring them down to see him."

"He is out of prison!" exclaimed Frithiof. "But surely his time is not up yet. I thought he had five years?"

"The five years would be over next October. I knew it would come some day, but I never thought of it so soon, and to take them away in a few days!"

"I remember now," said Frithiof; "there is a rule that by good behaviour in prison they can slightly shorten their time. I am so sorry for you; it will be a fearful wrench to you to part with Lance and Gwen."

She locked her hands together, making no attempt at an answer.

"How exactly like the world," thought Frithiof to himself. "Here is a girl passionately devoted to these children, while the mother, who never deserved them at all, has utterly deserted them. To have had them for five years and then suddenly to lose them altogether, that is a fearful blow for her, they ought to have thought of it before adopting the children."

"Is there nothing I can do to help you?" he said, turning towards her. "Shall I go and fetch Lance and Gwen?"

With an effort she stood up.

"No, no," she said, trying hard to speak cheerfully. "Don't let this spoil your game. I am better, I will go and find them."

But by a sudden impulse he sprang up, made her take his arm and walked to the house with her.

"You are still rather shaky, I think," he said. "Let me come with you, I can at any rate save you the stairs. How strange it was that you should have known beforehand that this was coming! Did you ever have a presentiment of that kind over anything else?"

"Never," she said. "It was such an awful feeling. I wonder what it is that brings it."

He left her in the hall and ran up-stairs to the nursery, where he was always a welcome visitor. Both children rushed to meet him with cries of delight.

"Cecil has sent me up with a message to you," he said.

"To say we may come down," shouted Lance. "Is it that, Herr Frithiof?"

"No," cried Gwen, dancing round him, "it's to say a holiday for to-morrow, I guess."

"No, not that exactly," he said; "but your father has come, and Cecil wants you to come down and see him."

The children's faces fell. It seemed almost as if they instinctively knew of the cloud that hung over their father. They had always known that he would some day come to them; but his name had been little mentioned. It was difficult to mention it without running the risk of the terrible questions which as children they were so likely to ask. All the gladness and spirit seemed to have left them. They were both shy, and the meeting with this unknown parent was a terror to them. They clung to Frithiof as he took them down-stairs, and, catching sight of Cecil leaning back in one of the hall chairs, they made a rush for her, and poured out all their childish fears as she clung to them and kissed them with all the tenderness of a real mother.

"We don't want to go and see father," said Lance stoutly. "We had much rather not."

"But you must think that he wants to see you very much," said Cecil. "He remembers you quite well, though you have forgotten him; and now that he has come back to you, you must both make him very happy, and love him."

"I don't like him at all," said Gwen perversely.

"It is silly and wrong to say that," said Cecil. "You will love him when you see him."

"I love you," said Gwen with a vehement hug.

"Have you only room for one person in your heart?"

"I rather love Herr Frithiof," said Gwen, glancing up at him through her eyelashes.

They both smiled, and Cecil, seeing that little would be gained by discussing the matter, got up and led them towards the drawing-room, her pale, brave face contrasting curiously with Gwen's rosy cheeks and rebellious little air.

Mr. Boniface sat talking to the new-comer kindly enough. They both rose as Cecil and the children entered.

"This is my daughter," said Mr. Boniface.

And Cecil shook hands with the ex-prisoner, and looked a little anxiously into his face.

He was rather a pleasant-looking man of five-and-thirty, and so much like Lance that

she could not help feeling kindly towards him. She hoped that the children would behave well, and glanced at Gwen nervously.

But Gwen, who was a born flirt, speedily forgot her dislike, and was quite willing to meet the stranger's advances half-way. In two minutes' time she was contentedly sitting on his knee, while Lance stood shyly by, studying his father with a gravity which was, however, inclined to be friendly and not critical. When he had quite satisfied himself he went softly away, returning before long with a toy pistol and a boat, which he put into his father's hands.

"What is this?" said Mr. Grantley.

"It's my favourite toys," said Lance. "I wanted to show them you. Quick, Gwen, run and find your doll for father."

He seemed touched and pleased; and indeed they were such well-trained children that any parent must have been proud of them. To this ex-convict, who for years had been cut off from all child-life, the mere sight of them was refreshing. He seemed quite inclined to sit there and play with them for the rest of the evening. And Cecil sat by in a sort of dream, hearing of the new home that was to be made for the children in British Columbia—where land was to be had for a penny an acre, and where one could live on grapes and peaches, and all the most delicious fruits. Then, presently, with many expressions of gratitude for all that had been done for the children, Mr. Grantley took leave, and she led the little ones up to bed, leaving Mr. and Mrs. Boniface to go out into the garden and tell Roy and Sigrid what had passed.

"How does Cecil take it?" asked Sigrid anxiously.

"Very quietly," was the reply; "but I am afraid she feels losing them so soon."

Frithiof, with an uncomfortable recollection of what had passed in the garden, doubted if Mrs. Boniface fully understood the depth of Cecil's feelings. He left them talking over the drawbacks and advantages of colonial life, and went in to his translating; but though he forgot the actual cause, he was conscious all the time of a disturbing influence, and even while absorbed in his work, had an irritating sense that something had gone wrong, and that trouble was in the air.

He went to bed and dreamt all night of Cecil. She haunted him persistently; sometimes he saw her leaning back on the garden seat, with the narcissus just falling from her hand, sometimes he saw her with the

children clinging to her as they had done in the hall.

From that time forward a great change came over his attitude towards her. Hitherto his friendship with her had, it must be owned, been chiefly selfish. He had always heartily liked her, had enjoyed being at Rowan-Tree House, had fallen into the habit of discussing many things with her and valuing her opinion, but it was always of himself that he had thought—of what she could do for him, of what he could learn from her, of how much enjoyment he could get from her music and her frank friendliness, and her easy way of talking. It was not that he was more selfish than most men, but that they had learnt really to know each other at a time when his heart was so paralysed by Blanche's faithlessness, so crushed by the long series of misfortunes, that giving had been out of the question for him, he could merely take and make the most of whatever she could give him.

But now all this was altered. The old wounds, though to the end of his life they must leave a scar, were really healed. He had lived through a great deal, and had lived in a way that had developed the best points in his character. He had now a growingly keen appreciation for all that was really beautiful—for purity, and strength and tenderness, and for that quality which it is the fashion to call Altruism, but which he, with his hatred of affectation in words, called goodness.

As he thought of Cecil during those days he began to see more and more clearly the full force of her character. Hitherto he had quietly taken her for granted; there was nothing very striking about her, nothing in the least obtrusive. Perhaps if it had not been for that strange little scene in the garden he would never have taken the trouble to think of her actual character.

Through the week that followed he watched her with keen interest and sympathy. That she should be in trouble—at any rate, in trouble that was patent to all the world—was something entirely new. Their positions seemed to be reversed; and he found himself spontaneously doing everything he could think of to please and help her. Her trouble seemed to draw them together; and to his mind there was something very beautiful in her passionate devotion to the children—for it was a devotion that never in the least bordered on sentimentality. She went through everything very naturally, having a good cry now and

then, but taking care not to make the children unhappy at the prospect of the parting, and arranging everything that they could possibly want, not only on the voyage but for some time to come in their new home.

"She is so plucky!" thought Frithiof to himself, with a thrill of admiration. For he was not at all the sort of man to admire helplessness, or languor, or cowardice, they seemed to him as unlovely in a woman as in a man.

At last the actual parting came. Cecil would have liked to go down to the steamer and see the children start, but on thinking it over she decided that it would be better not.

"They will feel saying good-bye," she said, "and it had better be here. Then they will have the long drive with you to the docks, and by that time they will be all right again, and will be able to enjoy the steamer and all the novelty."

Mr. Boniface was obliged to own that there was sound common sense in this plan; so in their own nursery, where for nearly five years she had taken such care of them, Cecil dressed the two little ones for the last time, brushed out Gwen's bright curls, coaxed Lance into his reefer, and then, no longer able to keep back her tears, clung to them in the last terrible parting.

"Oh, Cecil, dear, darling Cecil," sobbed Lance, "I don't want to go away; I don't care for the steamer one bit."

She was on the hearthrug with both children nestled close to her, the thought of the unknown world that they were going out into, and the difficult future awaiting them, came sweeping over her; just as they were then, innocent, and unconscious, and happy, she could never see them again.

"Be good, Lance," she said through her tears. "Promise me always to try to be good."

"I promise," said the little fellow, hugging her with all his might. "And we shall come back as soon as ever we're grown up—we shall both come back."

"Yes, yes," said Cecil, "you must come back."

But in her heart she knew that however pleasant the meeting in future years might be, it could not be like the present; as children, and as her own special charge, she was parting with them for ever.

The carriage drove up to the door, there came sounds of hurrying feet and fetching and carrying of luggage, Cecil took them down-stairs, and then with a last long em-

brace from Lance, and kisses interspersed with sobs from Gwen, she gave them up to her father, and turned to take leave of their nurse.

"I will take great care of them, miss," said the maid, herself crying, "and you shall hear from me regularly."

In another minute the carriage had driven away, and Cecil was left to make the best she might of what she could not but feel, at first, a desolate life.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HARDLY had the bustle of departure quieted down at Rowan-Tree House when a fresh anxiety rose. Herr Sivertsen, who had for some time been out of health, was seized with a fatal illness, and for three days and nights Frithiof was unable to leave him; on the third night the old Norseman passed quietly away, conscious to the last minute, and with his latest breath inveighing against the degeneracy of the age.

"Frithiof is a rare exception," he said, turning his dim eyes towards Sigrid, who stood by the bedside. "And to him I leave all that I have. As for the general run of young men now-a-days—I wash my hands of them—a worthless set—a degenerate—"

His voice died away, he sighed deeply, caught Frithiof's hand in his, and fell back on the pillow lifeless.

When the will was read it affirmed that Herr Sivertsen, who had no relations living, had indeed left his property to Frithiof. The will was terse and eccentric in the extreme, and seemed like one of the old man's own speeches, ending with the familiar words, "for he is one of the few honest and hard-working men in a despicable generation."

Naturally there was only one way to which Frithiof could think of putting his legacy. Every penny of it went straight to his debt-fund. Mr. Horner heard of it and groaned. "What!" he exclaimed, "pay away the principle; hand over thousands of pounds in payment of debts that are not even his own—debts that don't affect his name! He ought to put the money into this business, Boniface; it would only be a fitting way of showing you his gratitude."

"He put into the business what I value far more," said Mr. Boniface. "He put into it his honest Norwegian heart, and this legacy will save him many years of hard, weary work and anxiety."

When summer came it was arranged that they should go to Norway, and Frithiof went about his work with such an air of relief and

contentment, that had it not been for one hidden anxiety Sigrid's happiness would have been complete.

Her marriage had been so extremely happy that she was less than ever satisfied with the prospect that seemed to lie before Cecil. The secret which she had found out at the time of Frithiof's disgrace weighed upon her now a good deal, she almost wished that Roy would guess it; but no one else seemed to have any suspicion of it at all, and Sigrid of course could not speak, partly because she was Frithiof's sister, partly because she had a strong feeling that to allude to that matter would be to betray Cecil unfairly. Had she been a match-maker she might have done endless harm; had she been a reckless talker she would probably have defeated her own ends; but happily she was neither, and though at times she longed to give Frithiof a good shaking, when she saw him entirely absorbed in his work and blind to all else, she managed to keep her own counsel, and to await, though somewhat impatiently, whatever time should bring. One evening it chanced that the brother and sister were alone for a few minutes during the intervals of an amateur concert, which Cecil had been asked to get up at Whitechapel.

"How do you think it has gone off?" said Sigrid, as he sat down beside her in the little inner room.

"Capitally; Cecil ought to be congratulated," he replied. "I am glad she has had it on hand, for it must have taken her thoughts off the children."

"Yes," said Sigrid; "anything that does that is worth something."

"Yet she seems to me to have plenty of interests," said Frithiof. "She is never idle, she is a great reader."

"Do you think books would ever satisfy a woman like Cecil?" exclaimed Sigrid with a touch of scorn in her voice.

He looked at her quickly, struck by something unusual in her tone, and not at all understanding the little flush of hot colour that had risen in her face.

"Oh," he said teasingly, "you think that every one has your ideal of happiness, and cannot manage to exist without the equivalent of Roy and baby, to say nothing of the house and garden."

"I don't think anything of the sort," she protested, relieved by his failure to appropriate to himself her rather unguarded speech.

"Norway will be the best thing in the world for her," he said. "It is the true

panacea for all evils. Can you believe that in less than a week we shall actually be at Bergen once more!"

And Sigrid, looking at his eager, blue eyes, and remembering his brave struggles and long exile, could not find it in her heart to be angry with him any more. Besides, he had been very thoughtful for Cecil just lately, and seemed to have set his heart on making the projected tour in Norway as nearly perfect as might be. To Sigrid there was a serious drawback,—she was obliged to leave her baby behind in England; however, after the first wrench of parting she managed to enjoy herself very well, and Mrs. Boniface, who was to spend the six weeks of their absence in Devonshire with some of her cousins, promised to take every possible care of her little grandson, to telegraph now and then, and to write at every opportunity. It had been impossible for Mr. Boniface to leave London, but the two younger members of the firm, with Sigrid, Cecil, and little Swan-hild, made a very merry party, and Frithiof, at length free from the load of his father's debts, seemed suddenly to grow ten years younger. Indeed, Sigrid, who for so long had seen her hopes for Cecil defeated by the cares and toils brought by these same debts, began to fear that now his extreme happiness in his freedom would quite suffice to him, and that he would desire nothing further.

Certainly, for many years he had known nothing like the happiness of that voyage, with its bright expectation, its sense of relief. To look back on the feverish excitement of his voyage to England five years before was like looking back into some other life; and if the world was a graver and sadder place to him now than it had been long ago, he had at any rate learnt that life was not limited to three-score years and ten, and had gained a far deeper happiness of which no one could rob him. On the Wednesday night he slept little, and very early in the morning was up on the wet and shining deck eagerly looking at the first glimpse of his own country. His heart bounded within him when the red roofs and gables of Stavanger came into sight, and he was the very first to leap off the steamer, far too impatient to touch Norwegian soil once more to dream of waiting for the more leisurely members of the party. The quiet little town seemed still fast asleep, he scarcely met a soul in the primitive streets with their neat wooden houses and their delightful look of home. In a rapture of happiness he walked on drinking down deep

breaths of the fresh morning air, until coming at length to the cathedral he caught sight of an old woman standing at the door, key in hand.

He stopped and had a long conversation with her for the mere pleasure of hearing his native tongue once more; he made her happy with a *kroner* and enjoyed her grateful shake of the hand, then, partly to please her, entered the cathedral. In the morning light, the severe beauty of the old Norman nave was very impressive; he knelt for a minute or two, glad to have the uninterrupted quiet of the great place before it had been reached by any of the tourists. It came into his mind how, long ago, his father's last words to him had been "A happy return to Gammle Norge," how for so long those words had seemed to him the bitterest mockery,—an utter impossibility—and how, at last in a very strange and different way, they had come true. He had come back, and, spite of all that had intervened, he was happy.

Later in the day, when they slowly steamed into Bergen harbour and saw once more the place that he had so often longed for, with its dear familiar houses and spires, its lovely surrounding mountains, his happiness was not without a strong touch of pain. For after all, though the place remained, his home had gone for ever, and though Herr Grönvold stood waiting for them on the landing quay with the heartiest of welcomes, yet he could not but feel a terrible blank.

Cecil read his face in a moment, and understood just what he was feeling.

"Come and let us look for the luggage," she said to Roy, wishing to leave the three Norwegians to themselves for a few minutes.

"Rather different from our last arrival here," said Roy brightly. He was so very happy that it was hardly likely he should think just then of other people. But as Cecil gave the assent which seemed so matter-of-fact her eyes filled with tears, for she could not help thinking of all the brightness of that first visit, of Frithiof with his boyish gaiety and light-heartedness, of the kindness and hospitality of his father, of the pretty villa in Kalvedalen, of poor Blanche in her innocent girlhood.

They were all to stay for a few days with the Grönvolds, and there was now plenty of room for them, since Karen and the eldest son were married and settled in homes of their own. Fru Grönvold and Sigrid met with the utmost affection, and all the petty quarrels and vexations of the past were forgotten; indeed, the very first evening they

had a hearty laugh over the recollection of their difference of opinion about Torvald Lundgren.

"And, my dear," said Fru Grönvold, who was as usual knitting an interminable stocking, "you need not feel at all anxious about him, he is very happily married, and I think, yes, certainly I cannot help owning, that he manages his household with a firmer hand than would perhaps have suited you. He has a very pretty little wife who worships the ground he treads on."

"Which you see I could never have done," said Sigrid merrily. "Poor Torvald! I am very glad he is happily settled. Frithiof must go and see him. How do you think Swanhild is looking, auntie?"

"Very well and very pretty," said Fru Grönvold. "One would naturally suppose that at her rather awkward age she would have lost her good looks, but she is as graceful as ever."

"She is a very brave, hard-working little woman," said Sigrid. "I told you that she had begged so hard to stay on with Madame Lechertier that we had consented. It would indeed have been hardly fair to take her away all at once, when Madame had been so kind and helpful to us; and Swanhild is very independent, you know, and declares that she must have some sort of profession, and that to be a teacher of dancing is clearly her vocation."

"By-and-by when she is grown up, she is going to keep my house," said Frithiof.

"No, no," said Sigrid; "I shall never spare her unless it is to get married; you two would never get on all by yourselves. By-the-bye, I am sure Cecil is keeping away from us on purpose; she went off on the plea of reading for her half-hour society, but she has been gone quite a long time. Go and find her, Frithiof, and tell her we very much want her."

He went out and found Cecil comfortably installed in the dining-room with her book.

"Have you not read enough?" he said. "We are very dull without you in there."

"I thought you would have so much to talk over together," she said, putting down her book and lifting her soft grey eyes to his.

"Not a bit," he replied; "we are pining for music and want you to sing, if you are not too tired. What learned book were you reading, after such a journey? Plato?"

"A translation of the 'Phædo,'" she said. "There is such a strange little bit here about pleasure being mixed with pain always."

"Oh, they had found that out in those days, had they?" said Frithiof. "Read the bit to me; for, to tell you the truth, it would fit in rather well with this return to Bergen."

Cecil turned over the pages and read the following speech of Socrates:—

"How singular is the thing called pleasure, and how curiously related to pain, which might be thought to be the opposite of it; for they never come to man together, and yet he who pursues either of them is generally compelled to take the other. They are two, and yet they grow together out of one head or stem; and I cannot help thinking that if Æsop had noticed them he would have made a fable about God trying to reconcile their strife, and when He could not, He fastened their heads together; and this is the reason why, when one comes the other follows."

"It's odd to think that all these hundreds of years people have been racking their brains to find some explanation of the great problem," said Frithiof, "that generation after generation of unsatisfied people have lived and died."

"A poor woman from East London once answered the problem to me quite unconsciously," said Cecil. "She was down in the country for change of air, and she said to me, 'It's just like Paradise here, miss, and if it could always go on it would be heaven.'"

He sighed.

"Come and sing me 'Princessen,'" he said, "if you are really not too tired. I am very much in the mood of that restless lady in the poem."

And, in truth, often during those days at Bergen he was haunted by the weird ending of the song—

"'What do I then want, my God?' she cried.
Then the sun went down."

He had a good deal of business to see to, and the clearing off of the debts was, of course, not without a considerable pleasure; he greatly enjoyed, too, the hearty welcome of his old friends; but there was always something wanting. For every street, every view, every inch of the place was associated with his father, and, dearly as he loved Bergen, he felt that he could not have borne to live in it again. He seemed to find his chief happiness in lionizing Cecil, and sometimes, when with her, the pain of the return was forgotten, and he so enjoyed her admiration of his native city that he no longer felt the terrible craving for his father's presence.

They went to Nestun, and wandered about in the woods; they took Cecil to see the quaint old wooden church from Fortun; they had a merry picnic at Fjessanger, and an early expedition to the Bergen fish market, determined that Cecil should enjoy that picturesque scene with the weather-beaten fishermen, the bargaining house-wives with their tin pails, the boats laden with their shining wealth of fishes. Again and again, too, they walked up the beautiful *fjeldveien* to gain that wonderful bird's-eye view over the town and the harbour and the lakes. But perhaps no one was sorry when the visit came to an end, and they were once more on their travels, going by sea to Molde and thence to Næs.

It was quite late one evening that they steamed down the darkening Romsdalsfjord. The great Romsdalshorn reared its dark head solemnly into the calm sky, and everywhere peace seemed to reign. The steamer was almost empty; Frithiof and Cecil stood alone at the fore-castle end, silently revelling in the exquisite view before them.

A thousand thoughts were seething in Frithiof's mind; that first glimpse of the Romsdalshorn had taken him back to the great crisis of his life; in strange contrast to that peaceful scene he had a vision of a crowded London street; in yet stranger contrast to his present happiness and relief he once more looked into the past, and thought of his hopeless misery, of his deadly peril, of the struggle he had gone through, of the chance which had made him pause before the picture shop, and of his recognition of the painting of his native mountains. Then he thought of his first approach to Rowan-Tree House on that dusky November afternoon, and he thought of his strange dream of the beasts, and the precipice, and the steep mountain side, and the opening door with the Madonna and Child framed in dazzling light. Just at that moment from behind the dark purple mountains rose the great, golden-red moon. It was a sight never to be forgotten, and the glow and glamour cast by it over the whole scene was indescribable: Veblungnaes with its busy wooden pier and its dusky houses, with here and there a light twinkling from a window; the Romsdalshorn with its lofty peak, and the beautiful valley beyond bathed in that sort of dim brightness and misty radiance which can be given by nothing but the rising moon.

Frithiof turned and looked at Cecil.

She had taken off her hat that she might better enjoy the soft evening breeze which

was ruffling up her fair hair; her blue dress was of one of those shades which are called "new," but which are not unlike the old blue in which artists have always loved to paint the Madonna; her face was very quiet and happy; the soft evening light seemed to etherealise her.

"You will never know how much I owe to you," he said impetuously. "Had it not been for all that you did for me in the past I could not possibly have been here to-night."

She had been looking towards Veblungnaes, but now she turned to him with a glance so beautiful, so rapturously happy, that it seemed to waken new life within him. He was so amazed at the strength of the passion which suddenly took possession of him that for a time he could hardly believe he was in real waking existence; this magical evening light, this exquisite fjord with its well-known mountains, might well be the scenery of some dream; and Cecil did not speak to him, she merely gave him that one glance and smile, and then stood beside him silently, as though there were no need of speech between them.

He was glad she was silent, for he dreaded lest anything should rouse him and take him back to the dull, cold past—the past in which for so long he had lived with his heart half dead, upheld only by the intention of redeeming his father's honour. To go back to that state would be terrible; moreover, the aim no longer existed. The debts were paid—his work was over, and yet his life lay before him.

Was it to be merely a business life—a long round of duty work? or was it possible that love might glorify the every-day round—that even for him this intense happiness, which as yet he could hardly believe to be real, might actually dawn?

And the steamer glided on over the calm moonlit waters, and drew nearer to Veblungnaes, where an eager-faced crowd waited for the great event of the day. A sudden terror seized Frithiof that some one would come to their end of the steamer and break the spell that bound him, and then the very fear itself made him realise that this was no dream, but a great reality. Cecil was beside him, and he loved her—a new era had begun in his life. He loved her, and grudged whatever could interfere with that strange sense of nearness to her and of bliss in the consciousness which had suddenly changed his whole world.

But no one came near them. Still they stood there—side by side, and the steamer moved on peacefully once more, the silvery

track still marking the calm fjord till they reached the little boat that was to land them at Naes. He wished that they could have gone on for hours, for as yet the mere consciousness of his own love satisfied him—he wanted nothing but the rapture of life after death—of brightness after gloom. When it was no longer possible to prolong that strange, weird calm, he went, like a man half awake, to see after the luggage, and presently, with an odd, dazzled feeling, found himself on the shore, where Herr Lossius, the landlord, stood to welcome them.

"Which is the hotel?" asked Roy.

And Herr Lossius replied in his quaint, careful English, "It is yonder, sir—that house just under the moon."

"Did you ever hear such a poetical direction?" said Cecil, smiling as they walked up the road together.

"It suits the evening very well," said Frithiof. "I am glad he did not say, 'First turning to your right, second to your left, and keep straight on,' like a Londoner."

But the "house under the moon," though comfortable enough, did not prove a good sleeping-place. All the night long Frithiof lay broad awake in his quaint room, and at length, weary of staring at the picture of the stag painted on the window-blind, he drew it up and lay looking out at the dark Romsdalshorn, for the bed was placed across the window, and commanded a beautiful view.

He could think of nothing but Cecil, of the strange, new insight that had come to him so suddenly, of the marvel that, having known her so long and so intimately, he had only just realised the beauty of her character, with its tender, womanly grace, its quiet strength, its steadfastness, and repose. Then came a wave of anxious doubt that drove sleep farther than ever from him. It was no longer enough to be conscious of his love for her. He began to wonder whether it was in the least probable that she could ever care for him. Knowing the whole of his past life, knowing his faults so well, was it likely that she would ever dream of accepting his love?

He fell into great despondency; but the recollection of that sweet, bright glance which she had given him in reply to his impetuous burst of gratitude, reassured him; and when, later on, he met her at breakfast his doubts were held at bay, and his hopes raised, not by anything that she did or said, but by her mere presence.

Whether Sigrid at all guessed at the state of affairs and arranged accordingly, or

whether it was a mere chance, it so happened that for the greater part of that day, as they travelled through the beautiful Romsdal, Frithiof and Cecil were together.

"What will you do?" said Cecil to herself, "when all this is over? How will you go back to ordinary life when the tour is ended?"

But though she tried in this way to take the edge off her pleasure she could not do it. Afterwards might take care of itself. There was no possibility of realising it now, she would enjoy to the full just the present that was hers, the long talks with Frithiof, the delightful sense of fellowship with him, the mutual enjoyment of that exquisite valley.

And so they drove on, past Aak, with its lovely trees and its rippling river, past the lofty Romsdalshorn, past the Troltinderne, with their weird outline looming up against the blue sky like the battlements and pinnacles of some magic city. About the middle of the day they reached Horgheim, where it had been arranged that they should spend the night. Frithiof was in a mood to find everything beautiful, he even admired the rather bare-looking posting-station, just a long, brown, wooden house with a high flight of steps to the door and seats on either side. On the doorstep lay a fine white and tabby cat, which he declared he could remember years before when they had visited the Romsdal.

"And that is very possible," said the landlady, with a pleased look. "For we have had him these fourteen years."

Every one crowded round to look at this antiquated cat.

"What is his name?" asked Cecil, speaking in Norse.

His name is Mons," said the landlady, "Mons Horgheim."

They all laughed at the thought of a cat with a surname, and then came a general dispersion in quest of rooms. Cecil and Swanhild chose one which looked out across a grassy slope to the river; the Rauma just at this part is very still, and of a deep green colour; beyond were jagged, grey mountains and the moraine of a glacier covered here and there with birch and juniper. Half-a-dozen little houses with grass-grown roofs nestled at the foot, and near them were sweet-smelling hayfields and patches of golden corn.

They dined merrily on salmon, wild strawberries, and cream, and then a walk was proposed. Cecil, however, excused herself, saying that she had letters to write home, and

so it chanced that Frithiof and Sigrid had what did not often fall to their lot in those days, the chance of a quiet talk.

"What is wrong with you, dear old boy?" she said; for since they had left Horgheim she could not but notice that he had grown grave and absorbed.

"Nothing," he said, with rather a forced laugh. But, though he tried to resume his usual manner and talked with her and teased her playfully, she knew that he had something on his mind, and half hopefully, half-fearfully, made one more attempt to win his confidence.

"Let us rest here in the shade," she said, settling herself comfortably under a silver birch. "Roy and Swanhild walk at such a pace that I think we will let them have the first view of the Mongefos."

He threw himself down on the grass beside her, and for a time there was silence.

"You did not sleep last night," she said presently.

"How do you know that?" he said, his colour rising a little.

"Oh, I know it by your forehead. You were worrying over something. Come, confess."

He sat up and began to speak abruptly.

"I want to ask you a question," he said, looking up the valley beyond her and avoiding her eyes. "Do you think a man has any business to offer to a woman a love which is not his first passion?"

"At one time I thought not," said Sigrid. "But as I grew older and understood things more it seemed to me different. I think there would be few marriages in the world if we made a rule of that sort. And a woman who really loved would lose sight of all selfishness and littleness and jealousy just because of the strength of her love."

He turned and looked straight into her eyes.

"And if I were to tell Cecil that I loved her, do you think she would at any rate listen to me?"

"I am not going to say 'yes' or 'no' to that question," said Sigrid, suddenly bending forward and giving him a kiss—a salute almost unknown between a Norwegian brother and sister. "But I will say instead 'Go and try.'"

"You think then——"

She sprang to her feet.

"I don't think at all," she said laughingly. "Good-bye. I am going to meet the others at the Mongefos, and you—you are going back to Horgheim. Adjö."

She waved her hand to him and walked resolutely away. He watched her out of sight, then fell back again to his former position on the grass, and thought. She had told him nothing, and yet somehow had brought to him a most wonderful sense of rest and peace.

Presently he got up, and began to retrace his steps along the valley.

CHAPTER XL

THE afternoon was not so clear as the morning had been, yet it had a beauty of its own which appealed to Frithiof very strongly. The blue sky had changed to a soft pearly grey, all round him rose grave, majestic mountains, their summits clear against the pale background, but wreaths of white mist clinging about their sides in fantastic twists and curves which bridged over huge yawning chasms and seemed to join the valley into a great amphitheatre. The stern grey and purple rocks looked hardly real, so softened were they by the luminous summer haze. Here and there the white snow gleamed coldly in long deep crevices, or in broad clefts where from year's end to year's end it remained unmelted by sun or rain. On each side of the road there was a wilderness of birch and fir and juniper bushes, while in the far distance could be heard the Mongefos with its ceaseless sound of many waters, repeated on either hand by the smaller waterfalls. Other sound there was none save the faint tinkle of cowbells or the rare song of the little black and white wagtails, which seemed the only birds in the valley.

Suddenly he perceived a little farther along the road a slim figure leaning against the fence, the folds of a blue dress, the gleam of light-brown hair under a sealskin travelling cap. His heart began to beat fast, he strode on more quickly, and Cecil, hearing footsteps, looked up.

"I had finished my letter and thought I would come out to explore a little," she said, as he joined her. "You have come back?"

"Yes," he said, "I have come back to you."

She glanced at him questioningly, startled by his tone, but before his eager look her eyelids dropped, and a soft glow of colour suffused her face.

"Cecil," he said, "do you remember what you said years ago about men who worked hard to make their fortune and then retired and were miserable because they had nothing to do?"

"Oh yes," she said, "I remember it very well, and have often seen instances of it."

"I am like that now," he continued. "My work seems over, and I stand at the threshold of a new life. It was you who saved me from ruin in my old life—will you be my helper now?"

"Do you think I really could help?" she said wistfully.

He looked at her gentle eyes, at her pure, womanly face, and he knew that his life was in her hands.

"I do not know," he said gravely. "It depends on whether you could love me—whether you will let me speak of my love for you."

Then, as he paused, partly because his English words would not come very readily, partly in hope of some sign of encouragement from her, she turned to him with a face which shone with heavenly light.

"There must never be any secrets between us," she said, speaking quite simply and directly. "I have loved you ever since you first came to us—years ago."

It was nothing to Frithiof that they were standing at the side of the king's highway—he had lost all sense of time and place—the world only contained for him the woman who loved him—the woman who let him clasp her in his strong arm—let him press her sweet face to his.

And still from the distance came the sound of many waters, and the faint tinkle of the cowbells and the song of the little black and white birds. The grave grey mountains seemed like strong and kindly friends who sheltered them and shut them in from all intrusion of the outer world, but they were so entirely absorbed in each other that they had not a thought for anything else.

"With you I shall have courage to begin life afresh," he said after a time. "To have the right to love you—to be always with you—that will be everything to me."

And then, as he thought of her true-hearted confession, he tried to understand a little better the unseen ordering of his life, and he loved to think that those weary years had been wasted neither on him nor on Cecil herself. He could not for one moment doubt that her pure, unselfish love had again and again shielded him from evil, that all through his English life with its hard struggles and bitter sufferings her love had in some unknown way been his safeguard, and that his life, crippled by the faithlessness of a woman, had by a woman also been re-

deemed. All his old morbid craving for death had gone—he eagerly desired a long life that he might live with her, work for her, shield her from care, fill up to the best of his power what was incomplete in her life.

"I shall have a postscript to add to my letter," said Cecil presently—looking up at him with the radiant smile which he so loved to see on her lips. "What a very feminine one it will be! We say, you know, in England that a woman's postscript is the most important part of her letter."

"Will your father and mother ever spare you to me?" said Frithiof.

"They will certainly welcome you as their son," she replied.

"And Mr. and Mrs. Horner?" suggested Frithiof mischievously.

But at the thought of the consternation of her worthy cousins Cecil could do nothing but laugh.

"Never mind," she said, "they have always disapproved of me as much as they have of you; they will perhaps say that it is after all a highly suitable arrangement!"

"I wonder whether Swanhild will say the same?" said Frithiof with a smile; "here she comes hurrying home alone. Will you wait by the river and let me just tell her my good news?"

He walked along the road to meet his sister, who, spite of added years and inches, still retained much of her childlikeness.

"Why are you all alone?" he said.

"Oh, three is no fun," said Swanhild. "When Roy and Sigrid are out on a holiday they are just like lovers, so I came back to you."

"What will you say when I tell you that I am betrothed," he said teasingly.

She looked up in his face with some alarm.

"You are only making fun of me," she protested.

"On the contrary, I am stating the most serious of facts. Come, I want your congratulations."

"But who are you betrothed to?" asked Swanhild bewildered. "Can it be to Madale? And, oh dear, what a horrid time to choose for it—you will be just no good at all. I really do think you might have waited till the end of the tour."

"It might possibly have been managed if you had spoken sooner," said Frithiof with mock gravity, "but you come too late—the deed is done."

"Well, I shall have Cecil to talk to, so

after all it doesn't much matter," said Swanhild graciously.

"But unfortunately she also has become betrothed," said Frithiof, watching the bewildered little face with keen pleasure, and seeing the light of perception suddenly dawn on it.

Swanhild caught his hand in hers.

"You don't mean—" she began.

"Oh, yes," said Frithiof, "but I do mean it very much indeed. Come," and he hurried her down the grassy slope to the river. "I shall tell Cecil every word you have been saying." Then, as she rose to meet them, he said with a laugh, "This selfish child thinks we might have put it off till the end of the tour for her special benefit."

"No, no," cried Swanhild, flying towards Cecil with outstretched arms. "I never knew it was to you he was betrothed—and you could never be that horrid, moony kind who are always sitting alone together in corners."

At which ingenuous congratulation they all laughed so immoderately that Mons Horgheim the cat was roused from his afternoon nap on the steps of the station, and after a preliminary stretch strolled down towards the river to see what was the matter, and to bring the sobriety and accumulated wisdom of his fourteen years to bear upon the situation.

"Ah, well," said Swanhild, with a comical gesture, "there is clearly nothing for me but, as they say in Italy, to stay at home and nurse the cat."

And catching up the astonished Mons, she danced away, eager to be the first to tell the good news to Roy and Sigrid.

"It will be really very convenient," she remarked, to the infinite amusement of her elders. "We shall not lose Frithiof at all; he will only have to move across to Rowan-Tree House."

And ultimately that was how matters arranged themselves, so that the house which had sheltered Frithiof in his time of trouble became his home in this time of his prosperity.

He had not rushed all at once into full light and complete manhood and lasting happiness. Very slowly, very gradually, the life that had been plunged in darkness had emerged into faint twilight as he had struggled to redeem his father's name; then, by degrees, the brightness of dawn had increased, and, sometimes helped, sometimes hindered by the lives which had come into contact with his own, he had at length

emerged into clearer light, till, after long waiting, the sun had indeed risen.

As Swanhild had prophesied, they were by no means selfish lovers, and, far from spoiling the tour, their happiness did much to add to its success.

Cecil hardly knew which part of it was most delightful to her, the return to Molde and the pilgrimage to the quaint little jeweller's shop where they chose two plain gold betrothal rings such as are always used in Norway; or the merry journey to the Geiranger; or the quiet days at Oldören, in that lovely valley with the river curving and bending its way between wooded banks, and the rampart of grand, craggy mountains with snowy peaks, her own special mountain, as Frithiof called *Cecilienkrone*, dominating all.

It was at Oldören that she saw for the first time one of the prettiest sights in Norway—a country wedding. The charming bride, Pernilla, in her silver-gilt crown and bridal ornaments, had her heartiest sympathy, and Frithiof, happening to catch sight of the fiddler standing idly by the churchyard gate when the ceremony was over, brought him into the hotel and set every one dancing. Anna Rasmusen, the clever and charming manager of the inn, volunteered to try the *spring dans* with Halfstan, the guide. The hamlet was searched for dancers of the *halling*, and the women showed them the pretty *jelster* and the *tretur*.

By degrees all the population of the place crowded in as spectators, and soon Johannes and Pernilla, the bride and bridegroom, made their way through the throng, and, each carrying a decanter, approached the visitors, shook hands with them, and begged that they would drink their health. There was something strangely simple and charming about the whole thing. Such a scene could have been found in no other country save in grand, free old Norway, where false standards of worth are abolished, and where mutual respect and equal rights bind each to each in true brotherhood.

The day after the wedding they spent at the Brixdals glacier, rowing all together up the lake, but afterwards separating, Frithiof and Cecil walking in advance of the others up the beautiful valley.

"There will soon be a high-road to this glacier," said Frithiof, "but I am glad they are only beginning it now, and that we have this rough path."

And Cecil was glad too. She liked the

scramble and the little bit of climbing needed here and there; she loved to feel the strength and protection of Frithiof's hand as he led her over the rocks and boulders. At last, after a long walk, they reached a smooth, grassy oasis, shaded by silver birches and bordered by a river; beyond, the Brixdalsbræ gleamed white through the trees, with here and there exquisite shades of blue visible in the ice even at that distance.

"This is just like the land of Beulah," said Cecil, smiling, "and the glacier is the celestial city. How wonderful those broken pinnacles of ice are!"

"Look at these two little streams running side by side for so long and at last joining," said Frithiof. "They are like our two lives. For so many years you have been to me, as we should say, *fortrölig*."

"What does that mean?" she asked.

"It is untranslatable," he said. "It is that in which one puts one's trust and confidence, but more besides. It means exactly what you have always been to me."

Cecil looked down at the little bunch of forget-me-nots and lilies of the valley—the Norwegian national flowers with which Frithiof loved to keep her supplied—and the remembrance of all that she had borne during these five years came back to her, and by contrast made the happy present yet sweeter.

"I think," she said, "I should like Signor Donati to know of our happiness; he was the first who quite understood you."

"Yes, I must write to him," said Frithiof. "There is no man to whom I owe more."

And thinking of the Italian's life and character and of his own past, he grew silent.

"Do you know," he said at length, "there is one thing I want you to do for me. I want you to give me back my regard for the Sogne once more. I want, on our way home, just to pass Balholm again."

And so one day it happened that they found themselves on the well-remembered fjord, and coming up on deck when dinner was over, saw that already the familiar scenes of the Frithiof saga were coming into view.

"Look! look!" said Frithiof. "There, far in front of us is the Kvinnafos, looking like a thread of white on the dark rock; and over to the right is Framnaes!"

Cecil stood beside him on the upper deck, and gradually the scene unfolded. They saw the little wooded peninsula, the lovely

mountains round the Fjaerlands fjord, Munkeggen itself, with much more snow than during their last visit, and then, once again, King Bele's grave, and the scattered cottages, with their red-tiled roofs, and the familiar hotel, somewhat enlarged, yet recalling a hundred memories.

Gravely and thoughtfully Frithiof looked on the little hamlet and on Munkeggen. It was a picture that had been traced on his mind by pleasure and engraved by pain. Cecil drew a little nearer to him, and though no word passed between them, yet intuitively their thoughts turned to one who must for ever be associated with those bright days spent in the house of Ole Kvikne long ago. There was no indignation in their thoughts of her, but there was pain, and pity, and hope, and the love which is at once the source and the outcome of forgiveness. They wondered much how matters stood with her out in the far-off southern seas, where she struggled on in a new life, which must always, to the very end, be shadowed by the old. And then Frithiof thought of his father, of his own youth, of the wonderful glamour and gladness that had been doomed so soon to pass into total eclipse, and feeling like some returned ghost, he glided close by the flagstaff, and the grey rocks, and the trees which had sheltered his farewell to Blanche. A strange and altogether indescribable feeling stole over him, but it was speedily dispelled. There was a link which happily bound his past to his present—a memory which nothing could spoil—on the quay he instantly perceived the well-remembered faces of the kindly landlord, Ole Kvikne, and his brother Knut.

"See!" he exclaimed with a smile, "there are the Kviknes looking not a day older! We must just see if they remember us."

Did they not remember? Of course they did! And what bowing and hand-shaking went on in the brief waiting-time. They had heard of Frithiof, moreover, and knew how nobly he had redeemed his father's name. They were enchanted at meeting him once more.

"Let me have the pleasure, Kvikne, to introduce to you my betrothed, who was also your guest long ago," said Frithiof, taking Cecil's hand and placing it in that of the landlord.

And the warm congratulations and hearty good wishes of Ole and Knut Kvikne were only cut short by the bell, which warned the travellers that they must hasten up the gangway.

"We shall come back," said Frithiof. "Another summer we shall stay with you."

"Yes," said Cecil. "After all there is nothing equal to Balholm. I had forgotten how lovely it was."

As they glided on they left the little place bathed in sunshine, and in silence they watched it, till at last a bend in the fjord hid it from view.

Frithiof fell into deep thought.

What part had that passionate first love of his played in his life-story? Well, it had been to him a curse—it had dragged him down into depths of despair, and to the verge of vice; it had steeped him in bitterness and filled his heart with anguish. Yet a more perfect love had awaited him—a passion less fierce but more tender, less vehement but more lasting; and all those years Cecil's heart had really been his, though he had so little dreamed of it.

As if in a picture he saw the stages through which he had passed—the rapture of mere physical existence; the intolerable pain and humiliation of Blanche's betrayal; the anguish of bereavement; the shame of bankruptcy; the long effort to pay the debts; the slow return to belief in human beings; the toil-some steps that had each brought him a clearer knowledge of the Unseen, for which he had once felt no need; and, finally, this wonderful love springing up like a fountain in his life, ready to gladden his somewhat prosaic round of daily work.

It was evening when they left the steamer at Sogndal, but they were none of them in a mood for settling down, and indeed the weather was so hot that they often preferred travelling after supper. So it was arranged that they should go on to a very primitive little place called Hillestad, sleep there for a few hours, and then proceed to the Lyster fjord. Cecil, who was a much better walker than either Sigrid or Swanhild, was to go on foot with Frithiof; the others secured a stolkjaerre and a carriole, and went on in advance with the luggage.

The two lovers walked briskly along the side of the fjord, but slackened their pace when they reached the long sandy hill with its sharp zigzags; the evening was still and cloudless; above them towered huge, rocky cliffs, partly veiled by undergrowth, and all the air was sweet with the scent of the pine-trees. They were close to St. Olaf's well, where, from time immemorial, the country people have come to drink and pray for recovery from illness.

"Don't you think we ought to drink to my future health?" said Frithiof.

He smiled, yet in his eyes she saw all the time the look of sadness that had come to him as they approached Balholm.

The one sting in his perfect happiness was the thought that he could not bring to Cecil the unbroken health that had once been his. He knew that the strain of his past trouble had left upon him marks which he must carry to his grave, and that the consequences of Blanche's faithlessness had brought with them a secret anxiety which must to some extent shadow Cecil's life. The knowledge was hard; it humiliated him.

Cecil knew him so well that she read his thoughts in an instant.

"Look at all these little crosses set up in the moss on this rock!" she exclaimed when they had scrambled up the steep ascent. "I wonder how many hundreds of years this has been the custom? I wonder how many troubled people have come here to drink?"

"And have gained nothing by their superstition?" said Frithiof.

"It was superstition," she said thoughtfully. "And yet, perhaps, the sight of the cross and the drinking of the water at least helped them to new thoughts of suffering and of life. Who knows, perhaps some of them went away able to glory in their infirmities?"

He did not speak for some minutes, but stood lost in the train of thought suggested to him by her words. The sadness gradually died out of his face, and she quite understood that it was with no trace of superstition, but merely as a sign of gratitude for a thought which had helped him, that he took two little straight twigs, stooped to drink from St. Olafskilde, and then set up his cross among the others in the mossy wall. After that they clambered down over the boulders into the sandy road once more, and climbed the steep hill leisurely, planning many things for the future—the rooms in Rowan-Tree House, the little wooden cottage that they meant to build at Gødesund, three hours by water from Bergen, on a tiny island, which might be bought at a trifling cost; the bright holiday weeks that they would spend there; the work they might share; the efforts they might make together in their London life.

But the sharp contrast between this pictured future and the actual past could hardly fail to strike one of Frithiof's temperament; it was the thought of this which prompted him to speak as they paused to rest on the wooded heights above Hillestad.

"I almost wonder," he said, "that you have

courage to marry such an ill-starred fellow as I have always proved to be. You are very brave to take the risk."

She answered him only with her eyes.

"So," he said with a smile, "you think, perhaps, after all the troubles there must be a good time coming?"

"That may very well be," she replied; "but now that we belong to each other outer things matter little."

"Do you remember the lines about Norway in the Princess?" he said. "Your love has made them true for me."

"Say them now," she said; "I have forgotten." And, looking out over the ruddy sky where, in this night hour, the glow of sunset mingled with the glow of dawn, he quoted the words:

"I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun
Set into sunrise."

She followed the direction of his gaze and looked, through the fir-trees on the hill upon which they were resting, down to the lovely lake which lay below them like a sheet of mother-of-pearl in the tranquil light. She looked beyond to the grand cliff-like mountains with their snowy tops touched here and there into the most exquisite rose-colour by the rising sun; and then she turned back to the strong Norse face with its clearly-cut features, its look of strength, and independence, and noble courage, and her heart throbbed with joy as she thought how foreign to it was that hard, bitter expression of the past. As he repeated the words "Set into sunrise" his eyes met hers fully; all the tenderness and strength of his nature and an infinite promise of future possibilities seemed to strike down into her very soul in that glance. He drew her towards him, and over both of them

there stole the strange calm which is sometimes the outcome of strong feeling.

All nature seemed full of perfect peace; and with the sight of those snowy mountains and the familiar scent of the pines to tell him that he was indeed in his own country, with Cecil's loving presence to assure him of his new possession, and with a peace in his heart which had first come to him in bitter humiliation and trouble, Frithiof, too, was at rest. After all, what were the possible trials that lay before them? What was all earthly pain? Looked at in a true light, suffering seemed, indeed, but as this brief northern night, and death but as the herald of eternal day.

* * * * *

"Cecil," said Frithiof, looking again into her sweet, grave eyes, "who would have thought that the *Linnæa* gathered all those years ago should prove the first link in the chain that was to bind us together for ever?"

"It was strange," she replied with a smile, as she gathered one of the long trails growing close by and looked at the lovely little white bells with their pink veins.

He took it from her, and began to twine it in her hair.

"I didn't expect to find it here," he said, "and brought a fine plant of it from Nord fjord. We must take it home with us that you may have some for your bridal wreath."

She made a little exclamation of doubt.

"Why, Frithiof? How long do you think it will go on flowering?"

"For another month," he said, taking her glowing face between his hands and stooping to kiss her.

"Only a month!" she faltered.

"Surely that will be long enough to read the banns?" he said with a smile. "And you really ought not to keep the *Linnæa* waiting a day longer."

THE END.

ALEXIS HARLAMOFF.

By ROBERT WALKER.

IN the Gallery of the Hermitage at St. Petersburg are many of the notable pictures of the world. The rooms contain magnificent examples of such masters as Velasquez, Rembrandt, Murillo, Titian, Raphael, and da Vinci, together with numerous works by smaller—but still great—artists of the Dutch and Italian schools. The influence of such a collection of the best art the world

has yet known, varied and yet all good, has without doubt tended to develop artistic taste among educated Russians, and to stimulate the growth of a national school of painting. It is always to be remembered that Russia is a country, in matters intellectual and artistic, of comparatively recent importance. She emerged from barbarism and chaos when the mutations of time had seen

the rise and even the subsidence of many great European nations. From the controlling power of circumstances she is almost centuries behind in the race of intellectual effort. She has been heavily handicapped, in virtue of the very vastness and variety of the interests with which she has to deal, and of the forces that act and react in her maintenance and growth. Properly guided, Russia has all her future before her. She possesses the quick intelligence and the restless energy of a half-disciplined youth who has not yet learned to understand the full measure or the right direction of his powers.

In artistic education, and in the true appreciation of art—which means something very different from buying famous pictures at big prices, after all only a barbarous and vulgar homage to art—Russia, thanks to the Hermitage collection and to the exertions of the Academy of the Fine Arts at St. Petersburg, has during the last twenty or thirty years made steady progress. She is producing, year by year, painters whose works would be an honour to any country, and give brilliant promise for the future.

Russian art-students abound in Paris, and the work of many of them shows strongly the effects of French influence and culture. This, as matters stand, can hardly be helped. Of nearly one hundred artists exhibiting in the Russian section of the Fine-art galleries at the Paris International Exhibition, about forty per cent. reside in Paris, but the time will come, as Russian art grows stronger and stronger, when St. Petersburg will be the centre of its activity.

Among the Russian artists residing in Paris Alexis Harlamoff takes high rank. He was born in 1844, at Saratoff, and studied at the Academy of the Fine Arts, in St. Petersburg. His student's career was a successful one, as during its course he gained four silver and two gold medals. He was elected a member of the Academy in 1869, and shortly afterwards left for Paris for the purpose of the better prosecution of his studies. There he has since continued to reside.

Harlamoff has painted the portraits of many distinguished members of both the Russian and the English aristocracy and of some celebrated men. He has always been a worshipper of Rembrandt, and in his student days, long before he had ventured to paint a picture of his own, he laid the foundation of a good style by a most industrious course of copying the works of that great master.

Harlamoff's chief fame has been gained by

his pictures of children and young girls. He very often gives us only the head and face: sometimes he shows us the maidens knitting, sometimes he paints a group of two engaged in making up bouquets. Of eleven pictures by him in the Paris International Exhibition, no fewer than seven bear the title "Tête d'enfant." It is by pictures of this description that Harlamoff is known in this country; and it so happens that several of the finest examples of his skill are in Glasgow. It is from one of these, "La Petite Russe," in the possession of T. Carlile, Esq., who has kindly given his consent to its reproduction, that our frontispiece is taken. It may be mentioned that her Majesty the Queen, on the occasion of her visit to the Glasgow International Exhibition, was specially attracted by this picture, and expressed her strong admiration of it.

Harlamoff's treatment of youthful charms is full of exquisite grace and tenderness. His feeling, his purity of sentiment, his utter freedom from affectation, invest his portraiture of child-life with a singular charm. The clear eyes look into yours with shy confidence, the little maidens are full of winning ways, you love them because you recognise them as akin to the children whom you have known and loved in the flesh. Harlamoff's work has the inestimable virtue of sincerity: he is himself a great child-lover, and nothing pleases him better than to gather children round him in his studio, and watch their play and listen to their merry prattle. I am told that he even treasures up empty match-boxes, to serve as materials wherewith his tiny friends may build mimic towers and houses.

Still life and flowers Harlamoff paints with great dexterity. He is a fine draughtsman with a bold, free touch, and his colour is both rich and chaste. His flesh tints are good, and he renders admirably the roundness of a cheek and the contour of a fresh, sweet, young mouth. As a worker—and his life is a busy one—Harlamoff is exceedingly careful and painstaking, no slip-slop execution or blundered effect will satisfy him. He has his own ideal, and he works up to it, and therein he approves himself a true artist.

He is a man of charming personality, earnest and a little grave in appearance, but with a pleasant, kindly smile and a sympathetic manner.

Harlamoff is a regular contributor to the French Salon, and was awarded a second-class medal at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878.

A SNOW PARABLE.

By A. L. SALMON.

SOFTLY falls the snow and slowly, slowly,
O'er the solitude of wold and hill;
Winds are breathing desolate and lowly
Where the wearied world is lying still.

All the dismal blackness of the city
Lies enshrouded with a perfect white:
God in wonderful eternal pity
Sends His snowy message through the night.



Like a cloak of pardon and remission
Falls the snow on city den and street—
Emblem of the contrite heart's condition,
Earnest of forgiving love complete.

Where the sin and sadness are unsleeping
Lies a purity which is not theirs;
Thro' the night there comes a sound of weeping,
Thro' the night there comes a voice of prayers.

Turn, O hungry souls that tire of sinning,
Take the peace which earth can never give!
Leave the by-gone for a new beginning,
Leave the dreariness of death, and live.

Softly falls the snow and slowly, slowly,
O'er the solitude of street and mart:
Hear, O Father! Thou alone art Holy—
Lay its whiteness on the sinner's heart.

NUNC DIMITTIS.

By THE EDITOR.

THE picture presented by the old Simeon, with the Child Jesus in his arms, is exceedingly suggestive. It is the meeting of two epochs. The venerable man, from the character of his piety, his aspirations, and his hopes, is a fit representative of the Old Testament and of the age which was passing away; while in the infant Christ we behold incarnated the new era. Although Jesus is only a babe, yet every pulse is beating with the life which is to become the life of the world. The scene is exquisitely simple; it is a gospel idyll, harmonious, direct, complete.

Simeon belongs to a class of men who surprise us by appearing at the very periods, and under the very circumstances, we least expect them. In times of political storm, or when religion seems crushed under formalism or unbelief, here and there in quiet retreats we stumble on simple men of strong faith, who keep the lamp of God burning when all around is darkness. So do we find it in Scripture; so do we find it in the Middle Ages; so do we find it in more recent years. So was it that during the eighteenth century, with its Voltaire and Diderot, followed by the Revolution and the "Age of Reason," we have to go to the peasant's cottage rather than to the Courts of Europe, or to the world dominated by ecclesiastics, for types of unswerving devotion. Simeon was apparently of this unobtrusive, genuine character. He had nothing in common with Priest or Rabbi, he was neither Herodian nor Zealot, but a man of retired, meditative ways, and it was to him and not to the Church leaders that there was given the vision of the glory of Jesus.

His portrait is drawn in these graphic words: "The same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him." He was a true Israelite. "Waiting for the consolation" was the characteristic of the Old Testament, and that Hope was his guiding star. Other nations had regarded the Golden Age as already past; the Israelites believed in its future advent. And amid all the trouble, and disappointment, and confusion of his own time, this old man maintained his lofty hope, and his strong belief in its realisation. At an age when most men have outlived their ideals, his grew brighter and more certain. Everything then seemed against his expectation.

The prophets had long been silent. The tramp of the Roman sentinel was heard close to the very oracles of Jehovah. The seat of Moses was occupied by hard-hearted hypocrites. The temple was filled with formalists, who performed the drill of ritual while denying the spirit of religion. The sneer of the Sadducee seemed amply justified by appearances—"Where is the promise of His coming?" Yet this old man Simeon not only "waited," but believed that before his dimming eyes closed in death he would see the salvation of God. And now at the unlikely moment when he noticed a peasant woman coming with her infant, and carrying two turtle doves, which were the offering of the poorest, Simeon, moved by the Holy Ghost, sees what the eye of the flesh could not discern, and with eager trembling hands he lifts the babe into his own embrace, and raising his eyes to heaven he pours forth the "Nunc Dimittis," that was to become the song of millions then unborn:—

"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word;
For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people;
A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

This man had therefore risen above the gross and material conceptions of the Messianic kingdom which were then prevalent. We know what selfish hopes and what lust of power then coloured the dreams of the nation. We know the long contest St. Paul had to wage with the Jewish converts as he tried to establish the admission of the Gentiles. Yet this man Simeon, taught of God during many years of meditation, had already grasped the hope of a purely spiritual blessing, and rejoices in One who is to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of His people Israel."

It was in itself a marvellous faith, but it is the more extraordinary as having been held by one who during his long life must have seen enough to have made such hopes appear impossible. Cynicism might well have smiled at one whose foot was by the grave clinging to his ideal; nay, asserting its realisation under circumstances so unlikely, seeing salvation in a babe, while all around was the world of the Herods and the priests, the world of slaves and task-masters, the world of cruelty and lust.

Nay, he had pierced deeper still into the

character of the life and the work of Christ. He had no foolish dream of swift and easy victory. There is an ominous warning of suffering and trial in his words to Mary: "Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against: (yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." He seems to anticipate the Cross and Passion, and beholds the "Mater Dolorosa" in the strong young mother, whose face now reflects wonder and awe and joy.

This faith and the deep insight of the aged Simeon have many lessons for us now. Such firm belief in the glory of Him who was then an infant, and in the coming of that Kingdom, which had then scarcely dawned, may call shame on us in whom its full advent excites only a languid hope. And yet we have infinitely more to strengthen expectation than Simeon had. If we have not beheld accomplishment, we are able to mark enormous advance. It has been slow, as all the great works of God are slow—whether seen in the formation of the earth's crust or in the progress of human history. There may be much to make us pause as we listen to the measureless and assured hope of Simeon. When we look at Europe covered with armed millions; when we look at the churches, with their divisions and pharisaic disputings; when we pay regard to the world of thought, steeped in scepticism and materialism; or when we contemplate social life, the miseries of the poor and the seething depths of sin and abomination on which society—so-called Christian—rests, we cannot help asking whether we have any tokens of the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. But to cease to believe is to perish spiritually. We are saved by hope, and can labour with heart only in proportion to our faith in the possibility of human salvation. If we yield to the base Pessimism which pours the bitterness of its gall over every attempt to bring in the Golden Year of God, our own lives will degenerate. And how dare we doubt who can look back upon the victories already won, and recognise Him, Who once lay in the arms of Simeon, as now surrounded by the ten thousand times ten thousand of the noblest and best the world has seen, who became what they are through their love and loyalty to Jesus Christ? We ought assuredly to be able to bear with calmness the sneer of that Egoism which is ever preaching disappointment, when we

recall the multitudes of the poor and suffering who, through faith in Him, have been made more than conquerors over pain and death, and can relate the achievements of the Apostles and Missionaries of His Kingdom—the heroic soldiers of mercy and humanity who have reclaimed the barbarism of earth and made it as a fruitful vineyard. It may be long, very long, before the vision which brightened the hopes of seers and prophets shall be realised. But if we would be of those who shall rejoice with Christ at the final victory, let us now be fellow-workers with Him, and share the hopeful spirit of old Simeon who "waited" with assured confidence for the great consolation. If the world is full of sin and sorrow now, it was far more so then, and it was that world which Christ came to bless and is seeking now to redeem.

The picture of Simeon with the Infant Christ has also a peculiarly appropriate teaching for Christmas and for the closing days of the year. Gladness is the becoming accompaniment of Christmas-tide. Innocence, and purity, and hopefulness hover over the cradle of the Redeemer, and innocent mirth, the happiness of children, and the gracious festivities of home are the instinctive and traditional methods in which the feast of the Incarnation is celebrated. The young naturally enter into the gladness of the time. Kindness then reigns everywhere. The poor are remembered, and the interchange of loving remembrances among friends and the giving of presents fill the short winter day with brightness. But it is not so easy for the aged to respond to the merry voices. If memory re-creates the happiness once experienced, it also recalls the faces that are no more, and touches with a certain sadness the scenes whose repetition cannot for them be frequent in the coming years. And yet there is nothing lovelier than the union of youth and age in Christmas festival, and the face of the old Simeon shining with the light of joy as he embraces the holy Infant is suggestive of the beauty which consecrates the declining life whose love reigns so fresh and strong that it can enter heartily into the gladness that is for others rather than itself. Simeon gives an instance of an old man's joy, and is a vivid picture of what the aged may experience when there comes the rush of the happy group with the cheery greeting and when the merry-makings go on around them into which they may not enter. Then let them be glad, as they take up the youngest into

their arms, and think of him who so embraced the Christ.

As the old year leaves us, it is good that it should do so at Christmas-tide, holding, as it were, in its drooping arms, the Christ of hope and of life eternal—the pledge that, if time is flying, the Golden Year of God is also drawing nearer. The hurrying flood which sweeps past with irresistible might, and whose speed is marked by the swiftly recurring dates which number the years that are gone, might well bring sad or even maddening thoughts if we have no hope like an anchor of the soul, reaching beyond the temporary into the eternal. We can watch the passing away of time with a wise tranquillity only when we can look up to God as did Simeon, and say our “Nunc dimittis” to the flying years, because we, like him, have seen His salvation. To be without any assured hope must to the reflective either invest life at its brightest with a tragic sense of it all being a veiled mockery, or lead to the cold resignation of a cynical stoicism. But to let

the year depart in truest peace we ourselves must be at peace with God. Why should not this be the case with each of us? As it is certain that these words will be read by some who will never behold the close of another year, it is surely not out of place to urge on all the duty of earnestly considering the ground on which their hopes are resting; and if there is even one reader who is conscious that he at least is without a reasonable and blessed hope in Christ, then let Christmas have its deeper teaching for Him than social merriment, and let him listen to the old words of the song sung by angels:—“Unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Let him know that Christ is born his Brother and his Saviour, and yield himself to the good tidings of the mercy and help of God.

Blessed are they who can look calmly on the flight of earthly weeks and months, and who when their appointed time comes can utter their own “Nunc Dimittis” in peace, because their arms embrace the Christ and their hearts rejoice in His salvation.

A MODERN EASTERN MARTYR.

A Persian Story of the Present Day.

By DR. C. J. WILLS, AUTHOR OF “IN THE LAND OF THE LION AND SUN,” “PERSIA AS IT IS,” &c.

GÜLKHANDAN, which, by the way, means “laughing flower,” was little more than a big child; but she was a very pretty child, so at least said the matrons of her quarter—and in Persia youthful female beauty is only seen by the matrons, for outside the harems among the upper classes, and beyond their own immediate family circle in the middle and lower ranks of life, the women go habitually veiled. If GÜlkhandan had been a trifle less pretty her mother and her aunt wouldn’t have been as particular as they were in shielding her from the gaze of profane and curious men.

GÜlkhandan then was fourteen years of age, and ever since her birth she had been betrothed to Syud Achmet, the son of her paternal uncle. Now our idea of a girl of fourteen years of age is a sort of female hobbledehoy—it’s the only word that expresses it, and unfortunately hobbledehoy has no feminine. But in Persia women and fruit ripen quickly, and GÜlkhandan was no hobbledehoy; she was a lovely, graceful

girl, born in the city where loveliness—among the girls at least—is a matter of course. The nose aquiline, the complexion that of a brilliant brunette, the face inclined to roundness, the ever-parted lips arched and full of fun, disclosing a row of teeth of pearly whiteness. The women of Persia are often as fair as English women; but the brunette complexion is preferred; the delicate pink and white which we so much admire is there despised as a “cloying” style of beauty—according to the native idiom it is “without salt.” There was nothing cloying about GÜlkhandan; her great black eyes were full of fire, a fire which was shaded by their long lashes, the eyebrows perhaps were a trifle thicker than what we admire in Europe; but then, as the Persian poet says, “they are the accents which mark the beauty of the lovely eyes.” There was a little *point d’amour*, too, a tiny mole upon her blushing cheek, just the same little mole which Hafiz speaks of—“For the mole on the cheek of that girl of Shiraz, I would yield Samarkand and Bokhara.” As for the waving masses of her curl-

ing hair, being a Persian girl she naturally had a profusion of jetty, luxuriant tresses. Now Gulkhandan was a Shirazi, and Syud Achmet, her cousin, the man she was betrothed to, held tightly to the opinion of Hafiz with regard to the mole on her cheek. The young fellow literally worshipped her. He was ten years her senior; he had nursed her as a baby, and it was with a proud feeling of proprietorship that he had seen the big-eyed child ripen into the lovely girl who was soon to be his own.

Syud Achmet was an artist, and a distinguished artist too; had Syud Achmet been a European he would have possessed, being an artist, a sort of private pedestal of his own; but in Persia artists are a poorly paid race; they have no pedestal, they are simply day labourers. And though Syud Achmet was the most distinguished miniature painter in all Shiraz, yet it was with difficulty that he contrived to earn enough to keep body and soul together. Yet he was a man of importance in his way, for he was court-painter in ordinary to the provincial governor, the king's son, who, next to the Shah and the Prime Minister, was the most powerful man in Persia. But the consideration which the young fellow received was partly due to the fact of his being a descendant of the Prophet, a holy man. His descent was traced to Imam Hamza, and, as a holy man of unblemished descent, Syud Achmet had already had several opportunities of making a brilliant marriage; but he was desperately in love with his cousin Gulkhandan, and he declined the numerous tempting offers made him by the marriage-brokers. He would sit painting away in the great cool arched chamber over one of the palace gateways, which was his studio, and for which, as court-painter in ordinary, he paid no rent. A little four-legged table eighteen inches high and two feet square carried the implements of his art—a few rude cakes of paint and the tiny brushes fashioned by his own hand. He sat on the ground upon a big piece of coarse matting, and a charcoal brazier and half-a-dozen coffee-cups, with a kalian or hubble-bubble (the Persian water-pipe), formed the whole of the furniture of his official residence; they would have been dear at half-a-sovereign for the lot. And yet, strange to say, the great, bare, half-ruined room was one of the favourite lounging places for the *élite* of the capital of the south of Persia. Grandees, learned men, lawyers, priests and merchants, and the courtiers and hangers-on of the governor him-

self, delighted in frittering away their time in the artist's studio, in watching the composition of his numerous masterpieces, in talking scandal, philosophy, and politics, and in listening to the many subtle and dangerous theories which Syud Achmet, artist, poet, and dreamer of dreams, was accustomed to pour forth to their edification and astonishment.

The court-painter was a man of genius, his strongest point was his skill as a painter of miniatures; he had once actually received £40 in good sterling coin from the Prince-governor himself, for the decoration of a papier-mâché pen-case; it had cost him six months' hard work, and he painted steadily for eight hours a day. He was nearly equally strong in his ideal reproductions of flowers and birds upon book covers; in Persia every book cover is hand-painted, and is in itself an original work of art. Syud Achmet also painted in enamel upon gold. Those of us who have been to South Kensington know what has been achieved in Persia, in what is fast becoming there a dying art. Upon the pen cases and upon the enamels the subjects were ever the same, groups of birds and flowers, portraits, generally ideal portraits, of beautiful women in little medallions, and tiny crowds of innumerable figures, every individual face of which was a portrait.

It is a *sine quâ non* in Persia that these ideal female faces should be handsome, and I am afraid that a good deal of the Syud's success was due to his perpetual reproduction of the charming features of the girl he loved; not that he was a slavish copyist of himself, the ever-varying moods of the childish Eastern beauty gave variety to her numerous and too successful portraits. Whether he depicted her as Queen Balkis on her visit to King Solomon, or Zuleikha surrounded by the rival beauties, or as the delicious Shireen, the laughing girlish face was ever transcendently beautiful.

The consideration shown to the young painter by all classes was not due to his official position or his artistic skill, it was but the natural tribute to his birth, to the blue blood which ran in his veins as a descendant of the Prophet himself, a fact which was proudly proclaimed by his dark green turban, and the bright green shawl artistically twisted in its many folds around his slender waist. The artist was proud of his descent, prouder still of retaining in their traditional purity the very features of his great ancestors, for the face was not the

face of a Persian; the lines were more refined, they were those of a pure-blooded Arab. It was the same face that had been handed down through generations in the artist's family, ever since the conquest of Persia by the Moslems under Sa'd, when they snatched the great kingdom from Yezdegird, the last of the fire-worshipping kings.

Now it might have been supposed that Syud Achmet being a Muslem of the Muslems was a pious Mussulman, but this was not the case. The real fact is, that Syud Achmet though a holy man by birth, was no fanatic; he was worse, he was a sectary of the Baab, a communist, a philosopher, a disbeliever in the Koran and its traditions, a dangerous free-thinker, a man who, had his opinions been known, would have been unanimously adjudged by the whole fanatical body of the priesthood of his country as worthy of death. And his untainted descent would only have been an additional reason for putting the stern law against dangerous heretics into force. The Persians are tolerant, they do a great many things that stricter Mahomedans look upon as abominations. The artist's very profession as a depicter of the human face divine was in itself a crime against true Muslem tradition. Many of us have seen the glorious tiles with the metallic *reflet* which belonged to a pre-Mahomedan age, on which the faces of the figures have been carefully destroyed by religious enthusiasts; these things were done in the early ardour of the Mahomedan conquest, nowadays the Persians, in their earnest love of beauty, have allowed the old religious laws on this subject to become a dead letter.

But Syud Achmet was a prudent man, he kept his religious opinions to himself, and devoted his whole attention to earning as much money as possible, that he might be ready with the dowry which he had contracted to pay on his marriage with his cousin. Though they were living in a Mahomedan country, from the fact that they had been betrothed to each other since their childhood, that they had been children together, and that their parents' houses joined, they had been allowed almost as much license as an engaged couple with us. It is true for the last year, since Gulkhandan in the eyes of her relatives had ceased to be a child, that she used to decorously veil herself, whenever she and her handsome cousin met; but they used to chat away merrily and affectionately enough, even in their parents' presence; for the young people

were very shortly to be married, and so, after all, where was the harm? Like Pyramus and Thisbe, they used to tell their love by the hour together in the long soft summer nights, over the low ruined wall which separated the great flat roofs of the two houses. Syud Achmet was his cousin Gulkhandan's beau-ideal; and he worshipped her lovely features, the mole on her cheek, and the very ground she walked upon. The two young people were honestly and thoroughly in love with each other.

And then they were married. There was a tremendous entertainment at the wedding, there were at least a hundred invited guests at the house of the bride's father, the men in one court-yard, the women in another. The amount of pillaw, of stews, of hashes, of roast and boiled that was consumed by the hungry guests was enormous; they ate several hundredweight of confectionery, and a still larger quantity was given away. There was a rope-dancer and a juggler, and all the professional buffoons of the town attended with their performing monkeys to make merry at the marriage feast. The Prince-governor himself sent the happy bridegroom one of his own cast-off shawl garments as a wedding present. Syud Nadurûs, the chief of the religious law, sent a sugar-candy basin decorated with pink paper of portentous size. Then, nigh upon midnight, the bridegroom and his friends, clad in their best, and mounted on prancing steeds, borrowed for the occasion, came with music, shouts, and lighted cressets to Gulkhandan's father's house to demand the bride. The narrow streets were thronged with shouting well-wishers and sympathisers, the roofs of the adjacent houses were black with crowds of veiled women, who shouted their congratulations and clapped their hands with joy. And then the little bride, carefully veiled, and with a great sheet of pink spangled gauze thrown over her, was placed on a big grey horse borrowed from the Prince-governor's stable; and the flood of guests bundled out pell-mell into the street to wish her well.

"May your steps be fortunate," said her mother in her ear, as she kissed her for the last time, and then the wedding procession began to move; fireworks were discharged from the house of the bride's father; up went the rockets in bewildering profusion; the musicians played their hardest, the singers yelled their loudest, and above all resounded the bewildering crash of the great *dohol* or wedding-drum, a tremendous instrument used only at marriage feasts. The procession

reached the bridegroom's house, a sheep was killed upon the threshold for luck, the wedded pair entered the building, the door was closed, and the shouting crowd dispersed.

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"It's the very prettiest face," said the Syud Nadurūs to Mirza Mohamed, his cup companion, "that it's ever been my good fortune to look upon," and he handed his new gold enamelled opium pill-box to his friend. "If the Houris of Paradise are half as charming, my friend, I shall be more than satisfied."

To look at the Syud Nadurūs one might have taken him for a man of five-and-forty, who devoted a good deal of time to the immense and glossy black beard which reached nearly to his waist. But the Syud was in reality over seventy, and the beard was regularly dyed every morning in the hot bath with indigo and henna. His beard wasn't the only deception about Syud Nadurūs,—the fact is that he was an arch-hypocrite; he was the chief of the religious law in Southern Persia, a notorious fanatic, a Muslem pharisee whose phylactery was of the broadest; he had the Koran and the religious law at his fingers' ends. He never took a bribe openly, but his income from that source was extremely large. In public he was never seen to smile; he kept the great annual religious fast with the utmost strictness; he had made several converts, and had caused the execution of at least half-a-dozen apostates. He was universally respected, and everybody was afraid of him. Even the Prince-governor himself courted the holy man, for Syud Nadurūs was eloquent; he had but to say the word to render a governor distasteful at once, and to make his governorship impossible. He had the ear of all the fanatics of the province, and he swayed the priesthood with an iron hand. When he passed through the streets with cast-down eyes, mumbling prayers as he went, and slipping the beads of his rosary through his fingers, the mob of hangers-on that followed him far exceeded in number the Prince-governor's own retinue. The merchants and traders in the bazaar sprang to their feet to make him lowly obeisances. He affected a proud simplicity in his attire; he dressed in garments of a sombre colour, dark broad-cloth in winter, cotton and chintz in summer, a plain cloak of striped camel's hair all the year round. There was no gold embroidery, not a thread of silk in his garments; he kept to the letter of the law. Crowds of beggars

always thronged his gate, nor were they sent empty away, for charity was a part and parcel of the Syud's policy. The men's quarters of his great house were large, dirty, and dilapidated, they proved the arrogance of his humility. His great tribe of hungry retainers got no wages, but they lived upon the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and what they could wring out of the numerous litigants who sought audience with their master. We have said that the Syud Nadurūs never took a bribe, but Mirza Mohamed, his creature, was notoriously venal; the real fact was that the Mirza took the bribes in his own name, and then handed them over bodily to his master; his own pickings were pretty considerable.

It was quite a small room, in the private courtyard of the chief of religion, in which the Syud and his secretary were seated. A small carboy containing about half a gallon of raw arrack stood between them, a plain silver bowl was their drinking-cup, the time was midnight, and their potations had already been pottle-deep, for Mirza Mohamed, besides being the secretary, was the confidant and cup-companion of the holy man. They had no secrets from each other, these two.

"Soul of my soul," said the arch-priest as he emptied the goblet, "here's to the original of the charming portrait."

"You're doing the chief painter a great honour," said Mirza Mohamed with a knowing look; "they say it's his wife. Far too pretty a wife for an unsainted dog of a peniless artist."

"I wonder if it really is the portrait of his wife," said the holy man meditatively, as he gazed at the little golden box. "Of course he's flattered her."

"They say that is impossible," replied the secretary meaningly.

"Drink, pig," said his master as he passed the goblet to his confidant.

The Mirza was nothing loath, and he swallowed a deep draught of the potent spirit at a single gulp.

"And the husband," said his master, "a clever, handsome ne'er-do-well, they say?"

"A Syud, as we are," said the secretary with a laugh, "a holy Syud. Ho, ho!" he added with a loud laugh, "and they say protector of the poor," he continued; "a dangerous man, an atheist, a philosopher, a secretary of the Baab," he added in a whisper.

"May he die the death," said the high-priest piously, "and so meet the punishment he deserves in this world and the next."

And then in his turn he raised the beaker to his lips—"Confusion to all Jews, infidels, and heretics," he mumbled.

"So may it be," said the Mirza with pious enthusiasm.

"Sing, dog, sing!" cried his master.

Mirza Mohamed took up an elaborately-carved lute which lay at his side, ran his skilful fingers over the strings, and in a high falsetto voice he gave a rather florid rendering of one of those mystic odes of Hafiz, full of the praise of women, love, and wine, which the imaginative Persian never fails to appreciate and remember. And, as he sang it, the aged debauchee, his master, still gazed fondly on the little box, beating time with his fingers to the plaintive and catchy air, and then he raised it to his lips and fondly kissed the portrait.

"The fellow's existence troubles me," said the arch-priest; "these heretics must be stamped out," he added with enthusiasm. "Is our holy Islam to be imperilled by the doings of wretches such as he? God and the Prophet forbid!" He gently stroked his long black beard, and his little bloodshot eyes rolled in drunken fury. "Let him be seen to, Mirza. In the meanwhile sing."

The parasite obeyed, and the secret carouse went on till the small hours of the early morning.

We have said that the numerous followers of the Baab, a dangerous fanatic, who declared himself an incarnation of the Deity, and who flourished some forty years ago, were communists and heretics. They are exceedingly numerous in Persia, and at the commencement of the reign of the present Shah suffered a merciless persecution, in which many hundreds of them were cruelly put to death; nor had it been unprovoked, for a few of the more determined of the followers of the promulgator of the new religion had unsuccessfully attempted the king's life. The great city of Zinjan, the greater part of whose inhabitants had become converted to the new religion, had withstood a siege of several months, and on its capture had been given over to a general massacre, which spared neither age nor sex. But the new religion was very widely spread. Unfortunately, though the cult was a secret one, there was one unfailing test by which the Baabi could be assuredly recognised. When called upon to curse the false prophet, the disciple of Baab invariably refused, preferring imprisonment, unheard-of tortures, and even death itself.

Among the throng of litigants who awaited

an audience at nine o'clock next morning of Mirza Mohamed, the holy man's secretary, was the lovely Gulkhandan's newly-married husband, the young Syud Achmet. One of the arch-priest's hungry servants had summoned him by a polite message but an hour before. And it was with the hope of a fresh commission that the handsome young fellow attended at the levee of the great man's confidential secretary. He had entered the room, which was already crowded with litigants and persons whose interest it was to pay their court to the great man, with a low obeisance.

"You're welcome, Syud Achmet," said the secretary with a genial smile; "sit here, sit higher up," he said, as the penniless artist was about to take a place near the door. "God forbid that I, a descendant of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, should fail to do the proper amount of honour to a lineal descendant of the holy Imam Hamza." And then he inquired very particularly after the artist's health, and insisted on his smoking his own great jewelled water-pipe.

"May your shadow never be less, Aga Mirza Mohamed; your condescension is too great towards the least of your servants," said the young fellow as he took the pipe.

"I'm full of business, full of business as you see, friend of my soul," said the great man; "but I have something to say to you, something for your private ear," he added with a little bow; and then he went on sealing documents, reading letters, dictating their answers, shouting and gesticulating, joking all the while, for Mirza Mohamed was a man of many words and of much wit withal, a popular man in his way.

Gradually the great crowd of litigants dwindled away as their business was transacted. At last the Mirza dismissed his secretaries, and he and the court-painter were left alone.

"Sit nearer me, Aga Mirza Achmet," he said; "let us talk. Praise be to God you are a man of parts; in your conversation, oh Mirza, there is honey!"

The artist bowed.

"You know this box? It's a pretty toy," he said as he gazed at it appreciatively. "I want one like it. Ah, you artists, you're lucky fellows; we outsiders seldom see such a face as this, even in our dreams. Tell me, happiest of men, does she exist?" And his eyes suddenly left the box, and were fixed upon the young artist's features. He had ceased to smile, and commenced to blush, taken aback at the suddenness of the ques-

tion. "I needn't ask," continued the Mirza. "Syud Achmet," he said slowly in a solemn whisper, "I am your friend. I am your father's friend, young man," he added solemnly. "It is dangerous at times to be too fortunate."

"I fail to comprehend your Excellency's meaning," said the painter, his eyes fixed discreetly upon the ground.

"I've heard strange things of you. They say, and they say it loudly too, that Syud Mirza Achmet troubles himself overmuch with strange religions. My son, it's very simple. Curse me the Baab."

The young man was silent.

"Ah, it is so then," said the other. "I said I was your friend," he repeated after a pause. "There's a great deal in blood; and I, too, thank Heaven, am a descendant of our holy Prophet. You have no wish to die, young man," he said very solemnly. "Listen to me, and take my hint, as it is meant, in good part. Divorce that wife of yours."

"Never!" cried the young fellow.

"Then your blood be on your own head," said the Mirza, and he clapped his hands.

Two surly, ragged-looking fellows entered the room; they crossed their hands on their chests and bowed low.

"You will conduct the court-painter here to the House of Chains." (This is the poetic phrase which is always used to express a common gaol in Persia, nor is it inappropriate.) "You will take him there without any scandal or fuss. He's far too wise a man to attempt to run away, and should he be fool enough to do so, you will knock him on the head without hesitation. There is the order," he continued as he flung a little roll of paper across the room. "You will bring back a receipt for his body from the jailer. Wait one minute, however," he added, motioning them back as they advanced towards the young artist. "Syud Achmet," he whispered in the young fellow's ear, "you are a man of sense. Take my advice; write me out a letter of divorce of that wife of yours, and all may yet be well."

The young fellow shook his head sadly.

"I give you till to-morrow to consider of it," whispered the tempter, "till then I am your friend; till then mind, I can save you. Were I to do my full duty, you would be haled at once before the arch-priest himself, my lord the Syud Nadurūs. He is a fanatic, and never spares a Baabi who is once within his grasp. You would be condemned at once to a shameful death, and be dragged to the House of Chains in the midst of a shouting

and infuriated mob, lucky indeed if you reached it alive. My heart bleeds for you, young man. After all, are we not both descendants of the Holy Prophet? If you are ass enough to repeat one word of our conversation, no one will believe you. Send me the writing of divorce, and you are a free man. Once publicly accused, neither the Shah, the Baab," and he spat on the ground as he uttered the name, "nor the devil himself could save you. Till this time to-morrow, then, you have your chance of escape, after that time you are practically a dead man. Remove your prisoner," he added in a loud voice. "Treat him with every consideration and respect, but don't forget that you answer for the safety of his person with your heads, for the charge is a serious one."

The artist rose and walked out of the room, followed closely by the two men; he knew that resistance was useless, escape impossible, for each of the two ruffians carried a curved dagger at his girdle, which he was quite certain they would not hesitate to use, as their master had hinted, should he attempt to give them the slip.

And then Mirza Mohamed sought the presence of the arch-priest with a smiling face.

The party of three hadn't far to go; they walked across the deserted square, the place where criminals are always executed at early morning, and approached a large building of mud bricks. There was a ragged sentry at the door; in the porch sat an evil-looking man in a dirty cloth coat which had once been scarlet. The scarlet coat told too well who the man was. It was the public executioner. The young painter turned away with a shudder, he and his companions entered the building, they passed through an inner wicket, at which was a second sentinel, and entered the courtyard, along the shady side of which, squatted on the ground, were seated the prisoners; each man was clothed in rags, each wore a heavy iron collar round his neck, from which passed a massive chain which was attached to the collar of his neighbour. There were some forty of these unfortunate wretches; murderers, thieves, and innocent men chained together haphazard. A short, thick-set man rose to receive them, he made a low obeisance to the young court-painter. It was Koolf Beg, the jailer.

"Please step this way," he said. "What is your business with me, my master?" he added politely, and then Mirza Mohamed's servant handed him the warrant.

"It's quite correct," growled the jailer, and he drew his pen-case from his girdle and wrote out a formal receipt for the body of the prisoner, just as he would have done for a load of grain or a bag of money.

The two men bowed and departed.

"Follow me, oh, my master," said Koolf Beg, and he led the way to a low door in a corner of the courtyard. It was covered with plates of iron and had a grated aperture a foot square in its centre. Koolf Beg opened the door by means of a big key which he took from his bosom, then he struck a match and lighted a small oil lamp which stood in a little niche within the doorway. The air of the place was almost pestilential. It was some fifteen feet long by ten feet broad. Running down the middle of the floor of the dismal hold was a huge beam of wood in which were cut twelve grooves, just big enough to admit the ankle of a man, above each was a great iron hasp and a big padlock.

"You're lucky, oh, my master," said Koolf Beg. "In troublous times we are forced to accommodate twelve prisoners here, at present you are my only lodger, so it is comparatively cool and comfortable. This groove," said he, pointing to the first one, "is a keran (10d.) a day; you can take your choice, however, there's no compulsion. What do you say?" he added.

"Can't you leave me loose, Koolf Beg?" said the painter.

"I would if I dared, oh, my master," replied the jailer, "but the order is precise. Will you pay the keran?" he added roughly, "it's cheap at the money. I'll put your foot into one of the others if you like for an hour or so just to try, but it'll lame you for a week, I warn you; whereas in this one you'll be perfectly comfortable."

"Is this the best you can do for me, Koolf Beg?" said the painter.

"I daren't do more, oh, my master, the order is precise," he repeated.

The painter sat him down sadly in front of the great beam, the jailer removed his prisoner's shoe, fitted the ankle into the roomy groove, fastened down the great hasp and secured it with the padlock.

"It'll be half a keran for a pillow, and a keran a day for the light, if I leave it," he added meaningly, and he held out his hand.

There were tears in the young painter's eyes as he handed the two silver kerans to the jailer, for it was all the ready-money he had about him.

"Shall you want any food?" continued the man. "Your rations of two loaves of bread won't be due till to-morrow, but I'll bring you a crock of good water."

"You've had my last farthing," said the painter with a sigh.

"Don't let that trouble you, oh, my master," replied Koolf Beg, "I can advance at least ten kerans on that handsome cloth coat of yours."

"Why, it's worth sixty," said the prisoner in astonishment.

"It's only worth ten here," said the jailer doggedly.

"You're a man without mercy, Koolf Beg," replied the young Syud.

"I have to look after my lawful profits," retorted the man with a grin. "Only pay me, oh, my master, and there is no luxury that I will not procure for you: hot kababs from the bazaar, a good pillow at dinner-time, even a pack of cards and the forbidden juice of the grape if you will, are at your disposal, at a recognised and reasonable scale of charges, and I myself, should you wish it, will beguile the tedium of your solitude by my company, for a consideration."

"Leave me," said the prisoner impatiently.

"God be with you," said the jailer, with a low bow, and he left the dungeon, carefully closing the great door, and locking it from the outside.

And then the painter looked around him. Escape there was none, that he knew full well; there was no window, not even a loophole to admit the air. Roof and walls were black with the smoke of fires kindled there by prisoners in winter time. The place was alive with vermin; that was a matter of course in an Eastern prison. The young man's cup of bitterness was full, and he wept aloud. He knew that his life was in the hands of his enemies, for like his fellow-enthusiasts he would have died a thousand deaths rather than curse the name of the mountebank whom he worshipped as a divinity. And then he pondered. Divorce his wife, he would die first. Who was the enemy who coveted his newly-married bride? Why had Mirza Mohamed shown him the little golden enamelled box? He put the two things together, and then the hidden hand of Syud Nadurūs the arch-priest became visible to him, and then he cursed impotently and wailed aloud.

When Koolf Beg brought him the promised water, he was calmer. He thanked the jailer.

"Take the coat," he said, as he flung the garment from him, "I want you to send a letter."

"I dare not do it; oh, my master," said the jailer, with a melancholy shake of his head. "Order what food you will, oh, Syud, and as long as your money lasts your orders shall be faithfully obeyed," he added, as he carefully folded the garment and placed it under his arm. "But by the head of Mortazza Ali don't ask me to send letters. You can't tempt me," he continued. "I did it once ten years ago, and my feet still tingle with the remembrance of the awful bastinadoing that was the result. But oh, my master, should your case prove a desperate one, never forget that for fifty gold tomans (about £40) I can deliver you by a timely bolus of opium from the man in red," and then he left the prisoner to his meditations.

At the end of twenty-four hours one of the same men who had conducted the artist to prison was admitted into this dungeon by Koolf Beg.

"Peace be with you, Syud Mirza Achmet," said the man, with a low obeisance. "Have you any letter or communication for my master, Aga Syud Mohamed?"

"Tell him," said the painter calmly, "that I curse him. May the graves of his ancestors be defiled. I spit on his false face," and the prisoner suited the action to the word.

The man bowed to the ground, and replied with a grin,

"On my eyes, on my eyes, my master, I will faithfully deliver your excellency's message," and then he departed.

Next day the court-painter was dragged before the king's son, the governor of the province of Fars, he was hustled through the crowded courtyard with blows and curses; loaded with chains as he was, he still held up his head, and stood erect and proud. His very intimates and friends turned their backs upon him; a little crowd of his relatives stood huddled together in a corner of the great hall of audience. The king's son, who was seated at the top of the apartment, stroked his moustache fiercely; by his side sat the chief of the religious law, the arch-priest the Syud Nadurūs.

"What have you got to say?" said the young prince to the prisoner. "Speak, man, you are a Syud. What are these abominations that have come to our ears? You, who are our favoured servant, can it be true that you are a miserable sectary of the Baab? Come, curse me the impostor."

But the young man was silent.

"It is so then," said the prince after a long pause in a fierce voice. "This is your business, oh, my lord," said he, turning to the Syud Nadurūs. "What says the Koran?"

"The words of the Koran, may I be your sacrifice," replied the arch-priest, "are these: 'Verily, those who disbelieve our signs, we will surely cast to be broiled in fire; so often as their skins shall be well burned, we will give them other skins in exchange, that they may taste the sharper torment; for God is mighty and wise.'"

There was a loud murmur of assent from every one present, including the wretched man's own father. There is no fanatic so cruel as a Mussulman.

"May I be your sacrifice, oh, shadow of the king, pillar of the government, strict justice demands that the young man should be burnt, but permit the least of your slaves to plead for him. He is of the sacred race of the Prophet himself, he is young, there is yet hope for him. I would then supplicate, I would entreat, that your royal highness would commute the terrible penalty of death by fire to that of ordinary capital punishment. I know I am exceeding my duty," said the Syud Nadurūs, "I may be even committing a mortal sin in making this my supplication, but my heart bleeds for the young man, I pity his youth; and your royal highness," he added, "he may yet repent and return once more to the fold of the faithful."

There was a noise of talking and whispering as the arch-priest concluded his hypocritical appeal.

"He has spoken well."

"If he errs, it is on the side of mercy."

"After all the dog is young."

"He will sing another tune when he stands in the square at dawn."

And then the cruel farce was played out to the end, for the arch-priest's intercession and the Prince-governor's answer had been carefully settled beforehand.

"Have your way, descendant of the Prophet. As has been said, if we err let us err on the side of mercy, he is young. Let his friends and relatives have access to him. But remember, man," said the young prince fiercely, addressing the prisoner, "that if by dawn to-morrow you have not come to your senses, the king's justice will be done upon you in the usual manner." And he drew his finger significantly across his own throat.

And then the prince rose to his feet and left the hall of audience, followed by the arch-priest and the crowd of courtiers.

Directly the young painter was ushered into the courtyard, he was surrounded by his weeping relatives, friends, and acquaintances. They pleaded, cajoled, entreated, and stormed at him, by turns. His parents, his uncle, and his young wife entered the prison with him, and seated themselves around him in his dreadful dungeon. When they were alone the young Syud Achmet addressed them calmly.

"Bid me farewell, oh, my father," he said, "do not let us meet again, lest the sight of you all should unman me. To-morrow morning I shall go to take my place in another and a happier world."

"Are you mad enough then to confess your apostacy?" said his father. "Then you are no son of mine," he said solemnly, as the painter nodded sadly, "I and my brother we disown you." The uncle gave a gesture of assent.

"It is but natural," replied the son. "In forsaking the religion of my fathers, I become an outcast and a pariah in their eyes. It is but natural," he repeated bitterly. "Uncle, father, forgive me, ere you go," but the two men turned their backs upon him. His wife and mother clung to him and they covered his face with their kisses, and his fettered hands with their tears. They pleaded, they entreated with the wretched youth, but all in vain; and then he whispered in his mother's ear, "Would you know my real crime? Oh, my mother, it is here;" he said, and he laid his hand upon the clustering locks of his young wife, upon the head of the girl who was sobbing on his bosom. "I could have had my life," he said, "if I would have yielded up possession of the girl I love."

"Is it so, my son," she replied eagerly, "is it so? And who is your persecutor?" she added fiercely.

"The man who pretended to save me from the flames," he said calmly, "the Syud Nadurûs. But I have no proof, no witnesses," he added, with a sigh.

"Do not hesitate, my son. The arch-priest is all powerful, it is useless to fight against fate. Yield while you may, oh, Achmet. Please God we may both live to defile the arch hypocrite's grave."

Again he shook his head.

"Never," he said solemnly. "Farewell, my mother; see that she does not fall into his hands alive."

The child-wife, who had heard his words, looked up into his face and whispered through her tears,

"We shall not be parted for long, Achmet. Farewell, my darling, till we meet."

And then she fell in a dead swoon into his mother's arms.

Next morning at dawn they led him out into the square, and bade him kneel upon the fatal spot where so much innocent and guilty blood has been shed from time immemorial. There was an excited mob surrounding the place of execution. The young man's hands were bound behind his back. Close to him stood the arch-priest.

"Will you recant, oh, man?" he said solemnly.

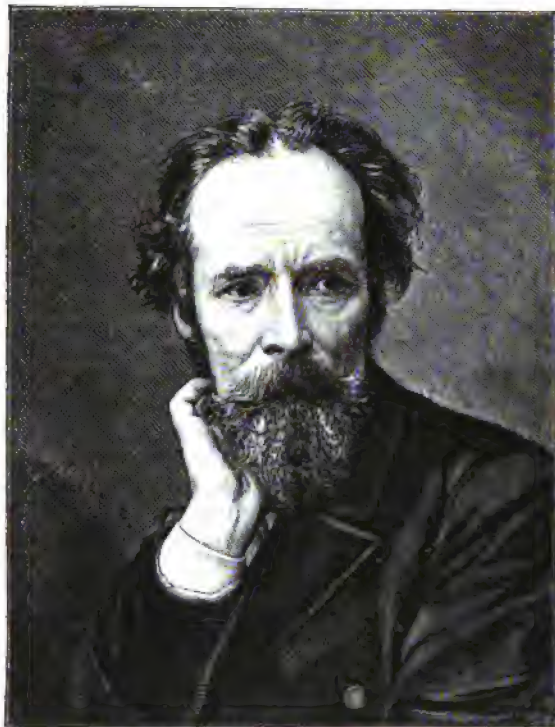
"No, dog," replied the prisoner. "I curse you and your false religion with my dying breath. I go to join my master and I summon you, oppressor of the poor, to appear before that throne where I can obtain the justice which is denied me here."

The arch-priest made a single gesture with his hand, and the evil-looking man in the tattered red-cloth coat stepped forward and slew the young court-painter, the descendant of holy Imam Hamza, as they slay a sheep.

That night when all the lights were out, Gûlkhandan and her mother-in-law sat weeping together in the ruined home. The girl kissed the aged woman. "Farewell, wife of my uncle," she said. "I see his beckoning hand. I hear his loving voice calling to me from within the gates of Paradise. Heaven will avenge us both. Oh, mother, farewell for ever!" And before the astonished woman could stretch out her restraining hand the girl had precipitated herself into the great open well which yawned in the corner of the courtyard.

That same night the arch-priest, the Syud Nadurûs, was stricken with a fit of apoplexy in the midst of his usual nocturnal carouse. Whether his death was the result of his continued potations, or whether the appeal of the murdered man to Heaven's justice had been answered, who can tell?

This little story is no exaggeration of the state of things in Persia at the present time. The writer's personal friends have been publicly done to death in the manner above described, because they refused to deny the new religion, and because their wealth was a too tempting bait to men in power. The writer has himself seen an aged priest dragged to execution, and the old man preferred to yield his life rather than recant his opinions. Oppression, fanaticism, and misgovernment ride rampant in the present day in wretched Persia. Not a year ago a man was executed in Ispahan for conscience' sake.



Frederic Shields

(From a photo by A. Brothers & Co., Manchester.)

FREDERIC SHIELDS.

An Autobiography.

MY first conscious impressions are of the streets of London, whither I had been brought as a babe when my parents removed from my northern birthplace, Hartlepool, on the Durham coast.

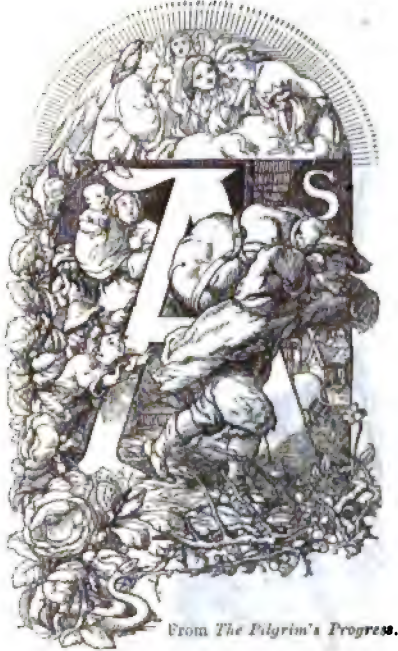
The three R's were acquired at the charity school of the parish church of St. Clement Danes, under a master who taught me also the fear of God as strongly by his example as his precept—Mr. Thomas Davies, whose name is to this day venerable to me.

My mother, fair-haired and blue-eyed, came from Alnwick, in Northumbria, a farmer's daughter, loving to make bread cakes on an iron griddle, in northern fashion, and tossing to her child a lump of paste, to satisfy his longing to shape little men, with currants stuck in their heads for eyes—and oft singing to me some stirring

northern ballad or reciting some romantic legend.

My father belonged to Perth, and was a bookbinder's finisher, in which decorative art he excelled, and so found some vent for a strong artistic faculty, which had been bottled down in his youth by his pious grandfather's determination that he should not be trained, as he wished, for an engraver, lest he should ever yield to the temptation of bank-note forgery—three engravers having suffered death at Edinburgh lately for that crime.

So one of the remote circles stirred by their fate was to mar my father's choice for his own course of life, and to make him aim that this should find development in his eldest boy. Vividly is impressed on my memory my initial lesson at his hands, setting me, when a child of six, to trace through upon a



Christian leaves the City of Destruction.

sheet of paper held up against a window-pane, a penny theatrical print of T. P. Cooke, as William in *Black-Eyed Susan*.

This spark fell upon tinder, and the flame blazed; for fuel to feed it lay beneath the roof of the house, 39, Stanhope Street, Clare Market, which we partially occupied. There, in the garret, which was used by the landlord as a lumber-room, was heaped a strange collection of curiosities, old swords and rapiers of many a fashion, and, above all, some musty portfolios, filled with grand old engravings of antique statues. This was always open, an enchanted chamber, and many a noontide did I simulate illness that I might not return to school that day, afterwards creeping upstairs, there to draw with trembling delight while daylight lasted. Thus secretly nurtured I reached the age of fourteen, and was removed from school—to pass on to the business of life. For one short session I was entered at the School of Design. There the undisciplined habit of my pencil was checked; I was first taught to make a clear and shapely outline, and this was supplemented by some study in the sculpture galleries of the British Museum, where I found a little band of youths earnestly working and encouraging one another, undiverted by the coquetry and

flirtation which is too prevalent since the admission of female students. About this time also I received some well-meant hints from a lithographic artist on oak touch, willow touch, &c.; but though astonished at these slick signs for objects all unfamiliar to my eyes, they had no effect upon my one aim—to be a painter of men.

My father's health failing, and my mother working late into the nights with her needle, to aid in the support of the four children, it was plain that the direct path to my goal was choked, and my lithographic friend using some interest, I was received on trial, as an apprentice to the art of artistic and commercial lithography, into the house of Maclure & Macdonald, in Leicester Square, my wages to begin after three years. Mr. Maclure, an able artist, received me in his study—where he and another were sketching from the head of a negro sitter. "Why," he said, "there is purple in his face," and thus I sucked my first lesson in the mystery of colour. Perhaps because he perceived my timid shyness, his next step was to bid me go into St. James's Park, and sketch the people, the trees, or what I would—and when I shrunk back he insisted imperatively, so that constrained to do his hard, wise hest, I was delivered at a stroke from the diffidence that else would have clogged my studies in nature's academy, and so learned Mercutio's philosophy,

"Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze:
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I."

It was my mother's custom to give me threepence per day to buy my mid-day meal, but the old print shops tempted me, and often I made a penny loaf serve my need, that I might save the other pence for the acquisition of some coveted engraving.

My proposed apprenticeship collapsed at the end of the first year, it being impossible to maintain me longer profitless at home, and my father, who now filled the post of foreman at McCorquodale's works, Newton-le-Willows, and was in weak health and lonely there, desired that I might be sent to him. He further stimulated me to draw from nature's fount, often inciting me with his advice, "Observe, observe!" and guiding me into an acquaintance with the best books, of which he knew much more than their gilded backs. After a time he procured a situation for me (then about sixteen) in Manchester, at the wages of five shillings per week, to do anything required in mercantile lithography. Soon my father grew more sick, and

I was wholly dependent on this sum for food, clothes, and lodging, living almost entirely upon meal; and when, shortly, this wage was cut off by my employer's failure, there came lower depths of privation, even to absolute lack of bread, and, as the culmination of my distress, my loved father's death, and I was left desolate in a strange city.

His end was soothed by obtaining a place for me in the firm of Messrs. Bradshaw and Blacklock. There, in the extremest drudgery of commercial lithography, I endured daily torture, suffering also from a disease brought on by semi-starvation, which sapped my strength for four years, and exposed me to the scoffs of the unfeeling wits of the shop. Months passed in this new circle of misery, and then I was dismissed for inability to execute with mechanical nicety the many repetitions of one bobbin ticket, of which some eighty might be massed on one cold stone, to be neatly painted exactly alike with the brush for colour printing, "Warranted 60 yards Best Thread:" to me a dull round

of torture—suffering as of the Inquisition's victim under slow drops of water falling on his chest. In vain I strove to satisfy the foreman's standard. My heart rose in loathing. So again I was without the means of bread-winning. I tramped to Liverpool—thirty-two miles by road—with a few pence in my pocket, and back without any, in search of work, indebted to the kindness of some Irish reapers for a night's rest and a basin of porridge. What to do?

I thought of Newton, where my father's memory was held in loving regard. There I found warm-hearted friends, though poor,

and at the tariff of seven shillings per head they took from me portraits, life-size, drawn in chalk on tinted paper, enough to keep me engaged for several months. Admirable practice, and joy delirious, as an escape from the grinding bondage of bobbin tickets, to be searching the beauty and mystery of Nature's work in the faces of men and women! But the mine of the little Lancashire town was soon exhausted, and at this juncture old Bradshaw, the Quaker partner in the firm

from which I had lately been ejected, sent for me and said, "Dost thee think thyself able to design for Baxter's patent oil-printing process?" Modestly, but confidently, I replied, "Yes." "What wages wilt thou require?" Seven shillings I had received for bobbin-ticket bondage, and I dared to ask ten shillings as wage for the elevated post of designer. So returning to my late shop in honour, the despised became a head, with a little den to himself, where no defilement of bobbin tickets entered, and he revelled in rustic lovers, and gleaners, and a box of colours



From *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Christian at the Cross.

for the first time. Only a few months so passed, my good master died, and all the firm's interest in the patent with him. I was again adrift, but I had at last obtained some standing in the trade, and easily entered on new service with a French firm, at much-increased wages, to design for every variety of ornamental labels used in the Manchester home and foreign commerce, making ever novel demands upon all the fertility of decorative invention I could exercise.

With more amplitude of means a passion for the theatre, which had been indiscreetly planted in me as a boy, found full indul-

gence; I became its oft frequenter, and this soon led to intimacy with the actors and fellowship with their light, loose ways of life. I was in an evil path, and none to restrain my youth. Among all I knew there was not one wise man to speak a saving word of remonstrance. Then there awoke within me a whisper, "You must give up the theatre." I tried to silence it until it swelled to thunderous threatening, and I have sat at a play trembling. God's spirit had put a bit and bridle upon me, that I dared no further perversely resist, and I yielded, being thus saved from a snare that else would have utterly destroyed me, as I have seen it destroy many a young man.

When this firm of Dubois failed, after another experiment of service, I resolved to give up shop situations and lodgings, with all their wretched discomforts, at once. Now it was that my mother, worn down with the struggle of keeping the younger children in London by her own work, came to live with me in Manchester. Alas! it proved to die (after a short period of patient suffering) of consumption. Her last dear words: "Remember me sometimes."

I rented a little house in the outskirts, and began to take jobs from the general lithographic trade, by which step I increased my leisure, and so began to paint in water colours, in hope to break through the commercial chrysalis which had encoffined my art aspirations so long. Throughout these long years of shop drudgery I kept up a habit, in my daily journeys to and from my place of employment, of familiarising my eyes with nature by observation of faces, figures, and groupings worthy of attention either for beauty or oddity, rapidly sketching them on the moment in the street, ere the impression faded—an exercise which did much to train me to swift perception of essential points and facility in portraying them. Now came from a Halifax firm an offer of fifty shillings per week, which I gladly accepted, seeing that it

made me free of the invigorating air of the Yorkshire moors, which greatly recruited my enfeebled health during a year's sojourn. Shut up heretofore in the narrowness of big cities, I recall the dancing delight excited in my heart by the first sight of widespread hill and dale from the crest of a moorland rise!

The Art Treasures Exhibition at Manchester in 1857 came, with its unique display of ancient and modern art, as a revelation to me. I compared school with school, master with master, old with new, making copious notes; and, eager to bring into play my new

knowledge, I again attempted a picture in water colours, which I sold at once for £9, with another commission as the result—and at last I was launched as an artist.

The year 1860 formed a turning-point in my career, for then, having before heard much of Rossetti, alone among the Pre-Raphaelites unrepresented at the "Art Treasures," I fell in with the edition of Tennyson's poems which contains some designs from his hand. Those burning with imaginative fervour of invention appealed to forces hitherto held in subjection within me, and at this juncture a door was opened to put to trial their capacity, in a proposition from the late Mr. Henry Rawson, of the *Manchester Examiner*,

to illustrate "The Pilgrim's Progress." "Cheaply it must be done," he said. In my enthusiasm, and fearful lest this first chance of serious design should slip my grasp, I undertook the larger designs at two pounds each, the smaller at half the price. The period occupied by this commission quickly consumed the savings from my Halifax service, and brought me again to bread and water, which I grudged not, my soul's desires being filled whilst I drank deep of Bunyan's divine dream.*

But these done, no like commission followed, though the designs elicited unstinted

* Mr. Shields' illustrations to *The Pilgrim's Progress* are published by the Proprietors of the *Manchester Examiner*, and we are kindly permitted to give here three of the smaller subjects.—Ed. G.W.



Christiana and her family.

praise from John Ruskin, and brought me eventually the friendship, warm, helpful, and steadfast until his death, of Dante Rossetti, and also of Ford Madox Brown.

So I was forced back again on subjects of child life, for which I had now an established reputation in Manchester—a choice of subjects originally induced by inability to afford adult models, and continued from the ready disposal found for such drawings. In this character I was elected into the Old Water Colour Society, and soon afterwards dared, for the sake of the great advantages of study offered by the Metropolis, to leave Manchester, taking apartments near Cheyne Walk, Chelsea. But there the almost ceaseless torture inflicted by wandering piano organs, making day hideous, so shook my disposition, that for six months I was prostrate with shattered nerves; and seeing that further effort to work under such conditions was futile, I was fain to return to my adopted city of Manchester.

The design of the "Nativity" was executed about this period.

In the lower part the rich and the poor meet together, worshipping before the Incarnate Word, their Maker and Redeemer. On the one hand the Magi, offering

"Gold, a monarch to declare,
Frankincense, that God is there,
Myrrh, to tell the heavier tale
Of His death and funeral;"

and, since by sin death entered, the vessel of myrrh bears on it a design of the serpent holding the forbidden fruit. The poor shepherds lay their simple, but significant offering of a lamb bound for sacrifice at His feet.

In the upper section the opened glory of the heavens is brought nigh to earth, and in the birth of the Son of Man, who is made unto us Righteousness, and who is our Peace, Righteousness and Peace are seen to kiss each other, as in Psalm lxxxv., which is appointed for Christmas Day. Righteousness (or Justice) crowned and shining as the sun, which reveals all things by its light, bears the sharp sickle of judgment (Rev. xiv.) and is attended by the mystic fiery wheels, full of eyes. Does not the whole course of nature move only by virtue of righteousness? Peace appears with rainbow aureole, dove wings, and olive branch. Around is the angelic host, bending with searching desire to know the mystery of the name "Emmanuel," or raising the song of glory in the highest to the Father's love, who gave His Son.

In Manchester then I remained—where

all growth was retarded, for then the city was absolutely barren of public examples of art, until I could no longer endure the famine, and again I sought London, if haply it held some corner where partial quiet from the maddening organ dance of "Tullochgorum," &c., might be found. Not long after this transplanting, Mr. Alfred Waterhouse, R.A., then engaged in the erection of the chapel of Eaton Hall, for the Duke of Westminster, honoured me, with his Grace's consent, by entrusting its decoration in glass and mosaic to my hands. The golden opportunity, for which my life's longings and aims had been insensibly fitting me, was come—late, but come! I thanked God, and the theme accepted, St. Ambrose's glorious "Te Deum" kindled and enflamed my soul. Here I had no more to deal with isolated subjects, but with one grand argument, linked in blessed continuity to keep the heart heated and the mind alive to the completion of its great end, the glory of God revealed in Jesus Christ by inspired apostles, prophets, and martyrs, and in the Holy Church of all the ages.

Long and reverent study of the Holy Scriptures, of which Dante saith, "The copious shower of the spirit of God diffused over them is a syllogism (which has settled my faith) on which all virtue is founded so clearly that in its presence all demonstration appears to me obtuse." I say this study had singularly trained me for the work, and all my life-repressed aspirations after spiritual avenues for expression by my art found amplest space.

To the inexhaustible fount of the written word I referred alone, casting aside traditional treatment wherever it clogged spiritual interpretation, holding earnestly in mind that all art within walls dedicated to the worship of God, if it be not spiritual and helpful, is *there* merely sensuous and impertinent. So I sought a new path, even to discriminate apostles, prophets, &c., not by the accepted conventional stamps of martyr sword or saw, but by symbolic devices, scripturally suggestive of those individual manifestations of the Holy Spirit through them, which differentiate the varied forms of the unity of their God-appointed mission to the world.

Here I could be expansive, but space forbids, and if any would know more of the scheme of Eaton Chapel it may be found in an article by Mr. Horace E. Scudder, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for October, 1882.

Thus far then this life story. To be continued? Aye! unto eternity.

Some HOMES of a VANISHED WORLD.



By

W. OUTRAM TRISTRAM.

With Pictures by

HERBERT RAILTON.

"IT has all gone—like an unsubstantial pageant faded, and between us and the Old English there lies a gulf of mystery which the prose of the historian will never adequately bridge. They cannot come to us, and our imaginations can but feebly penetrate to them. Only among the aisles of the Cathedrals, only as we gaze upon their silent figures sleeping on their tombs, some faint conception floats before us of what these men were when they were alive, and perhaps in the sound of church bells, that peculiar creation of the Mediæval Age which falls upon the ear like an echo from a vanished world."

So writes Mr. Froude in a fine passage in the introduction to his "History of England," lamenting the passing away of the Middle Age, and the impossibility of its realization by a posterity with which it has lost all touch! And yet it seems to me that its conception can be realized, and far less faintly too than in any example given above, in a brief visit to some of the old moated houses of England—grey relics still standing in different parts of the country, which Time's hand has touched lightly, and happy chance saved from Goth's desecrating rage. For surely, if anywhere, in their old homes we

may meet these long-estranged ancestors of ours face to face once more—get a more homely insight into their private lives than any recumbent monument in cathedral can show! In the secure quiet of their grey court-yards, in the deserted minstrels' galle-

ries of their banqueting halls, in the grave beauty of their formal gardens, on the clear moat's edge, into which the menacing draw-bridge still casts its shadow, we seem to stand on a familiar ground with them, to meet as friends and guests, to touch hands,



to feel almost that faint pulse's flicker whose life has long since fled.

Their homes indeed are in the truest sense these men's histories. And when applied to moated houses the parallel will be found to be peculiarly correct. For the very moat itself shadows the spirit of those times when mailed marauders, more or less intent on business, pricked industriously across plains; and John-Amend-alls, with a goodly companionship of skilled bowmen, peopled the

forests of a country helpless in the grasp of prolonged civil war; when deserving people who needed money made no distressing appeals to the public purse, but simply got to horse, and took one on the neighbouring common; when butlers in gentlemen's houses were men-at-arms, and valets knew how to buckle armour and handle pikes—when, in short, country seats had to be defensible, wardens on gate-houses alert, heavy draw-bridges religiously raised at nightfall.

One of these dreams of stone—the first of some few that I propose to chat about—lies within seven miles of Sevenoaks, and therefore within an easy day's journey from town. To approach Ightham Mote House on the fall of a winter's evening is like a descent into the Middle Ages. The road runs along the side of a steep slope thickly wooded. No sign of man's dwelling is seen. The traveller deems himself misdirected, yet expects to see a wizard start from every bush, or hear the

lone wood ring to the horn of some adventurous knight. And still downward the road plunges. Then suddenly grey tower and high pitched roofs start like some palace of enchantment from the very heart of the valley. One draws near and wonders, struck into silence. There is a look of dusty deadliness about the old house. The moat's dark depths hide secrets. A faint swirl is heard of running water!

The great hall at Ightham is of the time



of Edward III., and at once seizes the imagination. Its splendid proportions, the fine pitch of its central stone arch, suggest that atmosphere of the baronial castle imported into domesticity, which is this class of building's most characteristic charm—essential to it in those wild times that I am speaking of, when an Englishman's home had to be his castle indeed—that is to say, if he wished it to be his home for long. The fourteenth century, however, is not alone represented in this truly representative moated grange. Portions of it are of later date. Some fine

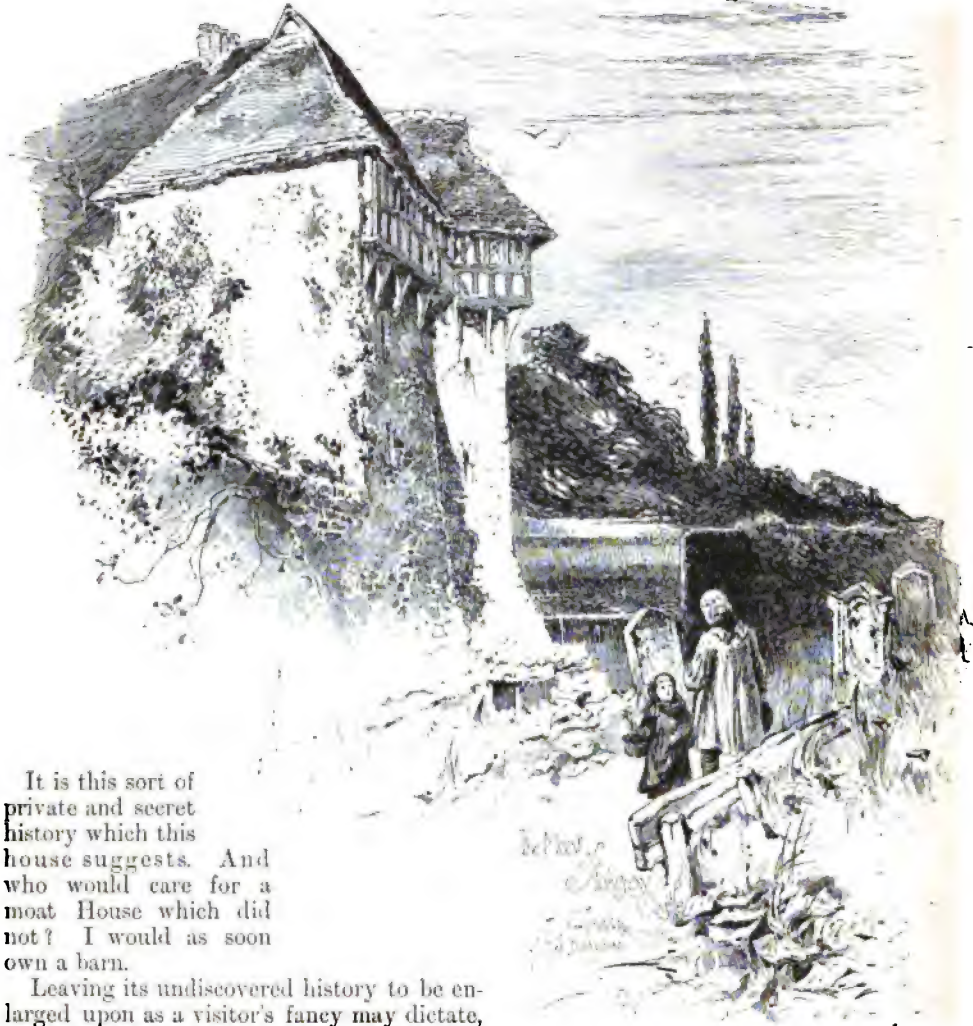
timber buildings outside the moat are of the time of Elizabeth. A charming Jacobean drawing-room rounds the full record of the house's architectural story. And architecturally speaking I do not suppose that a more perfect specimen of its class is to be seen.

Not that its architecture represents, to me at all events, by any means the most vivid side of the strange charm of this "old great house," as Charles Lamb would have called it. There hangs a certain ghostliness about it, as I said before. At the close of a winter's afternoon it looks wickedly—lying there in the hollow.



A traveller in the Middle Ages stumbling upon it suddenly in a sort of half gloom would have crossed himself. It is a house with a secret, and of its private history many a wild scene it no doubt keeps locked in its withered heart. Memories of fierce carousals; deadly orgies protracted in the great banqueting-hall till

blood flowed with overturned wine cups; the late arrival of unexpected guests, enemies recently reconciled, who slept but a night in their new friend's house and did not appear at breakfast on the morrow. (There is an oubliette at Ightham within a few steps of the drawing-room door which causes a shudder. Nothing is seen; but the moat is heard gurgling.)



It is this sort of private and secret history which this house suggests. And who would care for a moat House which did not? I would as soon own a barn.

Leaving its undiscovered history to be enlarged upon as a visitor's fancy may dictate, round even that part of Ightham moat's story which has been written, romance and mystery cling. Historical characters promenade that delightful court-yard—which, in winter, conveys a feeling of grave domestic security—in summer, shines rampant with Kent's most coloured flowers. Robert de Haut mounted here to join the party of Richmond. Richard the Third upon this confiscated the estate and granted it to Brackenbury—not destined long to enjoy his new possessions. In this court-yard Brackenbury, no doubt, marshalled his retainers bound for Bosworth field. In that great battle he commanded Richard's rear-

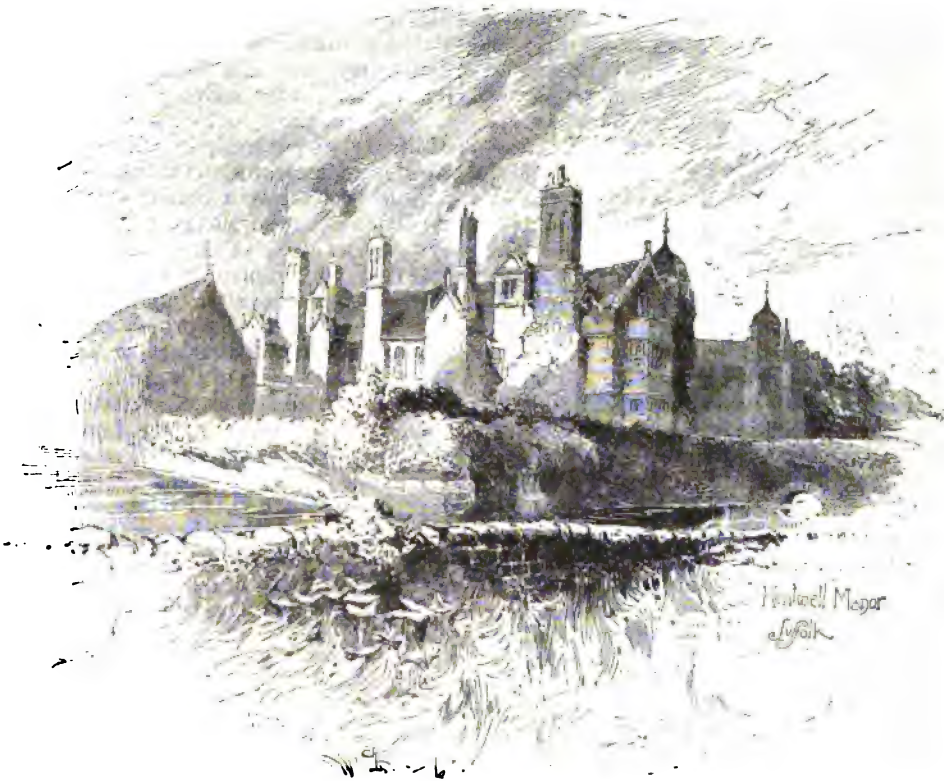
guard, and fell fighting. One can picture the small band setting out after deep stirrup cups—Brackenbury's banner moving along the steep hill-side surrounded by a clump of shining spears, and white hands waving signals in plenty from the Mote's northern windows.

After the roll call on Bosworth field, Henry the Seventh restored the Mote to its former owner, who, if he engaged at all on that desperate day, was clever or fortunate enough to keep his skin whole. Robert de Haut re-

turned covered with glory therefore to his Kentish home, and no doubt in its great hall mediævally celebrated the occasion. From his family the place passed successively to the Clements and Allens, and then in 1592 to the Selbys of Northumberland, who held it till Charles the First was King and their own family extinct, when the last representative made it over to one of like name,

but of no connection otherwise whatsoever.

History is dumb in the presence of later successors, but of one Dame Dorothy, the earliest of the Northumberland Selby's, it has a tale to tell. This Dame Dorothy appears to have been a personage. A sort of seventeenth-century Lady Bountiful of the Manor, who spent a serene life in acts of



unostentatious charity, and died famous and universally beloved in her home's small world. Her fingers of a skilful workwoman gave her wider fame. A laudable industry in this respect, indeed, cost her her life, and at the same time established her reputation as an historical character; for she died in 1641 from the prick of a too industrious needle (acquired on a Sunday, I regret to say), and having left a large piece of tapestry behind her, illustrative of the discovery of the Gunpowder Treason, has been supposed by some to have been actually and practically herself the secret instrument which brought that tremendous design to the knowledge of the government.

XXX-59

The following is the inscription in St. Peter's, Ightham, which has long furnished food for controversialists:—

D. D. D.

To the precious name and honour of

DAME DOROTHY SELBY.

She a Dorcas was
 Whose curious needle turned the abused Stage
 Of this lewd World into the Golden Age
 Whose pen of steel and silken ink enrolled
 The Acts of Jonah in records of gold.
Whose art disclosed that Plot which had it taken
Rome had triumphed and Briton's walls had shaken
 In heart a Lydia and in tongue a Hannah
 In seal a Ruth, in wedlock a Susannah
 Prudently simple, providently wary
 To the World a Martha, and to Heaven a Mary
 Who put on immortality in the year { of her pilgrimage, 68.
 { of her Redeemer, 1641.

Though the consensus of opinion on the subject leans, I believe, to the view that Dame Dorothy's instrumentality in discovering the Great Treason was confined to allegorically representing it on her tapestry frame—yet the issue cannot be said to be definitely decided. There are those who affirm, and with arguments no doubt to back their affirmation, that the lady both performed the one feat and the other; and having accidentally overheard compromising dialogue between two of the conspirators while staying in a manor-house in Gloucestershire, first secretly laid information to the government, and then, "with steel and silken ink enrolled," elaborately celebrated the fact. Major Luard Selby read a paper on this subject in 1863, before the Archæological Institute, and considerable ensuing controversy occurred in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, November and December, 1863, and also in January, 1864, by Excursionist and Mr. Thomas Selby, to which I refer those who may be interested in a subject—about which, in my view, much may be said on both sides.

If Ightham, so far as a moated building is concerned, is the most interesting house in Kent, Broughton Castle, two and a-half miles south-west of Banbury, holds the same honourable distinction in Oxfordshire. Like Ightham, it lies low; like Ightham, it is surrounded by a moat of clear water; like Ightham, various periods of architecture complete its harmonious whole. Seen from one point of view, the general impression given by the place is that of an Elizabethan mansion of the finest type—but this is only a one-sided view of it in another sense, for a considerable portion dates from 1301—1307, including the hall, from which bays were thrown out in 1554, when Tudor windows were inserted instead of Gothic.

Three periods of architecture adorn this grand house—each period marking the residence of a different proprietor. The De Broughtons were owners in the fourteenth century. From them William of Wykeham purchased it, and in 1404 bequeathed it to his great grandson, who immediately commenced building operations. He obtained permission to crenellate from Henry IV., in 1406, and the old battlements, lower part of the gate-house, and stables along the north side of the moat appeared upon the scene. The sixteenth-century portion of the house is represented by the great dining and drawing-rooms, which date from 1599, when the Fienneses held sway.

A sense of mystery proper to a moated house pervades Broughton Castle; but a mystery of another kind than that which at Ightham holds an imaginative manspell-bound and gives the most callous visitor pause. No chill of ghostliness strikes here; but that form of mystery proper to romance which takes the form of excitement—a delightful atmosphere of trap doors, hair-breadth escapes, secret hiding places, the tread of cautious feet heard in wainscotings at midnight, the hushed whispers of conspiracy startling drowsy serving men, coming suddenly they know not whence, dying as suddenly into silence. Everywhere here cling memories of those stirring times when lovers of liberty were secretly organizing resistance to arbitrary measures, and with swords already half unsheathed were drawing a great party slowly to a head, in stern opposition to the tyranny of Charles I. Broughton Castle was the very centre of these momentous intrigues. Night after night, all through those anxious months which preluded the raising of the royal standard at Nottingham, the secret staircases of the old house creaked to the hurried tread of agitated patriots stealing to conference. My Lord of Saye and Sele, then the owner of Broughton, was the oracle of the Puritans. "Lord Saye," says Anthony Wood, "held meetings at his house at Broughton, where was a room and passage thereunto which his servants were prohibited to come near; and when they were of a complete number there would be great noises and talking heard amongst them, to the admiration of those that lived in the house, yet could they never discern their lord's companions." So impenetrable a veil of secrecy shrouded the identity of these voices of the night that their approach to the castle was never suspected. All was still; no front or postern doors had been opened; and suddenly in the haunted silence the voices rose. Their owners (and what great names among the Parliamentary party at these secret conclaves did not make themselves heard?) are said to have been introduced into the very heart of the sleeping house by an underground passage, the entrance to which was supposed to have been in the Giant's Cave, a long way off, in an enclosure called Bretch, beyond the Broughton toll-gate. Picture the long line of cloaked patriots stooping in the underground way. Water oozing from dank walls—the low moan of the moat heard overhead!

Broughton Castle preserves further records of this part of history—when midnight

meeting had given place to armed resistance—when, as de Quincey finely puts it, “Those who had met in peace and sate at the same tables and were allied by marriage and blood, after a certain day in August, 1642, never smiled upon each other again, nor met but in the field of battle; and at Marston Moor, at Newbury, or at Naseby, cut asunder all ties of love by the cruel sabre, and washed away in blood the memory of ancient friendship.” The tide of the Great Civil War surged close about these grey towers. Edge Hill is not far off; and on the top of the old house, among the oak timbers, is the old Barrack Room where some of the Parliamentary soldiers are said to have been quartered before the battle—everywhere, indeed, from about the place some echoes of past storm and stress! Broughton Castle stands as the military type among these homes of a Vanished World.

Far off in low-lying Suffolk—adjoining that charming village of Long Melford, an English vision of neat cottages and pleasant village green, screened by fine trees—lies a very different sort of old English home in Kentwell Hall. No stirring story of war or family feud, or ghostly legend hangs, as far as I know, about its perfect presentment of dreaming gables and grey clustering chimneys. It is fortified, in that it is surrounded by a moat over which pass two bridges; but there is nothing of the fortress about it, either in its form or its history. An untouched Elizabethan house, lying among green meadows and rich corn-fields, and approached by a noble avenue of limes nearly a mile long, under whose high pitched roofs two generations of Cloptons were born



and grew to manhood, and married and died, and lie buried in the neighbouring church. I need linger no longer about Kentwell—a perfect sixteenth-century home simply!

Another such moated house, with much of the same air of happy domesticity lingering about its fast-decaying walls, but with more character attaching to it, is Moreton Hall, in Cheshire. This is a timber and plaster building, and in a county world-famed for its timber and plaster buildings, is perhaps the finest specimen. It has its moat, ap-

proached by a bridge on the south side, a fine old gateway, a curious gallery with sides formed of bay windows and roof of oak, whose silent length has often echoed, doubtless, to the retainers' armed heel and the loitering tread of lovers. It has its chapel, too, screened into two parts (of which the ante-chapel is the largest), a low ceiling and a painted window. These things it has in common with other buildings of its kind. But what makes Moreton Hall individual to me, is that, as it were, it is a house that has a voice to it. Its old walls speak to one from every side, in quaint inscriptions, silent messages from the coloured times when the Tudors ruled England. Over the upper windows in the old banquetting hall, for instance, the following facts are stated—

"God is al in al thing.
 "Thes windows where made by William Moreton
 In the yere of our Lorde MDLIX.
 Richard Dale, Carpeder, made this window by
 'The Grac' of God."

On one of the chapel windows, to quote another instance, was cut originally this profound observation on men and things—

"Men can noe more knowe weoman's mynde by teares
 Than by her shadow judge what clothes she weares."

Witness, I presume, that the inscriber was a family man!

Over the window, too, of the gallery, which I have before mentioned, this piece of Latinity stares from these vocal walls—

"Qui modo scandit corruct statim."

May not Moreton Hall, after this, be labelled the Moated Manor which speaks? I think so.

Shropshire furnishes me with the last text of my gossip—and in Stokesay Castle, one mile left of Craven Arms Junction, with one of the finest examples in England of the castellated mansions of the thirteenth century. Here all smacks of the time—the court-yard of an irregularly oblong form, the covered well, the old timber gate-tower, another tower on the south side (an irregular polygon of three stories, lighted by lancet



windows, and surmounted by a battlemented parapet), the great hall lighted by four large windows overlooking the moat. All here breathes of the England vanished long since, according to the historian's charmed words taken by me almost as a text; of the England lighted, it may be, by the fires of Smithfield, but in which strolling companies wandering from village to village, and playing in farmhouse kitchens, transacted on their petty stage those mystery plays which gave foundations for Shakespear's immortal conceptions; of the England in which men rose, summer and winter, at four o'clock, and breakfasted at five; of the England in which for a penny, a labourer could buy as much bread, beef, beer, and wine, as the labourer of to-day can buy for a shilling; of an England in short, coloured with a broad rosy English health; but in which manors had to be moated—private houses defensible. The last house I have spoken of bears witness to this truth. In the lower story of this Stokesay the windows are placed obliquely, to prevent assailants shooting their arrows inside.

A SUNDAY IN NORWAY.

BY THE BISHOP OF WAKEFIELD.

WE looked up from our Northern valley to the wall of the craggy height,
Where the flow of the great blue glacier was stayed in the sunny air:
'Twas Sunday; our office was said; and the gleam of the morning light
Made the face of the mountains all glorious, and we said "It were well to be there."

We have scaled the steep and the crag, we have left the soft valley below,
By the marge of the frozen torrent we rest for a little space;
There are flowers by the foaming runnels our home-lands do not know;
There are ferns in the rocky hollows rare in their tender grace.

And deep deep down lies the lake with its waters green and still,
And the tumbling cascades are reflected across its gleaming breast;
And the spell of the dreamy sunlight, and the joy of the silent hill,
Have passed on the musing spirit to hallow our day of rest.

Lo! a fleet of small boats push off from the shore (we have counted sixteen),
Inch-long they look in the distance, and each with its tiny wake;
Down to the church in the valley, where the fresh-shorn grass is green,
The peasants have gone, and homeward they row to their farms on the lake.

They have doubtless sung, in a speech that we know not, God's wisdom and love;
Their pastor has doubtless been preaching the wonderful things of God's word;
But, for us, God is teaching our souls by the vastness and beauty above,
And the canticle breaks from our lips, "O ye mountains and hills, bless the Lord!"

THE HAUTE NOBLESSE.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN, AUTHOR OF "THIS MAN'S WIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER LX.—THE DOG BITES.

PRADELLE started back as if he had been stung.

"Police?" he said. "What do you mean?"

"What a man does mean, you scoundrel, when he talks about them—to give you into custody."

"It is not a criminal offence to elope with a lady," said Pradelle with a malicious look at Leslie, who stood before the door with his hands clenched.

"Uncle!" cried Louise, whose pale face now flamed up as she glanced at Leslie, and saw that he avoided her eyes.

"You wait," he said. "I'll finish with this fellow first, and end by taking you home."

"But, uncle, let me explain."

"You'll hold your tongue!" cried Pradelle sharply. "Think what you are going to do."

"Yes, she can hold her tongue," cried

Uncle Luke, "while I settle our little business, sir. Let me see. Ah! I was always sure of that."

Pradelle had thrust himself forward offensively, and in a threatening manner, so near that the old man had only to dart out one hand to seize him by the throat; and quick as lightning had drawn an old gold ring from the scarf the young man wore.

"What are you doing?" roared Pradelle, clenching his fist.

"Taking possession of my own. Look here, Leslie, my old signet ring that scoundrel took from a nail over my chimney-piece."

"It's a lie, it's——"

"My crest, and enough by itself to justify the police being called up."

"A trick, a trumped-up charge," cried Pradelle.

"You must prove that at the same time you clear yourself of robbing Van Heldre."

"I—I rob Van Heldre! I swear I never had a shilling of his money."

"You were not coming away when I knocked you down with old Crampton's ruler, eh?"

Pradelle shrank from the upraised stick, and with an involuntary movement clapped his hand to his head.

"See that, Leslie!" cried the old man with a sneering laugh. "Yes, that was the place. I hit as hard as I could."

"A trick, a trap! Bah! I'm not scared by your threats. You stand aside, and let us pass!" cried Pradelle in a loud, bullying way, as he tried to draw Louise toward the door; but she freed herself from his grasp.

"No, no!" she cried wildly, as with ears and eyes on the strain she glanced at window and door, and caught her uncle's arm.

"Hah! glad you have so much good sense left. Nice scoundrel this to choose, my girl!"

"Uncle!" she whispered, "you shall let me explain."

"I don't want to hear any explanation," cried the old man angrily. "I know quite enough. Will you come home with me?"

"Yes!" she cried eagerly, and Leslie drew a breath full of relief. "No!"

The negative came like a cry of agony.

"I cannot, uncle, I cannot."

"I'll see about that," cried the old man.

"Now, Leslie, ask Sergeant Parkins to step up here."

"Let him if he dares!" cried Pradelle fiercely.

"Oh, he dares," said Uncle Luke, smiling.

"Call him up, for it is a criminal case, after all."

"Stop!" cried Pradelle, as Leslie laid his hand upon the door.

"Yes, stop—pray, pray stop!" cried Louise in agony; and with a wild look of horror, which stung Leslie with jealous rage.

"Uncle, you must not do this."

"I'd do it if it was ten times as hard!" cried the old man.

"What shall I say—what shall I do?" moaned Louise. "Uncle, uncle, pray don't do this. You must not send for the police. Give me time to explain—to set you right."

"Shame upon you!" cried the old man fiercely. "Defending such a scoundrel as that!"

"No, no, uncle, I do not defend this man. Listen to me; you do not know what you are doing."

"Not know what I am doing? Ah!"

He turned from her in disgust, and with a look of agony that thrilled him, she caught Leslie's arm.

"You will listen to me, Mr. Leslie. You must not, you shall not, call in the police."

He did not speak for the moment, but stood hesitating as if yielding to her prayer; but the frown deepened upon his brow as he loosened her grasp upon his arm.

"It is for your good," he said coldly, "to save you from a man like that."

"I must speak, I must speak!" cried Louise, and then she uttered a wail of horror and shrank to her uncle's side.

For as she clung to Leslie, Pradelle, with a bullying look, planted himself before the door to arrest Leslie's progress, and then shrank back as he saw the grim smile of satisfaction upon the young Scot's face.

It was the work of moments, and the action seemed like to that of one of his own country deer hounds, as Leslie dashed at him; there was the dull sound of a heavy blow, and Pradelle went down with a crash in one corner of the room.

"Mr. Leslie! Mr. Leslie! for pity's sake stay!" cried Louise as she made for the door; but Uncle Luke caught her hand, and retained it as the door swung to.

"Uncle, uncle!" she moaned, "what have you done?"

"Done?" he cried. "You mad, infatuated girl! My duty to my brother and to you."

"All right," said Pradelle, rising slowly. "Let's have in the police then. I can clear myself, I daresay."

"Mr. Pradelle, if you have a spark of manliness in you, pray say no more," cried Louise, as, snatching herself free, she ran to him now.

"Oh, I'm not going to be made a scape-goat!" he cried savagely; but as his eyes met hers full of piteous appeal, his whole manner changed, and he caught her hands in his.

"Yes, I will," he whispered. "I'll bear it all. It can't be for long, and I may get off. Promise me——"

He said the rest of the words with his lips close to her ear.

"Your wife?" she faltered as she shrank away and crossed to her uncle. "No, no, no!"

There was a sharp rap on the panel, the door yielded, and Sergeant Parkins stepped in.

"Mr. Pradelle, eh?" he said with a grim smile. "Glad to make your acquaintance, sir, at last. You'll come quietly?"

"Oh, yes, I'll come," said Pradelle. "I've got an answer to the charge."

"Of course you have, sir. Glad to hear

it. Sorry to put a stop to your pleasant little game. Shall I?"

"There's no need," said Pradelle in answer to a meaning gesticulation toward his wrists. "I know how to behave like a gentleman."

"That's right," said the sergeant, who, with a display of delicacy hardly to have been expected in his triumph at having, as he felt, had his prognostication fulfilled, carefully abstained from even glancing at the trembling girl, who stood there with agony and despair painted on her face.

"It ain't too late yet, Miss Louy," said Pradelle, crossing toward her.

"Keep that scoundrel back, Parkins," cried Uncle Luke.

"Right, sir. Now, Mr. Pradelle."

"Stop a moment, can't you?" shouted the prisoner. "Miss Louy—to save him you'll promise, and I'll be dumb. I swear I will."

Louise drew herself up as a piteous sigh escaped her breast.

"No," she said firmly, "I cannot promise that. Uncle dear, I have tried to save him to the last. I can do no more."

"No," said the old man, "you can do no more."

"Mr. Pradelle," she cried, "you will not be so base?"

"Will you promise?" he cried.

"No."

"Then—here, just a minute. You, Mr. Luke Vine, will you give me a word?"

"No," roared Uncle Luke. "Take him away."

"Then the sergeant here will," cried Pradelle savagely. "Look here, sit down and wait for a few minutes, and you can take Harry Vine as well."

"What do you mean?" cried the sergeant roughly.

"Only that he has gone out to raise the money for a bolt to France, and he'll be back directly. Two birds with one stone."

"Only a trick, sir," said the sergeant grimly. "Now, Mr. Pradelle, hansom or four-wheeler? I give you your choice."

"Four-wheeler," said Pradelle, with a sneering laugh.

"My poor brother!" moaned Louise, as she made a clutch at the air, and then sank fainting in her uncle's arms.

"You scoundrel! to speak like that," cried Uncle Luke fiercely.

"Here, what do you mean?" said the sergeant.

"What I said. He wasn't drowned. Harry was too clever for that."

Click—click!

A pair of handcuffs were fastened to his wrists with marvellous celerity, and he was swung into a chair.

"I don't know whether this is a bit of gammon, Mr. Pradelle," said the sergeant sharply, "but I never lose a chance."

He paid not the slightest heed to the other occupants of the room, but ran to the window, threw it open, and called to some one below, but only his last words were heard by those inside.

"Quick! first one you see, and I'll give you a shilling."

The sergeant closed the window and crossed to Pradelle.

"If it's a trick it will do you no good. You see, to begin with, it has brought you those."

"I don't care," said Pradelle, glowering at Uncle Luke. "It will take some of the pride out of him, and I shan't go alone."

"It is a trick, sergeant. Take the scoundrel away."

"Must make sure, sir. Sorry for the lady, but she may have been deceived that horrible night, and there's more in this than I can understand. Your friend be long, sir?"

"Mr. Leslie? I expected him back with you."

"Mr. Leslie went on out into the street, sir. Here, I have it. He has been in hiding down your way, and came up with the lady there."

"That's it, sergeant; you're a 'cute one," said Pradelle with a laugh.

"Who has been in hiding?"

"Your nephew, sir. I see it all now. What a fool I've been."

"My nephew!—Not dead?"

"Harry—brother!" moaned Louise. "I could do no more. Ah!"

Uncle Luke fell a-trembling as he caught the half-insensible girl's hand, gazing wildly at the sergeant the while.

"Look here, Pradelle, no more nonsense. Will he come back?"

"If you keep quiet, of course. Not if he sees you."

"Ah!" ejaculated the sergeant, crossing to the door as he heard a step; and hurrying out he returned directly with a constable in uniform.

"Stop!" he said shortly, and he nodded to the prisoner. "Very sorry, Mr. Vine, sir," he then said; "but you must stay here for a bit. I am going down to wait outside."

"But Parkins!" cried Uncle Luke, agita-

tedly, "I cannot. If this is true—that poor boy—no, no, he must not be taken now."

"Too late, sir, to talk like that," cried the sergeant. "You stop there."

"Yes," said Pradelle, as the door closed on the sergeant's retiring figure; "pleasant for you. I always hated you for a sneering old crab. It's your time to feel now."

"Silence, you scoundrell!" cried Uncle Luke, fiercely. "She's coming to."

Uncle Luke was wrong, for Louise only moaned slightly, and then relapsed into insensibility, from which a doctor who was fetched did not seem to recall her, and hour after hour of patient watching followed, but Harry did not return.

"The bird has been scared, sir," said Parkins, entering the room at last. "I can't ask you to stay longer. There's a cab at the door to take the lady to your hotel."

"But are you sure—that—my poor boy lives?"

"Certain sir, now. I've had his description from the people down below. I shall have him before to-night."

"L'homme propose, mais—"

Five minutes later Louise, quite insensible, was being borne to the hotel; Mr. Pradelle, to an establishment offering similar advantages as to bed and board, but with the freedom of ingress and egress left out.

CHAPTER LXL.—DIOGENES DISCOVERS.

"BLAME you, my dear! No, no, of course not. Then you knew nothing about it till that night when he came to the window?"

"Oh no, uncle dear."

Louise started up excitedly from the couch at the hotel upon which she was lying, while the old man trotted up and down the room.

"Now, now, now," he cried piteously, but with exceeding tenderness as he laid his hand upon her brow, and pressed her back till her head rested on the pillow. "Your head's getting hot again, and the doctor said you were not to be excited in any way. There, let's talk about fishing, or sea anemones, or something else."

"No, no, uncle dear, I must talk about this, or I shall be worse."

"Then for goodness' sake let's talk about it," he said eagerly, as he took a chair by her side and held her hand.

"You don't blame me then—very much."

"Well, say not very much; but it's not

very pleasant to have a nephew who makes one believe he's dead, and a niece who pretends that she has bolted with a scampish Frenchman."

"Uncle, uncle," she cried piteously.

"You see it has been a terrible upset for me, while as to your poor father—"

"But, uncle dear, what could I do?"

"Well, when you were writing, you might have said a little more."

"I wrote what poor Harry forced me to write. What else could I say?"

"You see, it has upset us all so terribly. George—I mean your father—will never forgive you."

"But you do not put yourself in my place, uncle. Think of how Harry was situated; think of his horror of being taken. Indeed, he was half mad."

"No: quite, Louy; and you seem to have caught the complaint."

"I hardly knew what I did. It was like some terrible dream. Harry frightened me then."

"Enough to frighten any one, appearing like a ghost at the window when we believed he was dead."

"I did not mean that, uncle. I mean that he was in a terrible state of fever, and hardly seemed accountable for his actions. I think I should have felt obliged to go with him, even if he had not been so determined."

"Ah! well, you've talked about it quite enough."

"No, no; I must talk about it—about Harry. Oh! uncle! uncle! after all this suffering for him to be taken after all! The horror! the shame! the disgrace! You must—you shall save him!"

"I'm going to try all I know, my darling; but when once you have started the police it's hard work to keep them back."

"How could you do it?"

"How could I do it?" cried the old man testily. "I didn't do it to find him, of course; but to try and run you to earth. How could I know that Harry was alive?"

"But you will not let him be imprisoned. Has he not suffered enough?"

"Not more than he deserves to suffer, my child; but we must stop all that judge and jury business somehow. Get Van Heldre not to prosecute."

"I will go down on my knees to him, and stay at his feet till he promises to spare him—poor foolish boy! But, uncle, what are you going to do? You will not send word down?"

"Not send word? Why, I sent to Made-

laine a couple of hours ago, while you lay there insensible."

"You sent?"

"Yes, a long telegram."

"Uncle, what have you done?"

"What I ought to do, my child, and bade her tell her father and mother, and then go and break it gently to my brother."

"Uncle!"

"There, there, my dear, you said I ought to put myself in your place; suppose you put yourself in mine."

"Yes, yes, uncle dear; I see now; I see."

"Then try and be calm. You know how these difficulties sometimes settle themselves."

"Not such difficulties as these, uncle. Harry! my brother! my poor brother!"

"Louy, my dear child!" said the old man, with a comical look of perplexity in his face, "have some pity on me."

"My dearest uncle," she sobbed, as she drew his face down to hers.

"Yes," he said, kissing her; "that's all very well, and affectionate, and nice; but do look here. You know how I live, and why I live as I do."

"Yes, uncle."

"To save myself from worry and anxiety. I am saving myself from trouble, am I not? Here, let go of my hand, and I'll send off another message to hasten your father up, so as to set me free."

"No, uncle dear, you will not leave me," she said, with a pleading look into his eyes.

"There you go!" he cried. "I wish you wouldn't have so much faith in me, Louy. You ought to know better; but you always would believe in me."

"Yes, uncle, always," said Louise, as she placed his hand upon her pillow, and her cheek in his palm.

"Well, all I can say is that it's a great nuisance for me. But I'm glad I've found you, my dear, all the same."

"After believing all manner of evil of me, uncle."

"No, no, not quite so bad as that. There: never mind what I thought. I found you out, and just in the nick of time. I say, where the dickens can Leslie be?"

"Mr. Leslie!"

Louise raised her face, with an excited look in her eyes.

"Well, why are you looking like that?"

"Tell me, uncle—was he very much hurt, that night?"

"Nearly killed," said the old man grimly, and with a furtive look at his niece.

"Uncle!"

"Well, what of it? He's nothing to you. Good enough sort of fellow, but there are thousands of better men in the world."

Louise's brow grew puckered, and a red spot burned in each of her cheeks.

"Been very good and helped me to find you; paid the detective to hunt you out."

"Uncle! surely you will not let Mr. Leslie pay."

"Not let him? I did let him. He has plenty of money, and I have none—handy."

"But, uncle!"

"Oh! it pleased him to pay. I don't know why, though, unless, like all young men, he wanted to make ducks and drakes of his cash."

Louise's brow seemed to grow more contracted.

"Bit of a change for him to run up to town. I suppose that's what made him come," continued the old man; "and now I've found you, I suppose he feels free to go about where he likes. I never liked him."

If Uncle Luke expected his niece to make some reply he was mistaken, for Louise lay back with her eyes half closed, apparently thinking deeply, till there was a tap at the door.

"Hah! that's Leslie," cried the old man, rising.

"You will come back and tell me if there is any news of Harry, uncle," whispered Louise. Then, with an agonised look up at him as she clung to his hands, "He will not help them?"

"What, to capture that poor boy? No, no. Leslie must feel bitter against the man who struck him down, but not so bad as that."

The knock was repeated before he could free his hands and cross the room.

"Yes, what is it?"

"That gentleman who has been to see you before, sir," said the waiter, in a low voice.

"Not Mr. Leslie? He has not returned?"

"No, sir."

"I'll come directly. Where is he?"

"In the coffee-room, sir."

Uncle Luke closed the door and recrossed the room, to where Louise had half risen and was gazing at him wildly.

"News of Harry, uncle?"

"Don't know, my dear."

"You are keeping it from me. That man has taken him, and all this agony of suffering has been in vain."

"I'd give something if Madelaine were here," said Uncle Luke. "No, no; I am not keeping back anything. I don't know

anything; I only came back to beg of you to be calm. There, I promise you that you shall know all."

"Even the worst?"

"Even the worst."

Louise sank back, and the old man descended to the coffee-room, to find Parkins impatiently walking up and down.

"Well?"

"No, sir; no luck yet," said that officer.

"What do you mean with your no luck?" cried Uncle Luke angrily. "You don't suppose I want him found?"

"Perhaps not, sir, but I do. I never like to undertake a job without carrying it through, and I feel over this that I have been regularly tricked."

"What's that to me, sir?"

"Nothing, sir; but to a man in my position, with his character as a keen officer at stake, a great deal. Mr. Leslie, sir: has he been back?"

"There, once for all, it's of no use for you to come and question me, Parkins. I engaged you to track out my niece; you have succeeded, and you may draw what I promised you, and five-and-twenty guineas besides for the sharp way in which you carried it out. You have done your task, and I discharge you. I belong to the enemy now."

"Yes, sir; but I have the other job to finish, in which you did not instruct me."

"Look here, Parkins," said Uncle Luke, taking him by the lapel of his coat, "never mind about the other business."

"But I do, sir. Every man has some pride, and mine is to succeed in every job I take in hand."

"Ah! well, look here; you shall succeed. You did your best over it, and we'll consider it was the last act of the drama when my foolish nephew jumped into the sea."

"Oh, no, sir. I——"

"Wait a minute. What a hurry you men are in. Now look here, Parkins. I'm only a poor quiet country person, and I should be sorry for you to think I tried to bribe you; but you've done your duty. Now go no farther in this matter, and I'll sell out stock to a hundred pounds, and you shall transfer it to your name in the bank."

Parkins shook his head and frowned.

"For a nest egg, man."

"No, sir."

"Then look here, my man; this is a painful family scandal, and I don't want it to go any farther, for the sake of those who are suffering. I'll make it two hundred."

"No, sir; no."

"Then two hundred and fifty; all clean money, Parkins."

"Dirty money, sir, you mean," said the sergeant quietly. "Look here, Mr. Luke Vine, you are, as you say, a quiet country gentleman, so I won't be angry with you. You'll give me five hundred pounds to stop this business and let your nephew get right away?"

Uncle Luke drew a long breath.

"Five hundred!" he muttered. "Well, it will come out of what I meant to leave him, and I suppose he'll be very glad to give it to escape."

"Do you understand me, sir? You'll give me five hundred pounds to stop this search?"

Uncle Luke drew another long breath.

"You're a dreadful scoundrel, Parkins, and too much for me; but yes: you shall have the money."

"No, sir, I'm not a dreadful scoundrel, or I should make you pay me a thousand pounds."

"I wouldn't pay it—not a penny more than five hundred."

"Yes, you would, sir; you'd pay me a thousand for the sake of that sweet young lady upstairs. You'd pay me every shilling you've got if I worked you, and in spite of your shabby looks I believe your pretty warm."

"Never you mind my looks, sir, or my warmth," cried Uncle Luke indignantly. "That matter is settled, then? Five hundred pounds?"

"Thousand would be a nice bit of money for a man like me to have put away against the day I get a crack on the head or am shot by some scoundrel. Nice thing for the wife and my girl. Just about the same age as your niece, sir."

"That will do; that will do," said Uncle Luke stiffly. "The business is settled, then."

"No, sir; not yet. I won't be gruff with you, sir, because your motive's honest, and I'm sorry to have to be hard at a time like this."

"You dog!" snarled Uncle Luke; "you have me down. Go on, worry me. There, out with it. I haven't long to live. Tell me what I am to give you, and you shall have it."

"Your—hand, sir," cried the sergeant; and as it was unwillingly extended he gripped it with tremendous force. "Your hand, sir, for that of a fine, true-hearted English gentleman. No, sir: I'm not to be bought at any price. If I could do it I would, for the sake of that poor broken-hearted girl; but

it isn't to be done. I will not insult you, though, by coming here to get information. Good-day, sir; and you can write to me. Good-bye."

He gave Uncle Luke's hand a final wring, and then, with a short nod, left the room.

"Diogenes the second," said Uncle Luke, with a dry, harsh laugh; "and I've beaten Diogenes the first, for he took a lantern to find his honest man, and didn't find him. I have found one without a light."

CHAPTER LXII.—UNCLE LUKE TURNS PROPHET.

"WHY doesn't Leslie come?" said Uncle Luke impatiently, as he rose from a nearly untasted breakfast the next morning to go to the window of his private room in the hotel and try to look up and down the street. "It's too bad of him. Here, what in the world have I done to be condemned to such a life as this?"

"Life?" he exclaimed after a contemptuous stare at the grimy houses across the street. "Life? I don't call this life! What an existence! Prison would be preferable."

He winced as the word prison occurred to him, and began to think of Harry.

"I can't understand it. Well, he's clever enough at hiding, but it seems very cowardly to leave his sister in the lurch. Thought she was with me, I hope. Confound it, why don't Leslie come?"

"Bah! want of pluck!" he cried, after another glance from the window. "Tide must be about right this week, and the bass playing in that eddy off the point. Could have fished there again now. Never seemed to fancy it when I thought poor Harry was drowned off it. Confound poor Harry! He has always been a nuisance. Now, I wonder whether it would be possible to get communication with him unknown to these police?"

He took a walk up and down the room for a few minutes.

"Now that's where Leslie would be so useful; and he keeps away. Because of Louy, I suppose. Well, what is it? Why have you brought the breakfast back?"

"The young lady said she was coming down, sir," said the chambermaid, who had entered with a tray.

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried the old man angrily. "Go up and tell her she is not to get up till the doctor has seen her, and not then unless he gives her leave."

The maid gave her shoulders a slight shrug, and turned to go, when the door

opened, and, looking very pale and hollow-eyed, Louise entered.

Uncle Luke gave his foot an impatient stamp.

"That's right," he cried; "do all you can to make yourself ill, and keep me a prisoner in this black hole. No, no, my darling, I didn't mean that. So you didn't like having your breakfast alone? That'll do; set it down."

The maid left the room, and Louise stood, with her head resting on the old man's breast.

"Now tell me, uncle dear," she said in a low voice, and without looking up, "has poor Harry been taken?"

"No."

"Hah!"

A long sigh of relief.

"And Mr. Leslie? What does he say?"

"I don't know. He has not been here since he left with me yesterday."

"And he calls himself our friend!" cried Louise, looking up with flushing face. "Uncle, why does he not try and save Harry instead of joining the cowardly pack who are hunting him down?"

"Come, I like that!" cried Uncle Luke. "I'd rather see you in a passion than down as you were last night."

"I—I cannot help it, uncle. I can think of only one thing—Harry."

"And Mr. Leslie, and accuse him of hunting Harry down."

"Well, did he not do so? Did he not come with that dreadful man?"

"To try and save you from the French scoundrel with whom he thought you had eloped."

"Oh, hush, uncle, dear. Now tell me what do you propose doing?"

"Nothing."

"Uncle!"

"That's the best policy. There, my darling, I have done all I could this morning to help the poor boy, but—I must be plain—the police are in hot pursuit, and if I move a step I am certain to be watched. Look there!"

He pointed down into the street.

"That man on the other side is watching this house, I'm sure, and if I go away I shall be followed."

"But while we are doing nothing, who knows what may happen, dear?"

"Don't let's imagine things. Harry is clever enough perhaps to get away, and now he knows that we have found out the truth, you will see that he is not long before he writes. I want Leslie now. Depend upon

it the poor fellow felt that he would be *de trop*, and has gone straight back home."

Louise uttered a sigh full of relief.

"You scared him away, my dear, and perhaps it's for the best. He's a very stupid fellow, and as obstinate—well, as a Scot."

"But knowing Harry as he does, uncle, and being so much younger than you are, would it not be better if he were working with you? We must try and save poor Harry from that dreadful fate."

"Oh, I don't know," said Uncle Luke slowly. "There, have some tea."

Then rising from his seat, he rang, and going to the writing-table sat down; and while Louise made a miserable pretence of sipping her tea, the old man wrote down something and gave it to the waiter who entered.

"Directly," he said; and the man left the room.

"Yes, on second thoughts you are quite right, my dear."

Louise looked up at him inquiringly.

"So I have telegraphed down to Hake-mouth for Leslie to come up directly."

Louise's eyes dilated, and she caught his arm.

"No, no," she whispered, "don't do that. No; you and I will do what is to be done. Don't send to him, uncle, pray."

"Too late, my dear; the deed is done."

Just then the waiter re-entered.

"Telegram, sir."

Louise turned if possible more pale.

"Tut—tut!" whispered Uncle Luke. "It can't be an answer back. Hah! from Madeline."

"*Your news seems too great to be true. Mr. George Vine started for town by the first train this morning. My father regrets his helplessness.*"

"Hah! Come. That's very business-like of George," said the old man. "Louy, my dear, I'm going to turn prophet. All this trouble is certain to turn in the right direction after all. Why, my child!"

She had sunk back in her chair with the cold, dank dew of suffering gathering upon her forehead, and a piteous look of agony in her eyes.

"How can I meet him now!"

The terrible hours of agony that had been hers during the past month had so shattered the poor girl's nerves, that even this meeting seemed more than she could bear, and it called forth all the old man's efforts to convince her that she had nothing to fear, but rather everything to desire.

It was a weary and a painful time, though, before Louise was set at rest.

She was seated in the darkening room, holding tightly by the old man's hand, as a frightened child might in dread of punishment. As the hours had passed she had been starting at every sound, trembling as the hollow rumbling of cab-wheels came along the street, and when by chance a carriage stopped at the hotel her aspect was pitiable.

"I cannot help it," she whispered. "All through these terrible troubles I seem to have been strong, while now I am so weak and unstrung—uncle, I shall never be myself again."

"Yes, and stronger than ever. Come, little woman, how often have you heard or read of people suffering from nervous reaction and—thank God!" he muttered, as he saw the door softly open behind his niece's chair, and his brother stand in the doorway.

"I did not catch what you said, dear," said Louise feebly, as she lay back with her eyes closed.

Uncle Luke gave his brother a meaning look, and laid his niece's hand back upon her knees.

"No; it's very hard to make one's self heard in this noisy place. I was only saying, my dear, that your nerves have been terribly upset, and that you are suffering from the shock. You feel now afraid to meet your father lest he should reproach you, and you can only think of him as being bitter and angry against you for going away as you did; but when he thoroughly grasps the situation, and how you acted as you did to save your brother from arrest, and all as it were in the wild excitement of that time, and under pressure——"

"Don't leave me, uncle."

"No, no, my dear. Only going to walk up and down," said the old man as he left his chair. "When he grasps all this, and your dread of Harry's arrest, and that it was all nonsense—there, lie back still, it is more restful so. That's better," he said, kissing her, and drawing away. "When, I say, he fully knows that it was all nonsense due to confounded Aunt Margaret and her noble Frenchmen, and that instead of an elopement with some scoundrel, you were only performing a sisterly duty, he'll take you in his arms——"

Uncle Luke was on the far side of the room now, and in obedience to his signs, and trembling violently, George Vine had gone slowly towards the vacated seat.

"You think he will, uncle, and forgive

me?" she faltered, as she lay back still with her eyes closed.

"Think, my darling? I'm sure of it. Yes, he'll take you in his arms."

A quiet sigh.

"And say——"

George Vine sank trembling into the empty chair.

"Forgive me, my child, for ever doubting you."

"Oh, no, uncle."

"And I say, yes; and thank God for giving me my darling back once more."

"Forgive me! Thank God for giving me my darling back once more! Louise!"

"Father!"

A wild, sobbing cry, as they two were locked in each other's arms.

At that moment the door was closed softly, and Uncle Luke stood blowing his nose outside upon the mat.

"Nearly seventy, and sobbing like a child," he muttered softly. "Dear me, what an old fool I am."

CHAPTER LXIII.—LESLIE MAKES AN ANNOUNCEMENT.

It was a week before the London doctor said that Louise Vine might undertake the journey down home, but when it was talked of she looked up at her father in a troubled way.

"It would be better, my darling," he whispered. "You shrink from going back to the old place. Why should you, where there will be nothing but love and commiseration?"

"It is not that," she said sadly. "Harry!"

"Yes! But we can do no more by staying here."

"Not a bit," said Uncle Luke. "Let's get down to the old sea-shore again, Louy. If we stop here much longer I shall die. Harry's safe enough somewhere. Let's go home."

Louise made no more opposition, and it was decided that they should start at once, but the journey had to be deferred on account of business connected with Pradelle's examination.

This was not talked of at the hotel, and Louise remained in ignorance of a great deal of what took place before they were free to depart.

That journey down was full of painful memories for Louise, and it was all she could do to restrain her tears as the train stopped at the station, which was associated in her mind with her brother, and again and again

she seemed to see opposite to her, shrinking back in the corner by the window nearest the platform, the wild, haggard eyes and the frightened furtive look at every passenger that entered the carriage.

The journey seemed interminable, and even when Plymouth had been reached there was still the long slow ride over the great wooden bridges with the gurgling streams far down in the little rock ravines.

"Hah!" said Uncle Luke cheerily, "one begins to breathe now. Look."

He pointed to the shadow of the railway train plainly seen against the woods, for the full round moon was rising slowly.

"This is better than a gas-lamp shadow, eh, and you don't get such a moon as that in town. I've lost count, George. How are the tides this week?"

Vine shook his head.

"No, you never did know anything about the tides, George. Always did get cut off. Be drowned some day, shut in under a cliff; and you can't climb."

They rode on in silence for some time, watching the moonlight effect on the patches of wood in the dark hollows, the rocky hillslopes, and upon one or another of the gaunt deserted engine-houses looking like the towers of ruined churches high up on the hills, here black, and there glittering in the moonlight, as they stood out against the sky.

These traces of the peculiar industry of the district had a peculiar fascination for Louise, who found herself constantly comparing these buildings with one beyond their house overlooking the beautiful bay. There it seemed to stand out bold and picturesque, with the long shaft running snake-like up the steep hillside, to end in the perpendicular monument-like chimney that formed the landmark by which the sailors set vessels' heads for the harbour.

But that place did not seem deserted as these. At any time when she looked she could picture the slowly moving beam of the huge engine, and the feathery plume of grey smoke which floated away on the western breeze. There was a bright look about the place, and always associated with it she seemed to see Duncan Leslie, now looking appealingly in her eyes, now bitter and stern as he looked on her that night when Harry beat him down and they fled, leaving him insensible upon the floor.

What might have been!

That was the theme upon which her busy brain toiled in spite of her efforts to divert

the current of thought into another channel. And when in despair she conversed with father or uncle for a few minutes, and silence once more reigned, there still was Duncan Leslie's home, and its owner gazing at her reproachfully.

"Impossible!" she always said to herself; and as often as she said this she felt that there would be a terrible battle with self, for imperceptibly there had grown to be a subtle advocate for Duncan Leslie in her heart.

"But it is impossible," she always said, and emphasized it. "We are disgraced. With such a shadow over our house that could never be; and he doubted, he spoke so cruelly, his eyes flashed such jealous hatred. If he had loved me, he would have trusted, no matter what befell."

But as she said all this to herself, the advocate was busy, and she felt the weakness of her case, but grew more determinedly obstinate all the same.

And the train glided on over the tall scaffold-like bridges, the tree tops glistened in the silvery moonlight, and there was a restful feeling of calm in her spirit that she had not known for days.

"No place like home," said Uncle Luke, breaking a long silence as they glided away from the last station.

"No place like home," echoed his brother, as he sought for and took his child's hand.

"You will stop with us to-night, Luke?"

"Hear him, Louy?" said the old man.

"Now is it likely?"

"But your place will be cheerless and bare to-night."

"Cheerless? Bare! You don't know what you are talking about. If you only knew the longing I have to be once more in my own bed, listening to wind and sea. No, thank you."

"But uncle, for to-night do stay."

"Now that's unkind, Louy, after all the time you've made me be away. Well, I will, as a reward to you for rousing yourself up a bit. One condition though; will you come down to-morrow and talk to me while I fish?"

She remained silent.

"Then I don't stop to-night."

"I will come to-morrow, uncle."

"Then I'll stop."

The train glided on as they watched in silence now for the lights of the little town. First, the ruddy glow of the great lamp on the east pier of the harbour appeared; then glittering faintly like stars, there were the various lights of the town rising from the water's edge right up to the high terrace

level, with the old granite house—the erst peaceful, calm old home.

The lights glittered brightly, but they looked dim to Louise, seen as they were through a veil of tears, and now as they rapidly neared a strange feeling of agitation filled the brain of the returned wanderer.

It was home, but it could never be the same home again. All would be changed. A feeling of separation must arise between her and Madelaine. The two families must live apart, and a dark rift in her life grow wider as the time glided on, till she was farther and farther away from the bright days of youth, with little to look forward to but sorrow and the memory of the shadow hanging over their home.

"Here we are," cried Uncle Luke, as the train glided slowly alongside the platform and then stopped. "Got all your traps? George, give me my stick. Now, then, you first."

The station lamps were burning brightly as Louise gave her father her hand and stepped out. Then she felt blind and troubled with a strange feeling of dread and for a few moments everything seemed to swim round as a strange singing filled her ears.

Then there was a faint ejaculation, two warm soft arms clasped her, and a well-known voice said, in a loving whisper,

"Louise—sister—at last!"

For one moment the dark veil over her eyes seemed to lift, and like a flash she realised that Madelaine was not in black, and that resting upon a stick there was a pale face which lit up with smiles as its owner clasped her to his breast in turn.

"My dearest child! welcome back. The place is not the same without you."

"Louy, my darling!" in another pleasant voice, as kisses were rained upon her cheek, and there was another suggestion of rain which left its marks warm.

"He would come, George Vine;" and the giver of these last kisses, and warm tears, did battle for the possession of the returned truant. "Maddy, my dear," she cried reproachfully and in a loud parenthesis, "let me have one hand. He ought not to have left the house, but he is so determined. He would come."

"Well, Dutch doll, don't I deserve a kiss?" cried old Luke grimly.

"Dear Uncle Luke!"

"Hah, that's better. George, I think I shall go home with the Van Heldres. I'm starving."

"But you can't," cried the lady of that

house in dismay; "we are all coming up to you. Ah, Mr. Leslie, how *do* you do?"

"Quite well," said that personage quietly; and Madelaine felt Louise's hand close upon hers spasmodically.

"Leslie! you here?" said George Vine eagerly.

"Yes; I came down from town in the same train."

"Too proud to be seen with us, eh?" said Uncle Luke sarcastically, as there was a warm salute from the Van Heldres to one as great a stranger as the Vines.

"I thought it would be more delicate to let you come down alone," said Leslie gravely.

George Vine had by this time got hold of the young man's hand.

"My boy—Harry?" he whispered, "have you any news?"

"Yes," was whispered back. "Let me set your mind at rest. He is safe."

"But where? For Heaven's sake, man, speak!" panted the trembling father as he clung to him.

"Across the sea."

CHAPTER LXIV.—HARRY'S MESSAGE.

"Do you wish me to repeat it? Have you not heard from your father or your uncle?"

"Yes; but I want to hear it all again from you. Harry sent me some message."

Leslie was silent.

"Why do you not speak? You are keeping something back."

"Yes; he gave me a message for you, one I was to deliver."

"Well," said Louise quickly, "why do you not deliver it?"

"Because Harry is, in spite of his trouble, still young and thoughtless. It is a message that would make you more bitter against me than you are now."

Louise rose from where she was seated in the dining-room, walked across to the bay window, looked out upon the sea, and then returned.

"I am not bitter against you, Mr. Leslie. How could I be against one who has served us so well? But tell me my brother's message now."

He looked at her with so deep a sense of passionate longing in his eyes, that as she met his ardent gaze her eyes sank, and her colour began to heighten.

"No," he said, "I cannot deliver the message now. Some day, when time has worked its changes, I will tell you word for word.

Be satisfied when I assure you that your brother's message will not affect his position in the least, and will be better told later on."

She looked at him half wonderingly, and it seemed to him that there was doubt in her eyes.

"Can you not have faith in me?" he said quietly, "and believe when I tell you that it is better that I should not speak?"

"Yes," she said softly, "I will have faith in you and wait."

"I thank you," he said gravely.

"Now tell me more about Harry."

"There is very little to tell," replied Leslie. "As I went downstairs that day, I found him just about to enter the house. For a moment I was startled, but I am not a superstitious man, and I grasped at once how we had all been deceived, and who it was dealt me the blow and tripped me that night; and in the reaction which came upon me, I seized him, and dragged him to the first cab I could find.

"I was half mad with delight," continued Leslie, speaking, in spite of his burning words, in a slow, calm, respectful way. "I saw how I had been deceived that night, who had been your companion, and why you had kept silence. For the time I hardly knew what I did or said in my delirious joy, but I was brought to myself, as I sat holding your brother's wrist tightly, by his saying slowly, "'There, I'm sick of it. You can leave go. I shan't try to get away. It's all over now.'"

"He thought you had made him a prisoner?"

"Yes; and I thought him a messenger of peace, who had come to point out my folly, weakness, and want of faith."

Louise covered her face with her hands, and he saw that she was sobbing gently.

"It was some time before I could speak," continued Leslie. "I was still holding his wrist tightly, and it was not until he spoke again that I felt as if I could explain.

"Where are you taking me?" he said. "Is it necessary for Mr. Leslie, my father's friend, to play policeman in the case?"

"When will you learn to believe and trust in me, Harry Vine?" I said.

"Never," he replied bitterly, and in the gladness of my heart I laughed, and could have taken him in my arms and embraced him as one would a lost brother just returned to us from the dead.

"You will repent that," I said, and I felt then that my course was marked out, and I could see my way."

Louise let fall her hands, and sank into a

chair, her eyes dilating as she gazed earnestly at the quiet, enduring man, who now narrated to her much that was new; and ever as he spoke something in her brain seemed to keep on repeating in a low and constant repetition.

"He loves me—he loves me—but it can never be."

"Where am I taking you?" I said," continued Leslie. "'To where you can make a fresh start in life.'" And as Louise gazed at him she saw that he was looking fixedly at the spot upon the carpet where her brother had last stood when he was in that room.

"Not to—"

"He stopped short there; and I—— Yes, and I must stop short too. It is very absurd, Miss Vine, for me to be asked all this."

"Go on—go on!" said Louise hoarsely.

Leslie glanced at her, and withdrew his eyes.

"Will you go abroad, Harry, and make a new beginning?" I said.

"Poor lad! he was utterly broken down, and he would have thrown himself upon his knees to me if I had not forced him to keep his seat."

"My brother!" sighed Louise.

"I asked him then if he would be willing to leave you all, and go right away; and I told him what I proposed—that I had a brother superintending some large tin mines north of Malacca. That I would give him such letters as would ensure a welcome, and telegraph his coming under an assumed name."

"And he accepted?"

"Yes. There, I have nothing to add to all this. I went across with him to Paris, and, after securing a berth for him, we went south to Marseilles, where I saw him on board one of the Messageries Maritimes vessels bound for the East, and we parted. That is all."

"But money; necessities, Mr. Leslie? He was penniless."

"Oh, no," said Leslie, smiling; and Louise pressed her teeth upon her quivering lip.

"There," said Leslie, "I would not have said all this, but you forced it from me; and now you know all, try to be at rest. As I told Mr. Vine last night, I suppose it would mean trouble with the authorities if it were known, but I think I was justified in what I did. We understand Harry's nature better than any judge, and our plan for bringing him back to his life as your brother is better than theirs. So," he went on with a pleasant smile, "we will keep our secret about him. My brother Dick is one of the truest fellows

that ever stepped, and Harry is sure to like him. The climate is not bad. It will be a complete change of existence, and some day when all this trouble is forgotten he can return."

"My brother exiled: gone for ever."

"My dear Miss Vine," said Leslie quietly, "the world has so changed now that we can smile at all those old-fashioned ideas. Your brother is in Malacca. Well, I cannot speak exactly, but I believe I am justified in saying that you could send a message to him from this place in Cornwall, and get an answer by to-morrow morning at the farthest, perhaps to-night. Your father at one time could not have obtained one from Exeter in the same space."

"There," he continued quietly, "you are agitated now, and I will say good-bye. Is not that Madelaine Van Heldre coming up the path? Yes, unmistakably. Now let us bury the past and look forward to the future—a happier one for you, I hope and pray. Good-bye."

He held out his hand, and she looked at him wonderingly.

"Good-bye?"

"Well, for a time. You are weak and ill. Perhaps you will go away for a change—perhaps I shall. Next time we meet, time will have softened all this trouble, and you will have forgiven one whose wish was to serve you, all his weakness, all his doubts. God bless you, Louise Vine! Good-bye!"

He held out his hand again, but she did not take it. She only stood gazing wildly at him in a way that he dared not interpret, speechless, pale, and with her lips quivering.

He gave her one long, yearning look, and, turning quickly, he was at the door.

"Mr. Leslie—stop!"

"You wished to say something," he cried as he turned toward her and caught her outstretched hand to raise it passionately to his lips. "You do not, you cannot, say it? I will say it for you, then. Good-bye!"

"Stop!" she cried as she clung to his hand. "My brother's message?"

"Some day—in the future. I dare not give it now. When you have forgiven my jealous doubts."

"Forgiven you?" she whispered as she sank upon her knees and held the hand she clasped to her cheek—"forgive me."

"Louise! my darling!" he cried hoarsely as he caught her up to his breast, upon which she lay as one lies who feels at peace.

Seconds? minutes? Neither knew; but after a time, as she stood with her hands

upon his shoulders gazing calmly in his eyes, she said softly—

"Tell me now: what did Harry say?"

Leslie was silent for a while. Then, clasping her more tightly to his breast, he said in a low, deep voice—

"Tell Louy I have found in you the truest brother that ever lived; ask her some day to make it so indeed."

There was a long silence, during which the door was pressed slowly open; but they did not heed, and he who entered heard his child's words come almost in a whisper.

"Some day," she said; "some day when time has softened all these griefs. Your own words, Duncan."

"Yes," he said, "my own."

"Hah!"

They did not start from their embrace as that long-drawn sigh fell upon their ears, but both asked the same question with their eyes.

"Yes," said George Vine gravely as he took Leslie's hand and bent down to kiss his child, "it has been a long dark night, but joy cometh in the morning."

CHAPTER LXV.—UNCLE LUKE HAS A WORD.

JOHN VAN HELDRE sat in his office chair at his table once more after a long and weary absence, and Crampton stood opposite scowling at him.

The old clerk had on one of his most sour looks when Van Heldre raised his eyes from the ledger he was scanning, and he made no remark; but looking up again he saw the scowl apparently intensified.

"What's the matter, Crampton? Afraid I shall discover that you have been guilty of embezzlement?" said Van Heldre, smiling.

"Not a bit," said the old clerk, "nor you aren't either."

"Then what is the meaning of the black look?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing!"

"Come, out with it, man. What's the matter?"

"Well, if you must know, sir, I want to know why you can't keep quiet and get quite well, instead of coming muddling here."

"Crampton!"

"Well, I must speak, sir. I don't want you to be laid up again."

"No fear."

"But there is fear, sir. You know I can keep things going all right."

"Yes, Crampton, and show a better balance than I did."

"Well then, sir, why don't you let me go

on? I can manage, and I will manage if you'll take a holiday."

"Holiday, man? why it has been nothing but one long painful holiday lately, and this does me good. Now bring in the other book."

Crampton grunted and went into the outer office to return with the cash-book, which he placed before his employer, and drew back into his old position, watching Van Heldre as he eagerly scanned the pages and marked their contents till, apparently satisfied, he looked up to see that Crampton was smiling down at him.

"What now?"

"Eh?"

"I say what now? Why are you laughing?"

"Only smiling, sir."

"Well, what have I done that is ridiculous?"

"Ridiculous? Why I was smiling because it seemed like the good old times to have you back busy with the books."

"Crampton, we often say that my old friend is an eccentric character, but really I think Luke Vine must give place to you."

"Dessay," said Crampton sourly. "You go on with these accounts. Look half-way down."

Van Heldre did look half-way down, and paused.

"Five hundred pounds on the credit side, per the cheque I wrote for Mr. Luke Vine—why, what's this?"

"Ah! that's what you may well say, sir. Refused to take the money, sir. I'm sure. I'm not so eccentric as that."

"But you never mentioned it, Crampton?"

"Yes, I did, sir, with my pen. There it is in black and white. Better and plainer than sounding words; and besides, you weren't here."

"But this is absurd, Crampton."

"That's what I told him, sir."

"Well, what did he say?"

"That I was an old fool, sir."

"Tut—tut—tut!" ejaculated Van Heldre; "but he must be paid. I can't let him lose the money."

"What I told him, sir. I said we couldn't let him lose the money."

"What did he say to that?"

"Called me an old fool again much stronger, sir. Most ungentlemanly—used words, sir, that he must have picked up on the beach."

"I hardly like to trouble him directly he is back; but would you mind sending up to

Mr. Luke Vine, with my compliments, and asking him to come here."

"Send at once, sir?"

"At once."

"Perhaps before I leave the office, sir, I might as well call your attention to a communication received this morning."

Van Heldre looked enquiringly at his old clerk.

"It's rather curious, sir," he said, handing a letter which he had been keeping back as a sort of *bonne bouche* for the last piece of business transacted that morning.

"Never presented yet?" said Van Heldre, nodding his head slowly.

"They must have known I stopped the notes directly," said Crampton with a self-satisfied smile.

"I had hoped that the whole of that terrible business had been buried for good."

"So it has, sir," grunted Crampton; "but some one or another keeps digging it up again."

Van Heldre made no reply, so Crampton left the office, sent off a messenger, and returned to find his employer seated with his face buried in his hands, thinking deeply, and heedless of his presence.

"Poor George!" he said aloud. "Poor misguided boy! I wish Crampton had been——"

"I'm back here," said Crampton.

"Ah! Crampton," said Van Heldre starting, "sent off the message?"

"Yes, sir, I've sent off the message," said the old man sternly. "Pray finish what you were saying, sir. Never mind my feelings."

"What I was saying, Crampton? I did not say anything."

"Oh yes, you did, sir; you wished Crampton had been—what, sir—buried too, like the trouble?"

"My good fellow—my dear old Crampton! surely I did not say that aloud."

"How could I have heard it, sir, if you hadn't? I only did my duty."

"Yes, yes, of course, of course, Crampton. Really I am very, very sorry."

"And only just before I left the room you were complaining about people digging up the old trouble."

"Come, Crampton, I can deny that. I apologize for thinking aloud, but it was you who spoke of digging up the old trouble."

"Ah! well, it doesn't matter, sir. It was my birthday just as you were at your worst. Seventy-five, Mr. Van Heldre, sir, and you can't be troubled with such a blundering old clerk much longer."

"My dear Crampton——"

"May I come in?" followed by three thumps with a heavy stick.

Crampton hurried to the outer office to confront Uncle Luke.

"Met your messenger just outside, and saved him from going up. How much did you give him? He ought to pay that back."

"Oh, never mind that, Luke. How are you?"

"How am I?"

"Yes. Getting settled down again?"

"How am I? Well, a little better this morning. Do I smell of yellow soap?"

"No."

"Wonder at it. I spent nearly all yesterday trying to get off the London dirt and smoke. Treat to get back to where there's room to breathe."

"Ah, you never did like London."

"And London never liked me, so we're even there. Well," he continued after a pause filled up by a low muttering grunt, "what do you want? You didn't send for me to come and tell you that I had caught a cold on my journey down or got a rheumatic twinge."

"No, no, Luke, of course not."

"Nice one, 'pon my word!" muttered Crampton.

"Well, what is it?"

Crampton moved toward the door, his way lying by Uncle Luke; but just as he neared the opening, the visitor made a stab at the wall with his heavy stick, and, as it were, raised a bar before the old clerk, who started violently.

"Bless my heart, Mr. Luke Vine!" he cried; "what are you about? Don't do that."

"Stop here, then. Who told you to go?"

"No one sir, but——"

"How do I know what he wants. I may be glad of a witness."

"Oh, yes! You need not go, Crampton," said Van Heldre. "Sit down, Luke."

"No, thankye. Sit too much for my health now. Come: out with it. What do you want? There is something?"

"Yes, there is something," said Van Heldre quietly. "Look here, my dear Luke Vine."

"Thought as much," sneered the old man. "You want to borrow money, my dear Van Heldre."

"No; I want to pay money, Luke Vine. It seems that you have returned that five hundred pounds to Crampton."

"What five hundred pounds?"

"The money you—there, we will not dwell upon that old trouble, my dear Luke. Come: you know what I mean."

"Oh, I see," said the old man with much surprise. "That five hundred pounds. Well, what about it?"

"How could you be so foolish as to return my cheque?"

"Because you didn't owe me the money."

"Nonsense, my dear fellow! We are old friends, but that was entirely a business transaction."

"Yes, of course it was."

"Five hundred pounds were stolen."

"Yes, and I was all right."

"Exactly. Why should you suppose it was your money?"

"Suppose? Because it was mine—my new Bank of England notes."

"How do you know that?"

"Never mind how I know it, and never mind talking about the money I didn't lose."

"But you did, Luke Vine, and heavily. Of course I am going to refund you the money."

"You can't, man."

"Can't?"

"No; because I've got it safely put away in my pocket-book."

Van Heldre made an impatient gesticulation.

"I tell you I have. The same notes, same numbers, just as you laid them all together."

"Nonsense, man! Come, Luke Vine, my dear old friend, let me settle this matter with you in a businesslike way; I shall not be happy till I do."

"Then you'll have to wait a long time for happiness, John," said Uncle Luke, smiling, "for you are not going to pay me."

"But, my dear Luke."

"But, my dear John! you men who turn over your thousands are as careless as boys over small amounts, as you call them."

"Oh, come, Mr. Luke Vine, sir," said Crampton sturdily; "there's no carelessness in this office."

"Bah! Clerk!" cried Uncle Luke. "Careful, very. Then how was it the money was stolen?"

"Well, sir, nobody can guard against violence," said Crampton sourly.

"Yes, they can, you pompous old antiquity. I could. I'm not a business man. I don't have ledgers and iron safes and a big office, but I took care of the money better than you did."

"My dear Luke Vine, what do you mean?" cried Van Heldre, after giving

Crampton a look which seemed to say, "Don't take any notice."

"Mean? Why, what I said. You people were so careless that I didn't trust you. I had no confidence."

"Well, sir, you had confidence enough to place five hundred pounds in our house," said Crampton gruffly.

"Yes, and you lost it."

"Yes, sir, and our house offered you a cheque for the amount, and you sent it back."

"Of course I did. I didn't want my money twice over, did I?"

"Is this meant for a riddle, Luke?" said Van Heldre, annoyed, and yet amused.

"Riddle? No. I only want to prick that old bubble Crampton, who is so proud of the way in which he can take care of money, and who has always been these last ten years flourishing that iron safe in my face."

"Really, Mr. Luke Vine!"

"Hold your tongue, sir! Wasn't my five hundred pounds—new, crisp Bank of England notes in your charge?"

"Yes, sir, in our charge."

"Then why didn't you watch over them, and take care of 'em? Where are they now?"

"Well, sir, it is hard to say. They have never been presented at any bank."

"Of course they haven't, when I've got 'em safe in my pocket-book."

"In your pocket-book, sir?"

"Yes. Don't you believe me? There; look. Bit rubbed at the edges with being squeezed in the old leather; but there are the notes; aren't they? Look at the numbers."

As the old man spoke he took a shabby old pocket-book from his breast, opened it, and drew out a bundle of notes held together by an elastic band, and laid them on the office table with a bang.

"Bless my heart!" cried Crampton excitedly, as he hastily put on his spectacles and examined the notes, and compared them with an entry in a book. "Yes, sir," he said to Van Heldre; "these are the very notes."

"But how came you by them, Luke Vine?" cried Van Heldre, who looked as much astounded as his clerk.

"How came I by them?" snarled Uncle Luke. "Do you think five hundred pounds are to be picked up in the gutter. I meant that money, and more too, for that unfortunate boy; and the more careless he was the more necessary it became for me to look after his interests."

"You meant that money for poor Harry?"

"To be sure I did, and by the irony of fate the poor misguided lad sent his companion to steal it."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Van Heldre, while Crampton nodded his head so sharply that his spectacles dropped off, and were only saved from breaking by a quick interposition of the hands.

"And did the foolish fellow restore the money to you?" said Van Heldre.

"Bah! no! He never had it."

"Then how——"

"How? Don't I tell you I watched—hung about the place, not feeling satisfied about my property, and I came upon my gentleman just as he was escaping with the plunder."

"And——" exclaimed Crampton excitedly.

"I knocked him down—with that ruler, and got my money out of his breast. Narrow escape, but I got it."

"Why did you not mention this before, Luke Vine?"

"Because I had got my money safe—because I wanted to give clever people a lesson—because I did not want to see my nephew in gaol—because I did not choose—because—Here, you Crampton, give me back those notes. Thank ye, I'll take care of them in future myself."

He replaced the notes in the case, and buttoned it carefully in his breast.

"Luke, you astonish me," cried Van Heldre.

"Eccentric, my dear sir, eccentric. Now, then, you see why I returned you the cheque. Morning."

Crampton took out his silk pocket-handkerchief, and began to polish his glasses as he gazed hard at his employer after following Uncle Luke to the door, which was closed sharply.

"Poor Harry Vine!" said Van Heldre sadly. "Combining with another to rob himself. Surely the ways of sin are devious, Crampton?"

"Yes," said the old man thoughtfully. "I wish I had waited till you got well."

"Too late to think of that, Crampton," said Van Heldre sadly. "When do you go to Pradelle's trial?"

"There, sir, you've been an invalid, and you're not well yet. Suppose we keep that trouble buried, and let other people dig it up, and I'll go when I'm obliged. I suppose you don't want to screen him?"

"I screen him?"

"Hah!" ejaculated the old clerk, who began rubbing his hands, "then I'm all right

there. I should like to see that fellow almost hung—not quite."

"Poor wretch!"

"Know anything about—eh?"

"Harry Vine? Not yet. Only that he has escaped somewhere, I hope, for good."

"Yes, sir, I hope so too—for good."

CHAPTER LXVI.—TRIED IN THE FIRE.

AFTER, as it were, a race for life, the breathless competitors seemed to welcome the restful change, and the sleep that came almost unalloyed by the mental pangs which had left their marks upon the brows of young and old. And swift tides came and went with the calms and storms of the western coast, but somehow all seemed to tell of rest and peace.

It was a year after Victor Pradelle had been placed in what Sergeant Parkins facetiously termed one of her Majesty's boarding-schools, under a good master, that John Van Heldre wrote the following brief letter in answer to one that was very long, dated a month previous to the response, and bearing the post-mark of the Straits Settlements:—

"HARRY VINE,—I quite appreciate what you say regarding your long silence. I am too old a man to believe in a hasty repentance forced on by circumstances. Hence, I say, you have done wisely in waiting a year before writing as fully as you have. George and Luke Vine have always been to me as brothers. You know how I felt toward their son. I say to him now you are acting wisely, and I am glad that you have met such a friend as Richard Leslie.

"Certainly: stay where you are, though there is nothing to fear now from the law, I guarantee that. The years soon roll by. I say this for all our sakes.

"As to the final words of your letter—one of my earliest recollections is that of my little hands being held together by one whom you lost too soon in life. Had your mother lived your career might have been different. What I was taught as my little hands were held together, I still repeat: 'As we forgive them that trespass against us.' Yes. Some day I hope to give you in the flesh that which I give you in spirit now—my hand."

Six more years had passed before a broad-shouldered, bronzed, and bearded man—partner in the firm of Leslie and Vine, Singapore and Penang—grasped John Van Heldre's hand, and asked him a question to which the old merchant replied: "Yes, all

is forgiven and forgotten now. If you can win her: yes."

But the days glided on and the question was not asked. Uncle Harry was constantly on the beach or down on the rocks with the two little prattling children of Duncan Leslie and his wife, and Uncle Luke, who seemed much the same, was rather disposed to be jealous of the favour in which the returned wanderer stood; but he indulged in a pleasant smile now and then, when he was not seen, and had taken to a habit of stopping his nephew on the beach at unexpected times, and apparently for no reason whatever.

The question was not asked, for Aunt Marguerite, who had taken to her bed for the past year, was evidently fading fast. As Dr. Knatchbull said, she had been dying for months, and it was the state of her health which brought her nephew back to England, to find his old sins forgotten or forgiven, a year sooner than he had intended.

By slow degrees the vitality had passed from the old woman step by step, till the brain alone remained bright and clear. She was as exacting as ever, and insisted upon her bed being draped with flowers and lace and silk, and her one gratification was to be propped up, with a fan in one nerveless hand and a scent-bottle in the other, listening to the reading of some old page of French history, over which she smiled and softly nodded her head.

One day Harry was down near the harbour talking to Poll Perrow, whose society he often affected, to the old woman's great delight, when Madelaine Van Heldre came to him hastily.

"Is anything wrong?" he asked excitedly.

She bowed her head, and for the moment could not speak.

"Aunt Marguerite?"

"Yes. I was reading to her, and you know her way, Harry: half mockingly she was telling me that I should never gain the pure French accent, when she seemed to change suddenly, and gasped out your name. Louy had not gone home; I was relieving her, as I often do now, and she is with her aunt. Leslie has gone to fetch Mr. Vine, who is down on the shore with Uncle Luke."

A few minutes later Harry was in the old lady's room, the doctor making way for him to approach the bed, about which the rest of the family were grouped.

"There," she said sharply, "you need not wait. I want to speak to Harry."

He bent down to place his arm beneath the feeble neck, and she smiled up at him with the ruling passion still strong even in death, and her words came very faintly; but he heard them all—

"Remember, Harry, the hope of our family rests on you. We are the Des Vignes, say what they will. Now marry—soon—some good, true woman, one of the *Haute Noblesse*."

"Yes, aunt, I will."

An hour later she was peacefully asleep.

"Closed in death," said Harry Vine as he laid his hand reverently across the withered lids; "but her eyes must be open now, father, to the truth."

There was to be a quiet little dinner at Leslie's about a fortnight later, and after a walk down through the churchyard, the party were going up the steep cliff path. Leslie and his handsome young wife were on ahead; the old men coming slowly toiling on behind as Harry stopped with Madelaine in the well-known sheltered niche.

They stood gazing out at the sea, stretching as it were into infinity, and as they gazed they went on with their conversation, talking calmly of the quaint old lady's prejudices and ways.

"Did you hear her last last words?" said Harry gravely.

"Yes."

The look which accompanied the answer was frank and calm. It seemed to lack emotion, but there was a depth of patient truth and trust therein which told of enduring faith.

"She would have me marry soon—some good, true woman, one of the *Haute Noblesse*."

"Yes; it would be better so."

"I have loved one of the *Haute Noblesse* for seven years as a weak, foolish boy—seven years as a trusting man—and she has not changed. Maddy, is my reward to come at last?"

As Madelaine placed her hands calmly in those extended to her she seemed without emotion still; but there was a joyous light in her brightening eyes, and then a deep flush suffused her cheeks as two words were spoken by one of the trio of old men who had slowly toiled up toward where they stood.

"Thank God!"

It was George Vine who spoke, and the others seemed to look "*Amen*."

LIFE HERE AND HEREAFTER.

Short Sunday Readings for December.

By THE REV. JOHN HUNTER.

FIRST SUNDAY.

TO-DAY—HOW RELATED TO YESTERDAY AND
TO-MORROW.

Read St. Luke ix. 59, to end; St. Matthew vi. 25, to end.

THE secret of true living is to be found in making the most of each day. We are putting yesterday to its truest and noblest use when we are using its experience to make the life of to-day better. We are preparing for the morrow in the truest and noblest way, when we are striving with all our might to be faithful to the opportunity of to-day. To spend to-day in looking away from it, backward to yesterday or forward to the morrow, is simply fatal to the highest purposes and issues of life.

It is true, that the power of looking before and after is one of the most characteristic endowments of man. And it is not denied, that there is a way of living in the present which makes impossible all best efforts and attainments. We are certainly not making the most of to-day, if we are not bringing to bear upon its events, relations, and duties the wisdom drawn from the experience of yesterday, and the inspiration that comes from the thought of the morrow.

Memory has its gracious and serious uses. It may be good, now and again, to yield ourselves to the spell of past things. To be taken away for a brief moment from our exciting and exacting life into the peace of yesterday, may refresh and strengthen us, rescue us from depressed feelings and narrow views; enable us to perceive and appreciate better the opportunity of the present, and renew our energy for the never-ending struggle. We are making a good use of the yesterdays of our life, when we are taking their lessons to heart, in order to protect and improve the life of the new day that is passing over us.

And, if we are truly wise, we shall not be indifferent to the past of the life of mankind and its teaching. It will at least show us that certain ways of dealing with our great speculative and practical questions lead to certain conclusions and results, and thus save us from a very tragic waste of time and energy. Universal history has been called 'a kind of memory' for the race; it is also a kind of Bible—part of that larger and equally divine Bible whose canon is never

closed. Sound progress is ever conservative of all that is finest and best in the old life it leaves behind; it does not allow one jot of true substance, one tittle of true worth, to pass away till it is fulfilled in something truer and better.

And 'looking before' may sometimes be as much a duty as 'looking after.' Experience teaches us the need of the on-looking and expectant spirit. We are saved by hope from discouragement and despair; saved also from indolence and ignoble contentment with ourselves and our surroundings. In our hopefulness lies the spring of progress and the promise of achievement. The hopeful temper, kindled and fed by faith in the Eternal Goodness, is the temper of inspiration. It is the temper of all the great teachers and leaders of the race. And the humblest man, moving among simplest duties, requires some touch of it to redeem his life from pettiness and vulgarity. It is essential to the working out of that great salvation, whose watchwords are Character and Service, that one should feel that his life is linked to divine purposes and movements. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' To-morrow gives larger and deeper significance to the life of to-day.

Granting, then, as we may do most readily, that a true and noble life is only possible by bringing to bear upon to-day the experience of yesterday and the hope of to-morrow, yet this concession does not diminish the value of to-day. We are not to live as if to-day stood alone—unrelated and apart; but we are called to live in to-day—in to-day not in yesterday, in to-day not in to-morrow. We have to guard against that kind of looking back, and that kind of looking forward, which would tempt us to forget, or slight the claims and duties on the fulfilment of which depend, the preservation of the best life of the past, and the realisation of the best hopes we can cherish for the future. We have to fight against moods and habits of thought and feeling which breed indifference to the present, and contempt for it. The past and the future, yesterday and to-morrow, are not being wisely used when they are robbing to-day of interest and meaning; when we are so absorbed by memories or expectations that we have not energy enough to make the most and the best of the present opportunity.

Let us be loyal to the life of to-day. Let us not give to yesterday more than its due. True life means unresting movement, aspiration, and endeavour. Even the man of many years is but beginning life, and cannot spare much time for recollection and regret. What we experienced or achieved yesterday is but small when compared with what remains. Let us, on the other hand, while cherishing the hope and prophecy of to-morrow, not sink into mere dreamers. The glory we see and seek cannot be born without our whole-hearted co-operation. Let us make of our imaginations, inspirations to present activity. The man of faith ought to be the man of works, and the most ideal man the most practical man.

SECOND SUNDAY.

TO-DAY—ITS IMPORTANCE.

Read Psalm xcv. ; 2 Cor. vi. 1-2 ; Ephesians v. 14-17.

To-day is the supreme and critical moment of life. Our vital concern is ever with to-day. Life in to-day is a clear and impressive feature of Biblical teaching. The emphasis of both Testaments is on to-day. 'To-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts.' 'We must work while it is day.' To look back is, in the judgment of the Master of our life, to unfit ourselves for any share in the work of the kingdom of God. To be loyal to the Christian idea and order of life, we must be ready to break with the old for the sake of the new. With absolute rigour Jesus Christ ever insisted upon this heroic renunciation of the past, and this heroic obedience to the present inspiration. 'Let the dead bury their dead, follow thou me.' 'He that saveth his life shall lose it.'

'Be not anxious for the morrow' is another great Gospel saying. It was spoken to raise the troubled heart above all undue and useless care, and with a view to the concentration of thought and energy on the duty of to-day. It is a word perfectly true and wise. It is folly to try to grasp too much of life at once. To take the days one by one is Divine wisdom. A day may seem but a small section of time to measure and command, but it holds about as much care and responsibility as our minds can embrace and bear. The only way to save ourselves from a past, the memory of which will be a reproach and a burden, is to care well for each new day before it leaves us to take its place among the irrevocable yesterdays. The only way to prepare for the morrow is through

fidelity to the duty of to-day. To-day found us as yesterday left us ; to-morrow will find us as to-day leaves us.

There is little need, then, to dwell on the past. It is not behind us. In a very real sense it goes with us. Names pass away but forces abide. We stand to-day in vital moral connection with all the days we have ever lived. The yesterdays are still with us to bless, or to curse. It is true, in a way, that each new day may be a new beginning, and that there is never a point in life when we may not move on to something better, and yet each new day is the outcome of the day before. The new continues, it does not efface the old. There is no 'dead past ;' the past is living in the present. We cannot get away from these inexorable yesterdays. Their life lives in what we are to-day ; in the fibre and quality of mind and soul ; in thought and feeling ; in taste, tendency, and habit ; in everything that goes to make up what we call character. 'God requireth that which is past.' The good and the ill we do find us out. We reap what we sow. Our present character is the Divine judgment upon our past conduct.

But to-day is not only a history of the past, it is also a prophecy of the future. It is by watching to-day we can tell what will be on the morrow. Foresight is truly insight. The power to foresee and forecast is the power to discern the natural and necessary tendency and result of certain principles and habits of life. Life has no sharp epochs. There is no violent break between yesterday and to-day. Whatever is to come out of to-day exists in to-day. The future is not a revolution, but an evolution. To-day is the child and heir of yesterday ; to-morrow will be the child and heir of to-day.

It is by a great perversion that so much of our religious teaching directs our thoughts to the life of to-morrow—to what follows death. It is plainly not the will of God that we should think much of the hereafter while we are here. There are seasons and pauses in life when 'other worldliness' becomes the most natural and proper mood and habit of the mind, yet frequent and morbid thought about the future is a hindrance and not a help to sound Christian progress. What we are now in life and character, in our relations to God and man is the main thing. The future can hold no promise of good save what is laid up by present faithfulness. In quietness and confidence we may leave what is to happen after death to the Everlasting Father and Redeemer of souls, while we assure our-

selves that the only possible preparation for the worthy use of another life is the worthy use of this life. Strictly speaking, there can be no special preparation for the future. The whole of life, and not isolated acts, experiences and hours, is the real preparation. It is by living we prepare to live. He who lives faithfully and well to-day, filling each day with truth and righteousness, love and peace, with honest and earnest labour for God and mankind, has no need or cause to be anxious for the morrow. Whatever happens, it must ever in this world and in all the worlds be well with him.

'It shall be well with thee, O soul,
Though the heavens wither like a scroll,
Though sun and moon forget to roll,
O soul, it shall be well.'

THIRD SUNDAY.

THE BLESSING AND OPPORTUNITY OF A DAY.

Read St. Luke xix. 1-10; St. John ix. 1-6.

What a great and royal gift is a day! It comes to us laden with blessing and promise, full of history and full of prophecy. It has taken many thousands of years to prepare it for us. In the very fuel that feeds its fires is the vegetation of primeval years. The effort to realise the tremendous cost at which we have everything in the daily order and enjoyment of life is baffling even to the imagination. Every day that dawns has countless relations with things far and wide. Ancient Egypt and Israel, Greece and Rome, Scandinavia and primitive Germany, priests and philosophers, prophets and poets, discoverers and inventors, innumerable thinkers and workers, known and unknown, have helped to prepare the materials out of which to-day's opportunity has been made. We are the heirs of the ages in a most real sense. We inherit the good, material and moral, wrought out through the experiences of many men and many races of men through many centuries. In the life of to-day are the results of the labour and struggle of all the yesterdays.

'Whatever of true life there was of yore
Along our veins is springing,
For us its martyrs die, its prophets soar,
Its poets still are singing.'

No day is poor and commonplace. The judgment of the pessimist is virtually a condemnation of himself and his own way of living. To the prepared soul every day is full of marvel and joy. Life has lost none of its ancient fascination; it is as full as ever of grandeur and loveliness, of wonder and mystery. All the things which deep-seeing

men have seen to be in human life, the things which have inspired the finest poetry of the world, are in human life to-day. Every day has its comedies and tragedies. Genius does not invent, it discovers and interprets. To find examples of heroism we need not turn to classic pages, nor search the annals of martyrdom. Heroism is as unfailing a reality as the daily dawn. Around and in each day are all the great marvels of creation, all the moral forces and splendours of life, and all the sacred realities to which the deeply moved soul has witnessed in every age. The miracle of creation is renewed every day. Light and heat, and all the ancient creative forces, are still active, doing the same kind of work they did when 'the morning stars sang together, and the first-born of the sons of God shouted for joy.' 'My Father,' said Jesus, 'works continuously and I work.' Faith is not retrospective only. Revelation is not reminiscence or report merely. God is the living God and the God of the living. The Divine vision can be won and the Divine voice can be heard to-day. Every mountain may be a point of contact between God and man, and the foot of Jacob's ladder may be touched anywhere. We have in to-day all that men ever had—the same spiritual resources, the same Divine helps. The heavenly realities belong to the present as much as to the past or the future. Loyalty to the laws of the highest growth will make to-day as sacred as yesterday, and one of the days of heaven upon earth. The Eternal Life of the Christian Gospel stands not in quantity but in quality of years, and is shared by us here according to our faithfulness.

It is a familiar saying that life is but a day. It is said to express the awful and pathetic brevity of our existence upon this earth. It is the utterance of an impressive truth, common yet never commonplace. But when we say each day is a life we are giving expression to a truth of deeper importance and of greater practical value and use. There is nothing small. In the smallest things are the elements of the greatest. One day of life has in it the quality of the whole. It is grander than we know or can imagine. It has infinite relations. In its acts and relations we see God making history, and man making his own future—making the character which creates condition and decides destiny.

Are we making the most and the best of the opportunities of to-day? Many people are sighing and crying for the larger opportunities to which they expect death will in-

roduce them, who do not know the value of a day. One of our older poets has represented the days as coming to us with their faces veiled; but when they have passed beyond our reach and call, the draped figures become radiant, and the gifts we slighted are seen to be right royal treasures.

Let us make the most and the best of each day's opportunity for pure and noble enjoyment. Let not our sorrow for some vanished good, nor our expectation of some promised or expected good, make us insensible to, or ungrateful for, the good which is now and here. Let us train our faculties to observe and appreciate all the gracious blessings of daily life. We need not be suspicious of what gives pleasure and joy. The lesson of joy is as Divine a lesson to learn as that of obedience and sacrifice.

Let us make the most and the best of each day's opportunity for thought and meditation. It was a good rule of a great man never to allow one day to pass without reading something that would quicken and enrich his mind. The inner life constantly needs deepening. Knowledge is growing from more to more, and God is ever revealing Himself. Every day is a day of revelation. We must follow the Spirit of truth. Our highest attainments ought only to be new starting-points. The mind closed against new truth is already dying.

Let us make the most and the best of the opportunity for moral and spiritual growth and beneficent service which is afforded by the daily task. It is in the sphere of the every-day duties most men must win the discipline which our earthly life is meant to yield, must form the character which is the crown of life, and prepare themselves for wider usefulness. No violent, overstrained efforts are necessary to achieve that moral and spiritual success which Scripture calls salvation—deliverance from weakness and sin, the reconciliation of the life to the order and will of God, the perfection of character. We may through the humblest fidelities reach the Christian righteousness, and rise out of our selfishness into the Christian generousities and sympathies. It is only by living up to the ideal and duty of making each day perfect in itself we can make life a spiritual triumph.

There are only 'twelve hours in a day,' yet how much can be done in and with a day.

'One day with life and heart
Is more than enough to find a world.'

Let us strive to get as much good as we can

out of each day, and to do as much good as we can in each day. If we throw away a day no miracle will bring it back to us. There is no to-morrow for the work that ought to be done to-day. The cry, "Too late," is not false. The mercy of God is infinite every way, but an opportunity lost is lost for ever. Other doors may open, but that door is for ever shut.

The exhortation, 'Prepare to meet thy God,' is, indeed, an exhortation to prepare for life, not death. Every day we meet God; every day we need to be prepared to meet Him. We prepare for what we suppose to be great days. But every day may be a great day, a Divine day. It was on a common day the Saviour of men met Zaccheus on the Jericho road, and said to him, 'Come down; this day I must abide at thy house.' It was on a common day He met the woman of Samaria at the well, and by His conversation made that day a day of revelation for all the ages. To-day all good and great things are possible. Let us by our faith and faithfulness, by our obedience to all best visions and impulses, turn it into a day of salvation, a day of God, one of the days of the Son of Man, one of the days of heaven upon earth.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF THE WORLD AND LIFE.

Read Isaiah III. 7-9; Luke II. 8-11; John xiv. 1-5;
Phil. iv. 4-8.

The divineness or sacredness of the present world and the present life is one of the great lessons which in our day we have had set to learn. It is a Christian idea, but its development, like that of all large and living ideas, has been painfully slow and complicated. For many hundreds of years it has been sedulously taught in the name of Christ, and it has been more or less the belief of men that the kingdom of God is not now and here, but in the future, and in another place. It is not difficult to explain, and in a measure to justify, the attitude of Primitive, Mediæval, and Puritan Christianity toward the world and life. Yet there can be little doubt that the separatist attitude is not the true Christian attitude. The Incarnation—that perfect union of the divine and human in the person of Jesus Christ, of which the constitution of man has always been a prophecy—is the consecration of our nature and life. Through Him whose birth Christendom is celebrating at this season of the year, we know the world of natural relationship to be a Divine world; fatherhood and motherhood,

childhood and brotherhood, have had their ideal significance and beauty unveiled and recognised, and the families of the earth have been blessed.

The feeling of Jesus toward the world was not that of the ascetic or pessimist. He was in love with this earth and this earthly life. He had all a poet's delight in sky and landscape, in every touch of natural beauty, and not less delight but more in the world of men and women. He liked to feel the warmth and magnetism of human neighbourhood, and was at home among crowds. Most truly and deeply He entered into our human life. The variety and breadth of His sympathies were a surprise and revelation to many in Galilee and Judea. So little of an ascetic was He that by one class of religionists He was set down as entirely too loose in His ideas of meat and drink and social intercourse. His goodness was genial and loveable, and had all that charm which touches and wins the heart. His communion with God did not mean separation from men. In the spirit and practice of His life, earth and heaven, life here and life hereafter, were not opposed to each other. In this world he did not feel that he was absent from God. He had, enveloping his whole life and vitalising every part of it, the sense of His Father's presence and companionship. He not only came forth from His Father, and was going back to His Father, but He saw His Father everywhere, and was nowhere alone, because His Father was with Him. He sought all through His ministry to inspire His disciples and friends with the confidence which was the spiritual atmosphere of His own life, that even here on earth and in this present life, they were children in their Father's house.

It is wonderful how very little Jesus said about the mere continuance of life—life hereafter. We can only be sure of some five or six great sayings which have a plain and direct reference to another world. The parables and prophecies which later Christianity transferred to life after death a more careful examination has shown that they were originally connected with a different order of ideas. The kingdom of God on earth is the central principle of Christ's teaching. Around it is grouped all that He said and taught. 'As in heaven so on earth,' is the Lord's ideal and prayer.

To win and keep the Christian faith in immortality we must recognise the essential unity of the two lives and the two worlds. It is one life we live on earth and in heaven. Heaven is for those who have made the most

and the best of earth. Until we have got the Divine good out of this world we have rightfully but small concern with any other world. The Gospel assumes that a man cannot believe in the next life till he believes in this life. The sense of a larger life beyond will not make itself clear and commanding till the Divine significance of this life has been learned. It is life that is the assurance and revelation of life. To raise the quality of life before death, to make life fuller and deeper, was therefore the object of the Saviour's mission. 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' Immortality is revealed to man by revealing it in man. When life takes on the Christ-like quality it becomes itself the prophecy of more life; we have no doubt or fear about the future; there comes surely if gradually a great trust and hope, a great peace, a sense of encompassment by Eternal Goodness, a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The attitude of Jesus Christ towards the world and life must be our attitude, His faith our faith, His spirit our spirit. To be a Christian is to be a man after the order and type of Jesus Christ; it is to think as He thought, feel as He felt, live as He lived; it is to take and keep His attitude toward God and man, toward heaven and earth, toward life here and life hereafter. Taking His mind and spirit as our law and guide we know that this world is God's as well as the next, and that God is here as well as there. We are not journeying toward a remote Deity, but walking with God. He only finds God who finds Him now and here. God wants us to love and enjoy His world. We can 'serve Him with mirth.' 'All things are ours, things present as well as things to come, because we are Christ's and Christ is God's.' Why should we be afraid to set our lives in harmony with this truth? We are not servants, but children in the house of God. We need not take our pleasures by stealth. 'Touch not, taste not, handle not,' is a maxim only quoted by the Christian Apostle to be condemned. It is not by negations and prohibitions we can save ourselves or others. The limitation of liberty may be a temporary necessity, but to learn how to use everything aright is the fundamental law and lesson. Natural joys may blend with Divine sanctities. In and through the earthly things we may find the heavenly realities. We may eat and drink to the glory of God. Sacred and pathetic memories, spiritual ideas and affections, were associated by our Lord

with a supper. 'Christianity,' says Novalis in a suggestive sentence, 'is the capability of everything earthly to become the bread and wine of a divine life.' Deep in the fellowship of Jesus Christ we learn to take a gracious and bright view of life—even of its hardest conditions and limitations. We learn that there is good in everything save sin, that sin is the only real evil of life, that these mortal years and all their circumstances and experiences mean education—the Father educating His children.

In many ways and by many agencies God is teaching us this great Christian lesson, that here and now we are children in our Father's house and fulfilling in present human experience the prophetic word—'Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and pilgrims, but members of the household of God.' Every energy of our civilisation is reducing the ancient ills of life, making the world look less and less inhospitable and harsh, and more and more home-like. By the removal of hardships, by the growth of justice, and that disposition which is fitly named 'the enthusiasm of humanity,' by the spread of education, and the multiplication of pure and noble interests and pleasures, we are being slowly brought to a new and more Christian sense of the value and sacredness of the present world and the present life.

It has been a common test of the reality and depth of a man's religious life to be able to say, 'I am willing and ready to die,' but a truer and healthier conception has entered into the thoughts of men. It is good to live. In this world and to-day it is good to live. To make this life as great and sacred as it ever can be; to taste as many sweet and solemn joys as we are able; to throw ourselves, mind, heart, and soul into the work of helping the world and enabling the lives we touch on every side to find and experience the goodness of existence; to bear quietly and bravely the hard and sorrowful realities of our personal lot as the beneficent discipline of heaven—this is being more and more clearly seen by us to be the purpose of pure Christianity: and striving to be obedient to this heavenly vision we feel that we are making for whatever awaits us beyond the truest and amplest preparation.

FIFTH SUNDAY.

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

Read Psalm xxiii.; St. Matt. xi. 25 to end.

The great problem which is set before us is not to solve and interpret the riddle of the

universe, but to live faithfully and bravely our own life. We need just so much religious assurance and inspiration as will enable us to do this; enough to give us confidence, courage, and hope in the struggle of our days to be the men and women we are meant to be and ought to be.

There are questions concerning life which we cannot answer, mysteries which the keenest thought cannot penetrate, and which rise before us in every direction in all their ancient solemnity and pathos. Yet that matters not, if only we can know enough to enable us to have confidence in the essential goodness of the universe and life; enough to nourish the calm and deepening sense that all is well: enough for the perception and performance of duty; enough for the culture of character; enough for the exercise of patience, charity, and hope; enough to inspire strength and peace. It is just this measure of knowledge, and no more, which we need for the practical purposes of life.

We do not need the knowledge of a god to live the life and to do the work of a man; but, on the other hand, there must be some knowledge before there can be trust, some foundation in knowledge for the faith which goes beyond knowledge. The God with whom we have to do is not an austere taskmaster, seeking to reap where He has not sown; He gives us grounds and reasons for trust before He solicits trust. In the world of nature and man, in the best thoughts of our own minds, in the best affections of our own hearts, in the best experiences of our own lives, in the witness of saintly and prophetic souls, in the life and work of Jesus Christ, God has revealed enough of His purposes and ways, of His character and will, to quicken and sustain trust in His righteousness and love, when clouds and darkness are round about Him, and mystery besets us behind and before, and we cannot walk any more by sight.

In all the range of ancient literature we do not find anywhere a deeper sense of the mystery of life than in the Old Testament, yet it is pervaded with a pure and lofty trust in All-wise and Almighty Goodness. It is full of hints and glimpses of that diviner vision and understanding of life, of those larger spiritual interpretations and consolations which came by Jesus Christ. The history of much that is called Christianity may be largely the history of distrust and fear, but when we return to the simplicity that is in Christ, we return to confidence and courage, to tranquillity and joy. The voice of the New Testament is the voice of Jesus to the

trembling, storm-tossed disciples on the old Galilean sea, 'Be of good cheer, be not afraid.'

The great trusts of religion which find expression in the Bible are the anticipations of what science and experience have been disclosing and verifying. The confidence that all things are very good in their purpose and end, and that the universe is essentially beneficent in all its operations though it transcends exact knowledge, is yet justified by it. An earlier science by its revelation of the severe side of nature may have turned some minds away from faith, but later and truer knowledge is restoring religious conviction by quickening and increasing our confidence in the nature and course of things. The more we search and the more we study the relation of each part to the whole, and of the whole to each, the more do we see that what we call evil is but good in the making. There is no trace of curse or caprice anywhere. Everywhere we see wisdom and goodness—one purpose, one law, one power, one God throughout the universe. At the root of all the seeming hardness and severity of nature there is mercy and faithfulness. The universe is what Jesus Christ said it was, 'My Father's house.'

We cannot hide from ourselves the dark side of human life, and we do not want a faith which does not fully recognise it; but when we study the drift and tendency of things God becomes His own interpreter. God and good are perceived to be one, and our human world is seen to be moving through such processes as moral growth requires toward harmony with good. 'If God made this world,' says one of our philosophical pessimists, 'I should not like to be God, its woes would break my heart.' But the world is not made; it is only in the process of making. The week of creation is a long week. 'Rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him.' The end will explain and vindicate both the length and severity of the process. God's world when finished will be far better than our best thought of what a world might and ought to be. A careful study of the past affords sufficient justification for our largest expectations as to the coming years. The movement is ever toward good. The centuries grow juster, more merciful, more peaceful.

* Step by step since time began,
We see the steady gain of man.

We may indeed trust life as meaning our good. It may be difficult to understand things when we are in the midst of them;

but by slow stages the knowledge dawns on every thoughtful and faithful man that life is underlain with beneficent purpose. The conditions may be hard, but character can only be formed through struggle; and the formation or training of character is the justification and explanation of the discipline of our days. We grow by what seems to thwart us; defeats are sometimes the best victories, and adversities and griefs the very conditions of fulfilling the noblest prophecy of life. The words, 'I will trust and not be afraid,' describe what ought to be our attitude toward God in all our personal and immediate relations to Him. God ought not to be the object of any base fear; He is the refuge from all such fear. 'What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee.' To see God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ is to trust Him and to be at rest in Him. We are much, it is true, that we ought not to be, and little that we ought to be. We need no arguments to convince us that we are weak and sinful. We have terrible inward evidence of transgression and failure. But it is only the heart without faith and hope that wears itself out in regrets and fears. We who profess to believe in the Eternal Love revealed in the character and cross of Jesus Christ need not have tormenting memories and forebodings as our companions in the coming year. Forgiveness, love for all, hope for all, help for all—this is the everlasting meaning and message of the Gospel of the Son of Man. We do not require to be protected and saved from God; He is our Protector and Saviour.

The attitude of trust ought to be our attitude toward the mysterious future. It is natural to desire some clear and authentic assurance concerning the life that lies on the other side of death. A longing to pierce the darkness comes at times to all who have loved and lost. When knowledge fails superstition often comes in, and men become the victims of their own credulous fancies and fears. But it is well that we do not know. In drawing a veil over to-morrow God is dealing with us as a Father who pities His children and knows what they can bear, and what is best for the healthy movement and progress of their life. We must leave the future to trust and hope. Yet it is not altogether a matter of uncertainty. Through these brief, vanishing mortal years, and for ever; in this world and in all the worlds—'The Eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.'

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